

# Tobacco-free children– give your child an upbringing free of tobacco

## PASSIVE SMOKING

If your child spends time close to smokers, the child is also smoking. When the child inhales the smoke, it is exposed to the same dangerous chemical substances as the smoker. This is called passive smoking. It is dangerous for everyone, but especially for children who do not have fully developed lungs and immune systems.

## CHILDREN HAVE A RIGHT TO A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Just a few puffs of smoke in a room make the air quality worse. It's not enough to smoke in a different room or to stand under an extractor. Smoke spreads. Nor is it enough to open windows or doors. There is a high risk that the smoke will be drawn into the room. And even if you don't notice it, the smoke can be there, as 80 per cent of cigarette smoke can be neither seen nor smelled.

Protect your child from tobacco smoke and make sure that no one smokes close to it. The same also applies to smoking a water pipe. If you are a smoker yourself, never do it indoors or in the car.

## HOW THE CHILD IS AFFECTED

Tobacco smoke can cause pain in the eyes, an irritating cough and headaches. It makes the membranes in the respiratory tracts more vulnerable to infections. This is why children of smokers suffer more often from respiratory tract infections and ear inflammation. Small children are affected worst of all, as they are more sensitive and cannot tell you that the smoke is affecting them.

Passive smoking increases the risk of allergies and worsens the symptoms of children with asthma. Sudden infant death is rare, but the risk increases if the mother has smoked or taken snus (mouth tobacco) during pregnancy, and is further increased if the newborn child is exposed to smoke.

## ABOUT BREASTFEEDING

Breast milk contains all the nutrition the child needs and protects against infections. Breastfeeding also reduces the risk of sudden infant death and diabetes. If you use tobacco, the nicotine and other toxins pass into the breast milk and then on to the child. It is therefore best not to use tobacco or other products that contain nicotine when you are breastfeeding. But despite the risks, it is recommended that women who smoke or take snus continue breastfeeding, as the benefits of mother's milk are believed to outweigh the risks.

## CHILDREN IMITATE ADULTS

You are an important role model, and your child will imitate you and learn from you. The same is true of using tobacco. The risk that young people will start smoking or taking snus is twice as high if the parents are tobacco users. This is confirmed by both Swedish and international research.

## COGNITIVE TRAPS

### **I ONLY SMOKE UNDER THE EXTRACTOR, SO THAT THE SMOKE IS REMOVED INSTANTLY.**

Smoke spreads to the kitchen even if you only smoke under the extractor.

### **SMOKING/TAKING SNUS CALMS ME DOWN.**

As a smoker or snus user, you are in a vicious circle in which you smoke or take snus to keep your mood in check. It is the nicotine craving that distorts your balance. When you stop, the vicious circle is broken. You become calmer, more relaxed and your mood is more even. Some people, however, may experience a temporary increase in stress and bad moods during the first few weeks. This is known as withdrawal.

### **I PUT ON SO MUCH WEIGHT DURING MY PREGNANCY - IF I STOP SMOKING I'LL PUT ON EVEN MORE.**

It is not proven whether smoking and taking snus actually help a person to keep down their weight. Some studies indicate the opposite. Whatever is true, smoking and taking snus are dangerous for your health and many women who are breastfeeding do lose weight quickly.

ENGELSKA

## **AIR POLLUTION OUTDOORS IS JUST AS DANGEROUS AS TOBACCO SMOKE.**

Not even by a busy street in a city centre does the air contain as many harmful substances as tobacco smoke.

## **LIFE IS FULL OF RISKS. YOU CAN'T PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST EVERYTHING.**

This is true, but of all the risks we face, smoking tobacco and passive smoking are things that we can avoid.

## **HOW TO STOP SMOKING**

**SET A DATE TO STOP.** Decide when you want to stop. A common approach is to give yourself a week or so to prepare before you stop smoking, but some choose to stop at once.

**STOP COMPLETELY ON THE DATE YOU CHOOSE.** Smokers who stop completely have almost twice as big a chance of success compared with those who try to stop by gradually reducing the number of cigarettes.

**CLEAR AWAY YOUR TOBACCO.** Get rid of all cigarettes, cartons of snus and accessories.

**WITHDRAWAL.** When you stop you may feel dizzy, unconcentrated, restless and in a bad mood for a while. This will pass. This is most noticeable during the first few days, before gradually fading, and these symptoms usually disappear within 2-4 weeks.

**STRATEGIES.** Give some thought to which situations can trigger your urge to use tobacco. Avoid situations that might tempt you to smoke or take snus. Come up with a few things to do when the urge arises. A glass of water can help, ideally with some lemon. Snus users can put a piece of fresh ginger under their lip. Eat regularly to avoid hunger pangs, which can feel like a nicotine urge. Physical activity can help reduce nicotine urges and withdrawal symptoms, and also counteract weight gain.

**AIDS.** Nicotine drugs relieve discomfort while giving up smoking and increase the chance of success. They are prescription-free. There are also prescription drugs to help you stop smoking that you can discuss with your doctor. If you are breastfeeding, you must consult your doctor before you start taking drugs to help you stop smoking.

## **GET SOME HELP**

- Your nurse in the child healthcare service or a paediatrician can usually answer your questions about tobacco.
- Contact a qualified stop smoking advisor for help in giving up tobacco. They are available at most health centres and may also be found at child healthcare centres (BVC), hospitals and dental clinics. Ask staff where you can find help locally.
- Free advice and support for giving up smoking and snus are available on the Stop Smoking hotline, 020-84 00 00, [www.slutarokalinjen.se](http://www.slutarokalinjen.se)
- Many people have found the apps **Rökfri** (adults) and **Fimpaaa!** (young people) useful.
- Find out more about giving up tobacco on the **TobaksStopp.Nu** website. [psykologermottobak.org](http://psykologermottobak.org),

Information from Psychologists against Tobacco. Websites: [psykologermottobak.org](http://psykologermottobak.org), [tobaksstopp.nu](http://tobaksstopp.nu)  
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