

## Smoke-free playgrounds

The second hand smoke created by smokers is harmful to both children and adults. Children exposed to second hand smoke are more likely to suffer from colds and ear infections. Children need clean air for good health.

Second hand smoke causes 8 per cent of all childhood asthma, and is especially dangerous to children and adults with asthma or other chronic illness because it aggravates their conditions. In addition, it is annoying to the 75 per cent of the population that does not smoke.

Each day, thousands of children visit local council parks and playgrounds to use the play equipment, play team sports, or just to be outside with their family and friends. When children see adults smoking in a family-friendly place, it 'normalises' smoking, making children more likely to try cigarettes and other tobacco products.

Littered cigarette butts are also hazardous to children. Young children may pick up the butts and put them in their mouths, possibly choking or burning themselves. The harmful chemicals and nicotine in discarded cigarettes can be toxic and even fatal to a small child.

Cigarette butts make our parks and beaches look dirty and uninviting, and cause long-term damage to the environment. Our children deserve clean, safe places to play.

Local councils have the power to deliver the benefits of smoke-free parks, playgrounds and other outdoor public spaces to the community. In May 2003, the Launceston City Council became the first local government area in Australia to ban smoking around children's playgrounds and some sporting fields. Since then, a number of local councils in other parts of Australia have followed suit.

A draft motion for local councils in relation to smoke-free playgrounds can be found on this website. The motion is supported by SmokeFree Tasmania, of which The Cancer Council is a member.

Members of the public who support the concept of smoke-free playgrounds are encouraged to contact their local council.