The Facts About Secondhand Smoke & Asthma:

- Nearly 2 out of 5 children aged 2 months to 5 years live with at least one smoker.
- An estimated 9-12 million children are exposed to secondhand smoke at home.
- It is estimated that up to 1 million children have aggravated asthma symptoms due to Secondhand Smoke.

What You Can Do

- If you smoke, the best action you can take is to quit for yourself and your children. Choose to quit.
- Call the free Michigan Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-480-7848 for help.
- Choose not to smoke in your home or car and do not permit others to do so.
- Do not allow babysitters to smoke in your home.
- Choose smoke-free daycare.

For More Information on Tobacco and Secondhand Smoke, Contact:

Michigan Department of Community Health
Tobacco Section
109 W. Michigan Ave.
P.O. Box 30195
Lansing, MI 48913
517-335-8376

If you think your child may have asthma or you have concerns about your child’s existing asthma:

- Go to www.getasthmahelp.org or call 1-866-EZLUNGS (395-8647) to get more information on asthma triggers, medications, and resources in your area.
- Contact your child’s physician about your concerns.
- Talk to your child’s physician about developing or revising an asthma action plan.
- Call your local county health department.
What is Asthma?

- Asthma is a chronic disease of the lungs that affects over 646,000 adults and 215,000 children in Michigan. Symptoms may include coughing, wheezing; feelings of chest tightness or pressure; and/or shortness of breath.

- Once a person has been diagnosed with asthma, they will always have the disease, even if their asthma symptoms are mild or seem to stop.

- Asthma can’t be cured, but can be controlled. Expect nothing less.

- Asthma is controlled by using asthma medications and by avoiding the things that make a child’s asthma symptoms worse.

- Asthma attacks are caused by or “triggered” by many things, including:
  - use of tobacco and secondhand smoke
  - dust mites
  - mold
  - animal dander
  - cockroaches
  - pollen
  - cold air
  - perfumes and strong odors
  - pollution
  - respiratory infections – bacterial or viral
  - exercise
  - emotional influences/stress
  - weather changes
  - food additives

  Triggers may differ from one person to the next, but the most common triggers are second hand smoke, dust mites, mold, animal dander, and cockroach allergens.

- Asthma causes over 16,000 hospitalizations and 165 deaths in Michigan each year. The rates of these events are higher among children, African-Americans, and women. Most of these events are preventable when a person’s asthma is under good control.

What is Secondhand Smoke?

- Secondhand Smoke consists of the smoke given off by cigarettes, cigars, and pipes, and the smoke exhaled by smokers.

- A mixture of chemicals including at least 50 chemicals known to cause cancer.

- Exposure to secondhand smoke can cause heart disease, cancer and lung disease.

Children are Especially Susceptible to Secondhand Smoke.

- The lungs of children are still developing and they have faster breathing rates than adults do.

- Second hand smoke is a common trigger of asthma attacks. It is also linked to the development of asthma in very young children.

- Infants and children who breathe secondhand smoke are more likely to suffer from:
  - Asthma
  - Bronchitis
  - Pneumonia
  - Respiratory infections
  - Wheezing and coughing spells
  - Ear infections
  - SHS exposure can cause sudden infant death (SIDS).