

# SECONDHAND SMOKING

"The evidence is now indisputable that secondhand smoke is an alarming public health hazard, responsible for thousands of premature deaths among nonsmokers each year."

—RICHARD CARMONA, U.S. SURGEON GENERAL, 2006

Secondhand smoke, also known as passive smoking or environmental tobacco smoke, is a mixture of sidestream smoke from the burning tip of the cigarette and mainstream smoke exhaled by the smoker. More toxic per unit of tobacco than mainstream smoke, sidestream smoke is the major component of secondhand smoke. At least fifty carcinogenic chemicals have been identified in secondhand smoke.

Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke experience immediate cardiovascular and respiratory damage. Long-term effects of secondhand smoke exposure include lung cancer and coronary heart disease. Expectant mothers, fetuses, and infants exposed to secondhand smoke face higher risk of adverse health consequences.

Smoke-free policies provide protection against exposure to secondhand smoke. Today, nearly half the world's children are exposed to an unacceptable health hazard: tobacco smoke in their daily environment. To secure every child's right to a healthy future, adult smoking should be highly regulated or eliminated, especially among parents and expectant parents. Exposure to secondhand smoke remains one of the world's most critical environmental health hazards, leading all other lethal indoor air contaminants—including wood fires, asbestos particles, and radon.



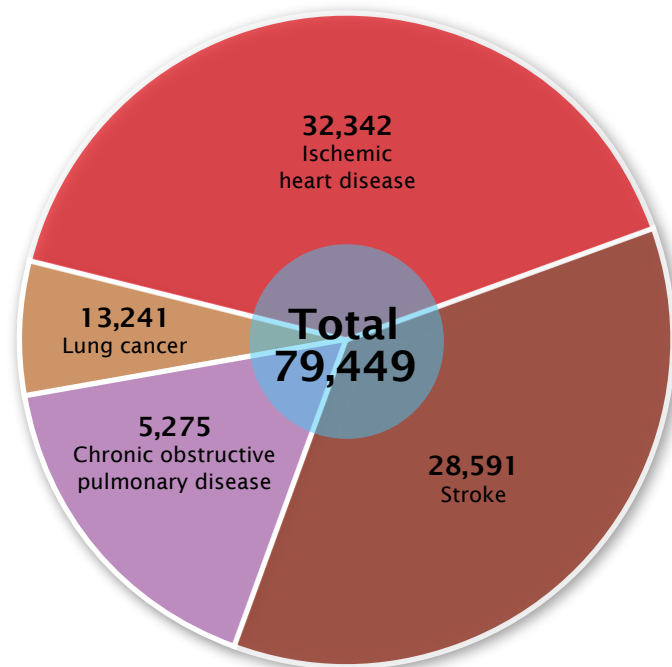
**NONSMOKERS EXPOSED** to secondhand smoke at home or at work increase their heart disease risk by 25 to 30 percent and lung cancer risk by at least 20 to 30 percent.

AFTER THE implementation of comprehensive smoke-free laws in New Zealand, bar patrons are exposed to 90 percent less secondhand smoke.

SMOKING IN THE home raises by 5 percent a child's probability of visiting a hospital emergency room for a respiratory illness.

