

SECONDHAND SMOKE: KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS OF LOUISIANANS

Secondhand smoke, also referred to as environmental tobacco smoke, is the smoke exhaled by a smoker from a lit tobacco product (i.e., cigarette, cigar, or pipe). Numerous studies have confirmed that exposure to secondhand smoke causes many serious illnesses in nonsmokers, including heart disease, respiratory problems, low birth weight, and sudden infant death. It is estimated that in the United States secondhand smoke is responsible for 3,000 deaths per year from lung cancer among nonsmokers.

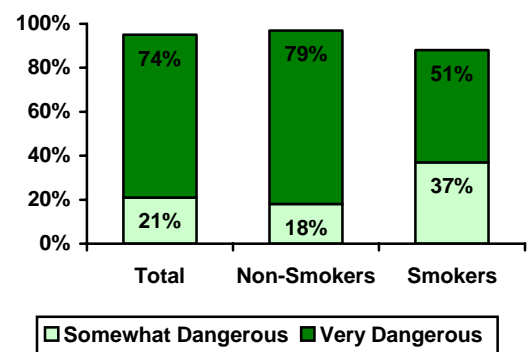
For the purposes of this report, unless otherwise noted, secondhand smoke is specifically defined as smoke exhaled from another person's cigarette.

THE MAJORITY OF LOUISIANANS BELIEVE THAT BREATHING SECONDHAND SMOKE IS VERY DANGEROUS

Nearly three-quarters of Louisiana residents believe that breathing secondhand smoke is very dangerous. Notably, even half of smokers agree.

Women were significantly more likely than men and African-American residents were significantly more likely than White residents to state that breathing secondhand smoke is very dangerous.

BREATHING SECONDHAND SMOKE IS DANGEROUS

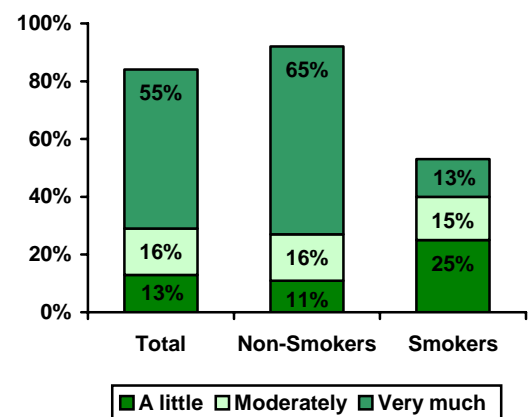


DESPITE THEIR BELIEFS ABOUT THE DANGERS, LOUISIANANS STILL HAVE A FAIR AMOUNT OF TOLERANCE FOR SECONDHAND SMOKE

Only slightly more than half of Louisiana residents say that being exposed to other people's cigarette smoke bothers them very much. While this feeling is more common among non-smokers, less than two-thirds of non-smokers say that secondhand smoke exposure bothers them very much.

Women were significantly more likely than men and African American residents were significantly more likely than White residents to state that breathing secondhand smoke bothered them very much.

BOTHERED BY SECONDHAND SMOKE



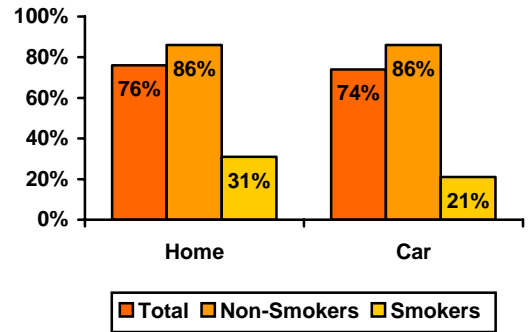
MOST LOUISIANANS TRY TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM SECONDHAND SMOKE

More than three-quarters of Louisiana residents do not allow smoking in their homes, regardless of whether or not a smoker lives there.

Three-quarters of Louisiana residents do not allow smoking in their cars.

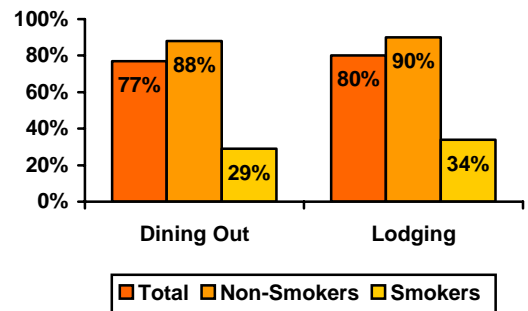
Note: This only includes people who own a car or have a car they ride in regularly.

SMOKE-FREE POLICIES



When given an option, the majority of Louisiana residents prefer to sit in non-smoking sections of restaurants and stay in non-smoking hotel/motel rooms. Not surprisingly, these practices are substantially less common among current smokers.

