Summer vacation beckons our kids with long hot days, popsicles, and relaxation. Though it’s important for kids to get a well-deserved break from their hectic and busy schedules, it is also just as important for them to stay active.

“Seek Clean Air for Kids” Understand the Risks of Secondhand Smoke Exposure in Children

By Catherine Chiu, M.D., Medical Advisor at The Children’s Health Alliance

What is secondhand smoke?
- Secondhand smoke is the term that doctors use to label the smoke that people (who do not smoke) breathe in from other people’s smoking
- It can come from a cigarette, cigar, pipe, or electronic cigarette
- Secondhand smoke is also called “environmental tobacco smoke”
- Secondhand smoke contains more than 4,000 substances, including cancer causing compounds
- More than one billion adults worldwide are smokers, which means that secondhand smoke exposure is almost unavoidable for our children

Does secondhand smoke cause health problems in children?
- Yes, the health of children exposed to secondhand smoke may be harmed
- These problems may be even worse if both parents smoke
- Children’s bodies are still developing, and are at increased risk to the harmful effects of secondhand smoke

What health problems does secondhand smoke cause?
- Breathing symptoms such as coughing, increased mucus, and wheezing
- Lung infections, such as pneumonia and bronchitis. There is a 50% increased risk of your child developing a lung infection if either parent smokes. These infections can be especially serious in infants and young children.
- Asthma--Secondhand smoke exposure is associated with up to an 85% increased risk of developing asthma. Asthma is a lung disease that makes it hard to breathe. Children with asthma have episodes where they cough, wheeze, or get a tight feeling in their chest.
- Allergies--The risk of developing allergies is increased
- Lung growth--The lungs do not grow and develop normally
- Ear infections--Kids are prone to recurrent ear infections
- Hearing loss can present later in childhood
- Dental cavities--Increased risk of developing cavities

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Do children who grow up with secondhand smoke exposure have effects in adulthood?

• Yes, especially because the exposure may have been from very early in life, and the duration of exposure to carcinogens is over a much longer time period.
• Lung cancer—17% of lung cancer in nonsmokers is due to high levels of secondhand smoke exposure during childhood and adolescence.
• Other cancers—Cancer risk is increased 50% among children of parents who smoked.
• Heart disease—Environmental exposure to tobacco smoke changes the lining of arteries, which can then damage the heart.
• Children who grow up with parents who smoke are more likely to become smokers.

What if my child already has asthma?

• Secondhand smoke exposure can trigger asthma attacks and increase the severity of the symptoms.
• Your child may need to use higher doses of medications.
• Your child may have to go to the hospital more often.

Smoking during pregnancy:

• When a woman smokes during pregnancy, she has a higher chance of a miscarriage.
• Her baby has a higher chance of
  – Being born too early.
  – Not growing as much in the uterus as he or she would have if the mom didn’t smoke.
  – Being born with a birth defect.
  – Dying from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—this is when a healthy baby dies suddenly in their sleep for no apparent reason. Up to 40% of cases of SIDS are related to the mom smoking during pregnancy.

What can be done?

• Smokers should be supported in quitting smoking for the health benefits of themselves and others.
• Make your home and car smoke free—ban any indoor smoking.
• If this is not possible, intermediate steps to reduce exposure include: restricting smoking to a single room with good ventilation, smoking after the children have gone to bed, and smoking away from children.
• Air cleaning devices are NOT effective in decreasing secondhand smoke exposure, and are not recommended.

Raising a Summer Reader

When the lazy days of summer arrive and your child’s schedule is packed with swimming, camp, and family vacations, it can be a challenge to find time for reading. But kids’ reading skills don’t have to stop growing just because school’s out. Here are some ways to make reading a natural part of their summer fun:

Explore your library. Visit your local library to check out books and magazines that your kids haven’t seen before. Many libraries have summer reading programs, book clubs, and reading contests for even the youngest borrowers. There are often incentives, such as a free book upon completing their summer reading lists. Young kids will feel extra grown-up checking out books with their own library card.

Read on the road. Going on a long car trip? Make sure the back seat is stocked with favorite reads. When you’re not at the wheel, you can read the books aloud. Get some audiobooks (many libraries have large selections) and listen to them together during drive time.

Make your own books. Pick one of your family’s favorite parts of summer—whether it’s baseball, ice cream, vacation, or the pool—and have your child draw or cut out related pictures from magazines and catalogs. Paste the pictures onto paper to make a book, and then encourage your child to write text for each page. A younger child can dictate the story for you to write down (using your child’s words). When you’re done, read the book together.

