

PARENT'S SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO ACT INFORMATION SHEET

Why did the province pass the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2006?

The provincial government passed the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2006 to protect the health of all Ontarians. Research shows that 80%- 90% of young people start smoking before the age of 19. This provincial legislation aims to prevent young people from smoking and reduce their exposure of second-hand smoke in public places such as schools.

The *Smoke-Free Ontario, 2006* says it's against Provincial law for anyone to:

- Sell cigarettes to youth under 19 years old.
- Buy cigarettes for youth under 19 years old.
- Supply or give cigarettes (even one) to youth under 19 years old.
- Smoke anywhere on school property including playing fields, courtyards, driveways, parking lots and in cars in the parking lots.

Who is responsible for enforcing Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2006?

In York Region, The Smoke-Free Ontario Act is enforced by Tobacco Control Officers who are responsible for inspecting places like schools, tobacco retail stores and hospitals, as well as educating the community about Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

What are the consequences of breaking the law?

Individuals caught supplying or selling tobacco to anyone under 19 years old can be fined up to \$4,000. Individuals can also be fined for smoking or holding a lighted cigarette on school property. This includes any vehicles on school property. Retailers caught supplying or selling tobacco to anyone under 19 can be fined up to \$20 000 and can lose their ability to sell tobacco.

Is it illegal for me to give my son/daughter who is under 19 years old cigarettes?

Yes! It is illegal to give cigarettes to your children who are under 19 years old. Section of the *Smoke-Free Ontario, 2006* makes it an offence to sell or supply tobacco to anyone under the age of 19 years. Parents have been found guilty and fined (\$120) for this offence.

My son, who is under 16, was charged for smoking on school property. Can he send payment of the fine to the court office?

No! When a youth is under 16 years old, provincial law does not allow the Tobacco Control Officer to issue a 'ticket'. The offence must be dealt with by the courts. The youth will be issued a summons to appear in court at a specific time, date and location. Parents will be notified by a Tobacco Control Officer. Youth over 16 years of age may be ticketed or may be summoned to appear in court; their parents will not be notified.

Why does the *Smoke-Free Ontario, 2006* prohibit smoking on school property?

By making school property smoke-free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, we are sending a clear message that smoking is unhealthy and young people need to be protected from second-hand smoke.

Who can I call when I think a store is selling cigarettes to youth under 19?

You can anonymously call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 and a Tobacco Control Officer will investigate. If found selling or supplying tobacco to under age youth, they will be charged.