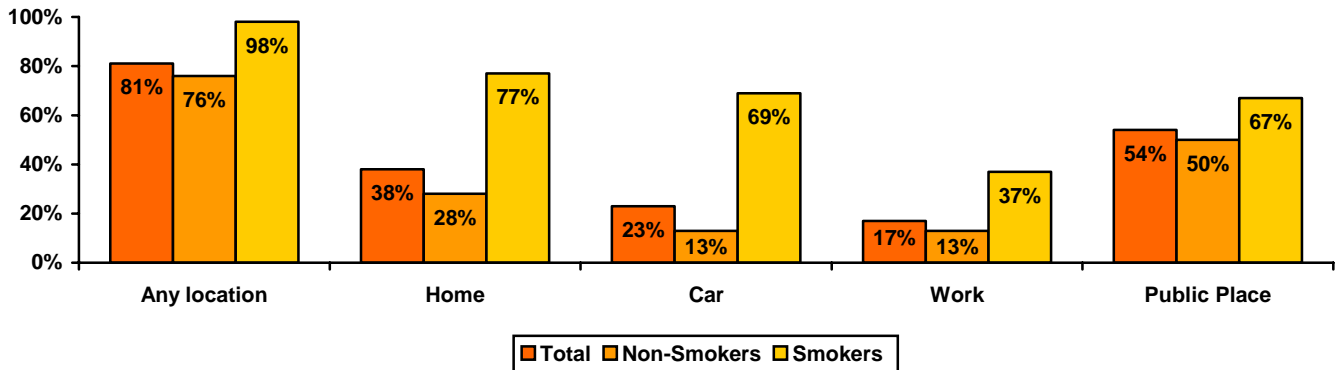
REQUEST NON-SMOKING ACCOMMODATIONS



DESPITE THEIR EFFORTS, THE MAJORITY OF LOUISIANANS ARE STILL EXPOSED TO SECONDHAND SMOKE

About four out of every five Louisiana residents reported exposure to secondhand smoke either in their home, at work, in a car, or in another location during the past seven days. Nearly all current smokers reported being exposed to secondhand smoke during the past seven days. More than three-quarters of non-smokers had also been exposed, most commonly in a public place.

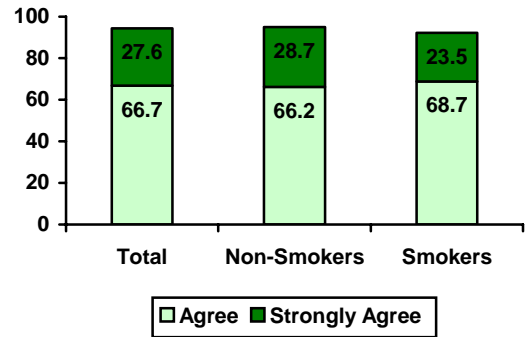
PAST WEEK SECONDHAND SMOKE EXPOSURE



MOST LOUISIANANS BELIEVE IN PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST SECONDHAND SMOKE

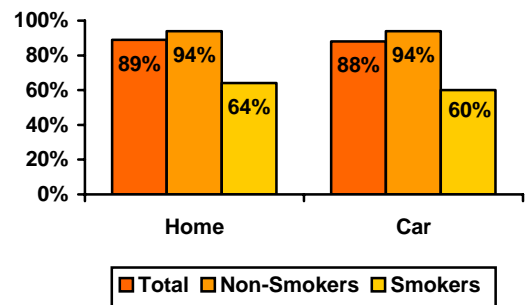
The vast majority of Louisiana residents agree that inhaling smoke from a parent’s cigarette harms the health of babies and children. Surprisingly, only slightly more than a quarter strongly agree that secondhand smoke is harmful to children.

SHS IS HARMFUL TO CHILDREN



Nearly nine out of 10 Louisiana residents prohibit smoking in their homes and cars in the presence of children. Despite holding similar beliefs as non-smokers about the dangers of secondhand smoke exposure to children, smokers are substantially less likely to make prohibitions against smoking in the presence of children.

SMOKE-FREE POLICIES IN PRESENCE OF CHILDREN

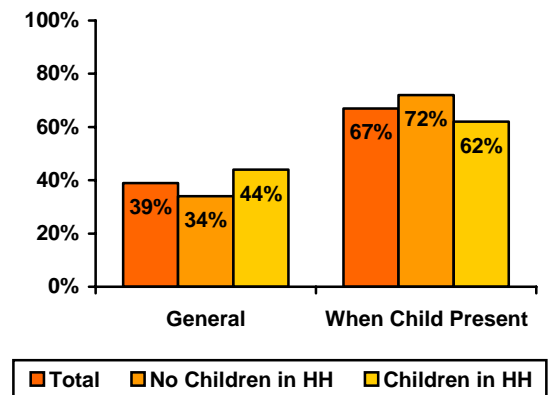


MANY CHILDREN ARE AT RISK AT HOME

As stated above, most Louisiana households have banned smoking in the presence of children. However, in households where both children and a smoker reside, more than half allow smoking in some or all parts of the home and less than two-thirds have banned smoking in the presence of children.

