

Ninety-six percent of New Zealand smokers support smokefree cars containing preschool children

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Abstract

New Zealand and international research shows that smoking in cars, even with the windows down, produces dangerous levels of pollutants.^{1,2} These levels are far higher than World Health Organization air quality guidelines for particulates in ambient air.³

While at least 10 Australian and North American jurisdictions (including California) have banned smoking in cars carrying children,^{4–13} New Zealand officials have been reported as hesitant about considering such a move.¹⁴ Perceived questions about public support appear to have contributed to lack of progress on this issue in New Zealand.¹⁴

In a number of areas of Australia and North America, support from smokers (85% or over) and non smokers (90% or over) has been reported for banning smoking in cars with children inside.^{15–18} In a 1997 Wellington area survey, 94% agreed that cars with children in them should be smokefree (86% of smokers).¹⁵ In a 2004 New Zealand wide survey, 76% disagreed that it is “okay” to smoke around non smokers inside cars even when there are windows down.¹⁶

Recommended Citation

Thomson, G., Wilson, N., Weerasekera, D., Edwards, R. (2008). Ninety-six percent of New Zealand smokers support smokefree cars containing preschool children. *New Zealand Medical Journal*, 121 (1285), 139-140.

Link To PDF: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19079449>