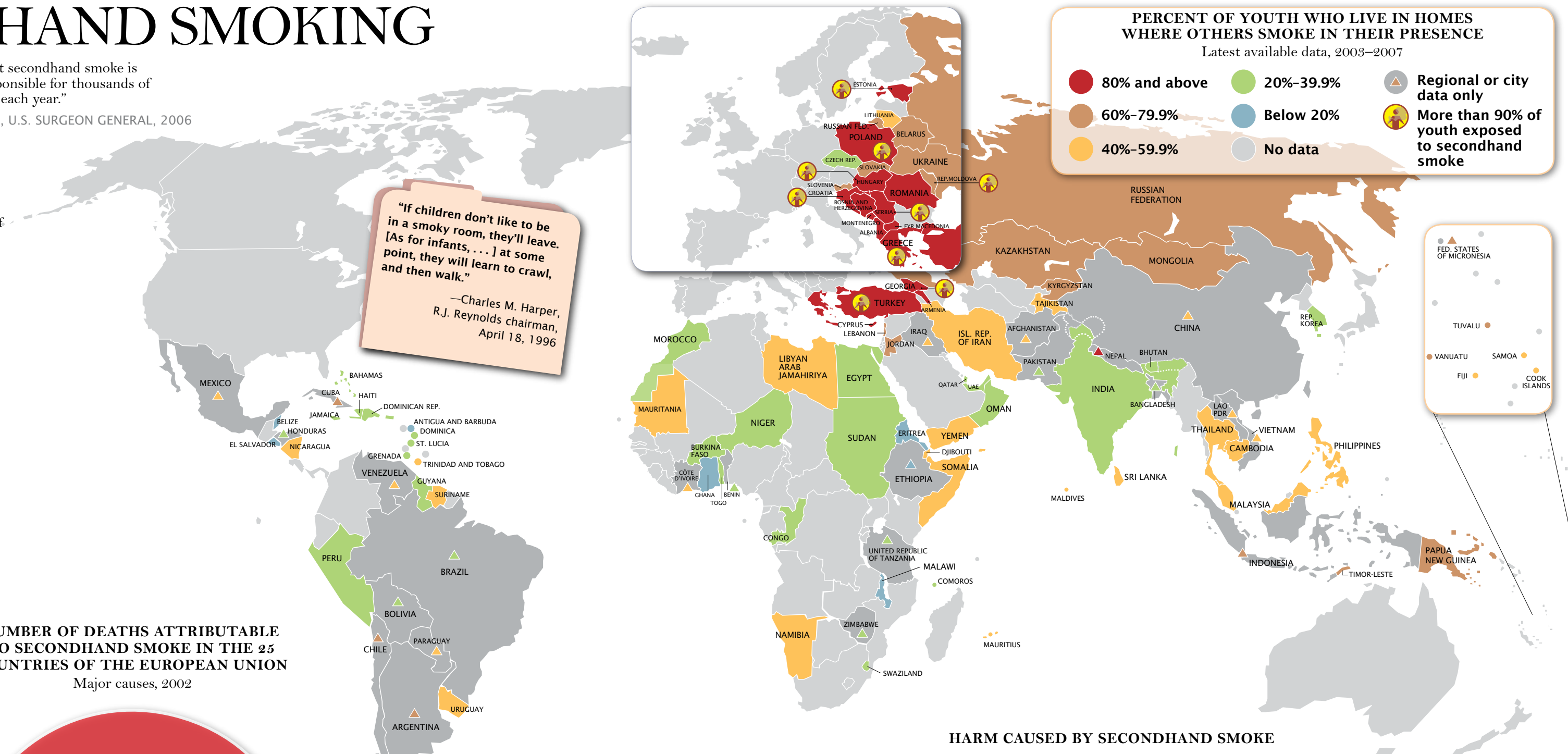
THERE IS NO risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Breathing even a little secondhand smoke can be harmful to your health.

**NUMBER OF DEATHS ATTRIBUTABLE TO SECONDHAND SMOKE IN THE 25 COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**  
Major causes, 2002



*"If children don't like to be in a smoky room, they'll leave. [As for infants, . . .] at some point, they will learn to crawl, and then walk."*

—Charles M. Harper, R.J. Reynolds chairman, April 18, 1996



**HARM CAUSED BY SECONDHAND SMOKE**

- Adults**
  - Sufficient Evidence**
    - Coronary artery disease
    - Lung cancer
    - Reproductive effects in women
  - Suggestive Evidence**
    - Stroke
    - Nasal sinus cancer
    - Breast cancer
    - Atherosclerosis
    - Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic respiratory symptoms, asthma, impaired lung function
    - Preterm delivery



- Children**
  - Sufficient Evidence**
    - Middle ear disease
    - Respiratory symptoms, e.g., cough, wheeze
    - Impaired lung function
    - SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome)
    - Lower respiratory illness, including infections
    - Low birth weight
  - Suggestive Evidence**
    - Brain tumors
    - Lymphoma
    - Leukemia