Keep in touch. Kids don’t have to go away to write about summer vacation. Even if your family stays home, you can encourage your child to send postcards, letters, or e-mails to friends and relatives. Ask a relative to be your child’s pen pal, and encourage a weekly exchange of letters, postcards, or e-mails.

Keep up the reading rituals. Even if everything else changes during the summer, keep up the reading routines already in place at your house. Read with your kids every day—whether it’s just before bedtime or under a shady tree on a lazy afternoon. And don’t forget to take a book to the beach! Just brush the sand off the pages!

From kidshealth.org
Fireworks Safety
by Catherine Chiu, M.D., Medical Advisor at The Children’s Health Alliance

Fourth of July is a day to celebrate all that we love about summer – long warm days, playing at the pool, picnics, and ice cream. Everybody loves the thrill of fireworks--from sparklers to amazing bursts of color in the sky. Fireworks, however, are a significant cause of injuries each year. In 2013, there were 11,400 injuries due to fireworks, and eight deaths. Sparklers account for 17% of all fireworks related accidents. More than 50% of injuries are burns. 17,800 fires were started by fireworks in 2013. You can help prevent fireworks-related accidents by following these safety tips.

Fireworks Safety
- Buy legal fireworks only
- Never try to make your own fireworks
- Always use fireworks outside, away from flammable objects
- Point fireworks away from homes
- Steer clear of others, and keep a safe distance from lit fireworks
- Always have a bucket of water and a water source nearby
- Soak all used fireworks in water before throwing them in the trash can
- Never try to re-light or pick up a firework that has not ignited

Personal Safety
- Do not wear loose fitting clothing while using fireworks
- Wear eye protection when lighting fireworks
- Never hold fireworks in your hand
- Do not stand over fireworks while lighting, and move away immediately after lighting

Special Precautions for Kids
- Closely supervise children at all times around fireworks
- Be extra careful with sparklers. These can reach 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to melt gold!
- Don’t let kids pick up pieces of fireworks. These may still be ignited and can explode.

If Injury Occurs
- If any eye injury occurs:
  - Don’t flush out with water or put an ointment on it
  - Don’t allow your child to touch or rub it, as this may cause more damage
  - Immediately go to the doctor or hospital
- If a burn occurs:
  - Remove clothing from burned area
  - Run cool water over the burn and call your doctor

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Make a Splash!

When the temperature rises a great family activity is to take the kids to a community pool to cool off and have fun.

**Portland Metropolitan Area**

Tualatin Hills Aquatic Center  
15707 SW Walker Road, Portland, OR 97006

Mount Scott Community Center & Indoor Pool  
5530 SE 72nd Ave, Portland, OR 97206

Northeast Community Center  
1630 NE 38th Ave., Portland, OR 97232

Gresham High School Aquatic Center  
1200 North Main Ave., Gresham, OR 97030

Montavilla Community Center and Pool  
8219 NE Glisan Street, Portland, OR 97220

Sherwood Regional Family YMCA  
23000 SW Pacific Hwy, Sherwood, OR 97140

**Vancouver**

Marshall Community Center  
1009 E. McLoughlin Blvd  
Vancouver, WA 98663

Jim Parsley Community Center  
2901 Falk Road, Vancouver, WA 98661

Firstenburg Community Center  
700 NE 136th Ave.  
Vancouver, WA 98684

**Salem**

The Salvation Army / Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center  
1865 Bill Frey Drive, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Olinger Pool  
1310 A Street, NE, Salem, OR 97301

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**Strawberry-Orange Ice Pops**

Making your own colorful, refreshing ice pops is so satisfying and easy—plus, you get to know exactly what’s in them when you enjoy them later. And what’s in them is real fruit and fruit juice. The pulp floats to the top so that when you unmold them there’s a clear layer and a cloudy layer. Beautiful!

**HANDS-ON TIME:**  
5 MINUTES

**TOTAL TIME:**  
4 HOURS

**MAKES:**  
8 POPS

**KITCHEN GEAR:**  
Blender or food processor  
Ice-pop molds or paper cups and wooden sticks

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 cup very ripe strawberries, hulled (*hulled* means with the green top taken off)
- 1 cup orange juice

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your kitchen gear and ingredients and put them on a clean counter.

1. Put all the ingredients in the blender or food processor and blend until liquidy.
2. Divide the mixture evenly among the ice-pop molds or paper cups. If you’re using paper cups, put them on a small baking sheet, cover them with plastic wrap, and then poke a wooden stick down through the wrap into each cup. Freeze until solid, around 4 hours.

Recipe from Chop Chop magazine. See more recipes at chopchopmag.org