

Dear childcare facility,

Children are at a higher risk for health impacts from smoke. They're a sensitive group because they breathe in more for their body mass, their lungs are still developing, and they often have a higher activity level than adults. Parents and others who care for kids need to take special precautions to protect kids when the air is smoky.

It's crucial to know if the air outdoors and inside is safe enough for kids to spend time in.

To find [current air quality conditions](#) and **wildfire/smoke forecasts** in your area go to:
<http://wasmoke.blogspot.com/>

To help you decide if **it's safe for kids to play or be outside**, use [this guide](#) we've developed (it's meant for schools, but helpful in general).

Learn about health effects and how to [keep indoor air cleaner inside](#) on our website.

Learn more about protecting children's health, use this guide provided by the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units for [during wildfires](#): and [after wildfires](#):

[What about masks](#)? Be aware that masks don't work well on small children or people with beards due to issues of fit/seal and it needs to be the right kind of mask. People with pre-existing heart and lung conditions should ask their doctor before using a mask because a mask can make it more difficult to breathe.

In addition to kids, people with pre-existing lung and heart disease (such as asthma, COPD and coronary artery disease), or respiratory infections (like pneumonia), pregnant women, elderly, and smokers are especially vulnerable to exposure to smoke.

Symptoms of smoke exposure include minor irritation such as burning eyes, runny nose and coughing. There are also much more serious effects such as aggravation of existing heart and lung diseases that can be life-threatening—like triggering asthma attacks. Always contact 911 if you're having breathing difficulty or other serious health problems.

To learn more about health & smoke, visit www.doh.wa.gov/smokefromfires