

# Ban on smoking in cars with children

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Smoking in cars carrying children will soon become illegal in England – in a significant victory for protecting under-18s from second-hand smoke.

The new law was passed following a vote in Parliament with 342 MPs voting for the measure, and 74 voting against. The regulations will come into effect on 1 October 2015.

Second-hand smoke is particularly dangerous for [children](#), placing them at higher risk of respiratory infections, asthma, bacterial meningitis and

cot death.

Passive [smoking](#) has also been linked to around 165,000 new cases of disease among children in the UK each year.

Medical experts and health organisations have welcomed the ban.

Alison Cox, Cancer Research UK's director of cancer prevention, hopes the change in the law will also pave the way for plain tobacco packaging.

"This is a great result and sends a clear message that protecting children's health is a priority," she said.

"This law will protect children from being forced to inhale cancer-causing tobacco smoke when they travel in a car. Now the government must press the accelerator and fulfil a commitment to protect children from tobacco marketing by sending regulations for plain, standardised packaging for tobacco products to Parliament without delay.

"Comprehensive tobacco control measures will protect children from a deadly addiction and save lives. These measures have strong support across the political parties, and are popular with the public."

Half a million children are exposed to second-hand smoke in the family car every week in England.

A large proportion of parents are not aware that most of second-hand smoke is invisible and odourless. This means the smoke they blow out of the car window is just the tip of the iceberg.

People who break the new law in England could face the fixed penalty fine of £50.

Public Health Minister, Jane Ellison, said that alongside awareness campaigns to highlight the dangers of second-hand smoke, Public Health England will also be running a campaign later this year to highlight the new law.

Bans on smoking in cars with children already exist in certain states in the US, including California, as well as parts of Canada and Australia.

The fact that 200,000 children take up smoking every year nationwide is also cause for concern.

Standardised packaging is considered the next step towards protecting the younger population from the dangers of smoking.

Deborah Arnott, Chief Executive of health charity ASH, said: "Taken together, the regulations on smoking in cars and standardised packaging will help de-normalise smoking and protect children from this deadly addiction."

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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