

# Facts: Stop the Secondhand!

## Smoking on school property is still a problem.

- According to the 2005 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, nine percent (9%) of all students smoked cigarettes on school property in the 30 days before the survey.
- Among current student smokers, 43% reported smoking on school property in the past month.
- The percentage of current student smokers smoking on school property in 2005 was significantly lower than it was in 1995. In 2005, the figure was 43%, down from 54% ten years before.

For more information: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/hprograms/yrbs/05/ch2.pdf>

## The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that breathing even a little secondhand smoke poses a risk to your health.

- Scientific evidence indicates that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Breathing even a little secondhand smoke can be harmful to your health.
- The National Toxicology Program estimates that at least 250 chemicals in secondhand smoke are known to be toxic or carcinogenic (cancer causing).
- Secondhand smoke contains many chemicals that can quickly irritate and damage the lining of the airways.
- Even brief exposure can trigger respiratory symptoms, including cough, phlegm, wheezing, and breathlessness.
- Brief exposure to secondhand smoke can trigger an asthma attack in children with asthma.

—Adapted from *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General* (June 27, 2006)

For more information: <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke>

## It is illegal for *anyone* to smoke in school buildings.

- All schools in Massachusetts are covered under the Smoke-Free Worksite law. This means that it is illegal for *anyone* to smoke inside a school.
- Since the passage of the Massachusetts Educational Reform Act in 1993, it's been illegal to use tobacco anywhere on school grounds.
- And while we're at it, it's illegal for anyone to smoke on school buses, too—part of the same 1993 Education Reform Act.

For more information: [http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/tobacco\\_control/schools\\_faq.doc](http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/tobacco_control/schools_faq.doc)



MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT  
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**Make smoking history.**