



## For Family Service Workers

- ✓ Believe in and support the mission of the project—*“Improving the overall health and well-being of Head Start children by improving their indoor air quality, especially exposure to secondhand smoke and other environmental asthma triggers.”*
- ✓ Get the message out about the risks of secondhand smoke and the benefits of making your home and car smoke-free!
- ✓ Have your center look at various ways parents can “Take the Pledge.” Options:
  - A one-on-one conversation with a family service worker
  - A classroom activity
  - A program for your entire center
  - Participate in a community event
- ✓ Help parents understand this issue is an important one that affects **all children**, not just those whose parents smoke or children who have asthma.
- ✓ Help families develop family specific plans such as an individualized “Family Partnership Agreement” that not only includes taking the pledge but also offers specific strategies on how to fulfill the commitment they made to improve the health of their child (ren) and family.
  - Ask parents about their child’s exposure to secondhand smoke during the intake process.
  - Problem solve around how to talk to friends and family members that live in the home (or extended family members not living in the home) about their decision not to allow smoking in their home and car.
  - Develop strategies with family members on how to deal with cravings when they are not able to go outside to smoke.
  - Talk about the Stages of Change and the difficulty of making those changes.
  - Find out if they are ready to quit. If they are, provide referrals and information about where they can get help with quitting. If they are not ready to quit, reinforce that this is not about cessation. Instead, it is something they can do to improve the health and lives of their child (ren).
  - Celebrate the parent’s success!



Photo by H. Wilson. Community Services for Children HS



- ✓ Refer families to community resources such as local clinics, health care providers, the local chapter of the American Lung Association, or other members of your community who support a healthy environment.
- ✓ Provide a monitoring system for staff to document the work they are doing in this area.
- ✓ Encourage parents on the Policy Council, Health Services Advisory Committee, and other committees to make this issue a priority. Help them understand this is a health issue that affects **all children** not just children whose parents smoke.
- ✓ Plan parent meetings that address the topic of promoting “Smoke-Free Homes for Head Start Families.”
- ✓ Seek out community partners.
  - American Lung Association - <http://www.lungusa.org>
  - Cancer Association - <http://www.cancer.org>
  - National SIDS/Infant Death Resource Center - <http://www.sidscenter.org>
  - Regional EPA offices - <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/locate2.htm>
  - Local clinics and doctors
  - Community leaders and advocates for children’s health
- ✓ Plan or participate in community events that support getting the message out.
  - A Family Health Fair – include information on the harmful effects of secondhand smoke from EPA’s “Smoke-Free Homes” Program. Have participants who are ready “Take the Pledge.” <http://www.epa.gov/smokefree/pledge/index.html>
  - Celebrate “Asthma Awareness Month” and “World Asthma Day.” <http://www.epa.gov/asthma/awm.html>
  - See what other communities are doing. Create your own Smoke-Free activity! [http://www.epa.gov/smokefree/images/local\\_program\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/smokefree/images/local_program_brochure.pdf)