

***Both children and adults are exposed to secondhand smoke (SHS) (also called environmental tobacco smoke) in the United States and in Virginia.***

- SHS exposure occurs when nonsmokers breathe in smoke exhaled by smokers or from burning tobacco products.<sup>1</sup>
- There is no safe level of exposure to SHS.<sup>2</sup>
  - Separation of smokers from non-smokers, air cleaning and building ventilation systems will not eliminate exposure.<sup>2</sup>
  - The only way to protect nonsmokers from the dangerous chemicals in secondhand smoke is to eliminate smoking indoors.<sup>3</sup>

## **United States**

- More than 41,000 nonsmoking adults and 400 infants die\* from SHS exposure each year.<sup>1</sup>
- SHS produces an estimated \$5.6 billion annually in lost productivity.<sup>2</sup>
- The workplace is a major source of SHS exposure for many adults.<sup>4</sup>
- Among adult non-smokers, SHS in the workplace has been linked to an increased risk for heart disease and lung cancer.<sup>4</sup>
- From 1999-2000 to 2011-2012, SHS exposure among nonsmokers in US declined from 52.5% to 25.3%, but remains high for the following groups:<sup>2</sup>
  - Children aged 3-11 years (40.6%)
  - Non-Hispanic Blacks (46.8%)
  - Persons who rent their housing (36.8%)
  - Persons living in poverty (43.2%)
- An estimated of 57.9 million non-smokers aged ≥3 years in the United States have been exposed to SHS based on detectable levels of cotinine†, a biomarker of tobacco smoke, in the bloodstream.<sup>2</sup>
- According to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey during 2011-2012, 15.1 million children aged 3-11 years, 9.6 million adolescents aged 12-19 years and 35.2 million adults aged ≥ 20 years were exposed to SHS†.<sup>2</sup>

## **Virginia**

- The home is the primary source of SHS exposure for children and a major source of exposure for nonsmoking adults.<sup>5</sup>
  - In Virginia, the prevalence of households with smokefree rules § in all households increased from 39% during 1992-1993 to 85.6% in 2010-2011.
  - During this period the prevalence of households with smokefree rules increased from 53.8% to 93.2% among households with no adult smokers, and from 7.4% to 46.1% among households with at least one smoker.<sup>¶</sup>

- In Virginia, 1,160 adults die each year from exposure to secondhand smoke.<sup>6</sup>
- A 2013 state youth tobacco survey indicates that 17.6% of high school students and 17.1% of middle school students live in households where smoking is allowed.<sup>7</sup>

For more information about tobacco use and control, contact the Virginia Department of Health's Tobacco Use Control Project (TUCP) at (804)864-7749, or access information on the website (<http://www.vahealth.org/cdpc/tucp/>).

\*Infant deaths due to secondhand smoke-related Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Deaths among nonsmoking adults due to secondhand smoke-related lung cancer and heart disease.

† Based on detectable levels of cotinine 0.05-10ng/ml in the bloodstream.

§ Households were considered to have a smokefree home rule if all adult respondents aged ≥18 years in the household reported that no one was allowed to smoke anywhere inside the home at any time.

¶ Households were considered to have at least one adult smoker if at least one adult resident aged ≥18 years reported that they had smoked ≥100 cigarettes in their lifetime and smoked "every day" or "some days" at the time of survey

<sup>1</sup> Centers for the Disease Control and Prevention. Vital Signs: Secondhand Smoke: An Unequal Danger, February 3, 2015. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/pdf/2015-02-vitalsigns.pdf>. Accessed on February 27, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for the Disease Control and Prevention. Vital Signs: Disparities in Nonsmokers' Exposure to Secondhand Smoke—United States, 1999–2012. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 2015; 64(4):103-108. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6404.pdf>. Accessed on February 5, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services. The health consequence of smoking: 50 years of progress: a report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2014. Available at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress>. Accessed on June 10, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> American Cancer Society. Secondhand Smoke, 2015. Available at <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/tobaccocancer/secondhand-smoke>. Accessed on May 16, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for the Disease Control and Prevention. Prevalence of Smokefree Home Rules —United States, 1992–1993 and 2010–2011. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 2014; 63 (35): 766-769. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6335.pdf>. Accessed February 10, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth, "By the numbers", 2013. Available at: <http://www.vfhy.org/statistics/tobacco/numbers>. Accessed February 10, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Office of Family Health Services (OFHS), and Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY), Virginia Youth Survey, 2013. Available at: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/OFHS/youthsurvey/results.htm>. Accessed February 12, 2015.