

# Nursing Note

## Jeri Cress, Sunset Nurse

### Secondhand Smoke

Breathing secondhand smoke can be harmful to children's health including asthma, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), bronchitis and pneumonia and ear infections. The developing lungs of young children are severely affected by exposure to secondhand smoke for several reasons including that children are still developing physically, have higher breathing rates than adults, and have little control over their indoor environments. Children receiving high doses of secondhand smoke, such as those with smoking mothers, run the greatest risk of damaging health effects.

#### **A few basic actions can protect children from secondhand smoke:**

- Choose not to smoke in your home and car and do not allow family and visitors to do so. Infants and toddlers are especially vulnerable to the health risks from secondhand smoke.
- Do not allow childcare providers or others who work in your home to smoke.
- **Until you can quit, choose to smoke outside.** Moving to another room or opening a window is not enough to protect your children.