

Quit calls for state-wide ban on smoking in cars with children, with new data showing overwhelming community support

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Almost 9 out of 10 Victorian smokers think that smoking should not be allowed in cars when children are present, according to figures released today.

The 2006 data, from The Cancer Council Victoria, also reveals that less than 5% of all Victorians think smoking in cars when children are present *should definitely be allowed*.

Acting Director of Quit, Ms Suzie Stillman, said the combination of enormous community support and mounting evidence that the confined space of a car increases exposure to second-hand smoke meant it was timely for the State Government to consider a ban on smoking in cars when children are present.

"Banning smoking in cars when children are present would be a significant step in protecting children against the harms of second-hand smoke."

"It sends a very clear message that the seriousness of exposure to second-hand smoke as a health issue should not be underestimated."

"Children and babies are unable to escape from the poisons contained in cigarette smoke when confined in a car with a smoker and they are particularly susceptible to illnesses such as pneumonia, middle ear infection and asthma attacks when exposed to second-hand smoke."

Ms Stillman said the community would embrace the move to make cars carrying children completely smokefree.

"There is such tremendous public support, from both smokers and non-smokers, for banning smoking in cars carrying kids, that we can be confident any legislative change in this area will be largely self-enforcing, and welcomed by the community."

"Several laws already exist to regulate the car environment with the safety of children in mind, including seatbelt use and special fittings for child passengers. Eliminating second-hand smoke in cars when children are present is a natural extension of this."

Ms Stillman said as well as protecting children against exposure to second-hand smoke in cars, a ban may also help to de-normalise smoking in the eyes of children.

Suzie Stillman is available for comment on 03 9635 5526 or 0419 533 869

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Table 1

Attitudes about smoking *in cars where children are present*, 2004 - 2006

Should smoking be allowed in cars where children are present?	2004	2005	2006
	(N=2998)	(N=2999)	(N=2996)
	%	%	%
No, not allowed	89.6	91.0	92.1
Yes, allowed	5.0	5.3	4.1
Maybe allowed/Don't know/Can't say	5.4	3.7	3.8

Table 2

Attitudes about smoking *in cars where children are present*, by smoking status, 2004 - 2006

Should smoking be allowed in cars where children are present?		2004	2005	2006
		(N=2998)	(N=2999)	(N=2996)
		%	%	%
Smokers	No, not allowed	85.1	86.3	88.2
	Yes, allowed	8.0	6.6	6.0
	Maybe allowed/Don't know/Can't say	6.9	7.1	5.8
Former smokers	No, not allowed	90.9	90.8	90.6
	Yes, allowed	4.3	6.1	4.8
	Maybe allowed/Don't know/Can't say	4.9	3.0	4.6
Never smokers	No, not allowed	90.8	92.8	94.3
	Yes, allowed	4.1	4.4	3.1
	Maybe allowed/Don't know/Can't say	5.1	2.8	2.7

http://www.cancervic.org.au/media/media-releases/archived_media_releases/2007_media_releases/media_releases_july_2007/smoking_in_cars.html