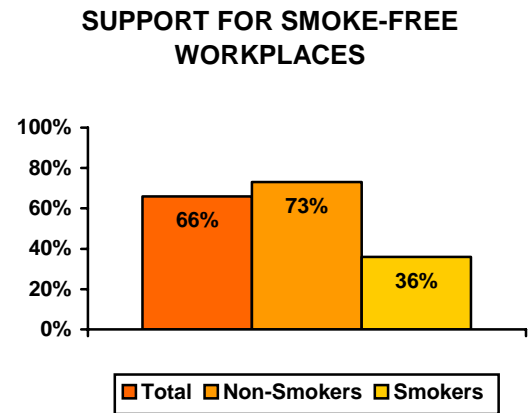
Note: The survey found that about 14% of Louisiana households have a current smoker and at least one child under age 18 living at home.

SMOKING BANS IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH SMOKERS



MANY LOUISIANANS SUPPORT RESTRICTIONS ON SMOKING IN THE WORKPLACE

Two-thirds of Louisiana residents think that smoking should not be allowed at all in indoor work areas. Support for smoke-free workplaces was more common among women than men and older workers than younger workers. There were no significant racial differences in support for smoke-free workplace policies.

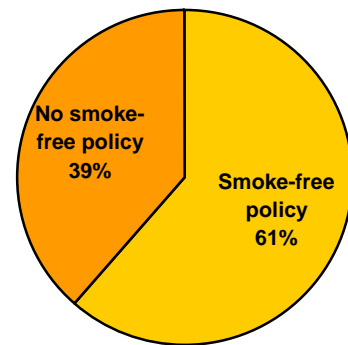


NOT ALL LOUISIANANS ARE PROTECTED FROM SECONDHAND SMOKE AT WORK

More than one-third of Louisiana residents reported that smoking is allowed at their workplace.

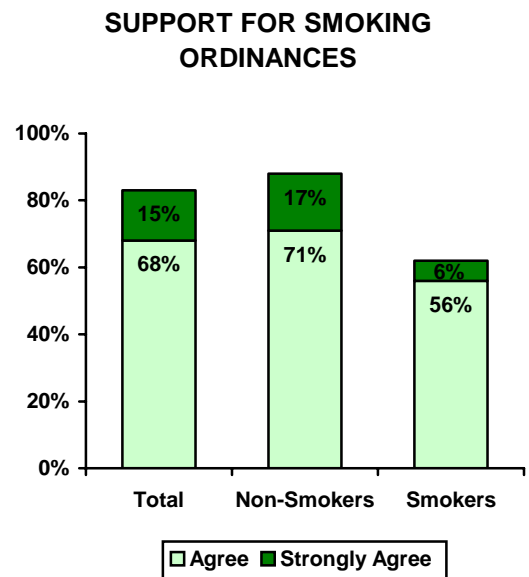
There are clear disparities in smoke-free workplaces. Men and African-Americans were significantly less likely to be employed in a workplace with a smoke-free policy. Younger and less educated residents were also less likely to have smoke-free workplaces.

WORKPLACE POLICIES

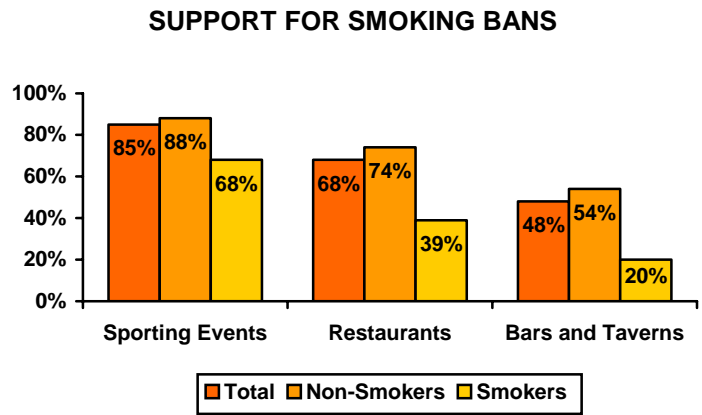


THERE IS MODERATE SUPPORT FOR SMOKING RESTRICTIONS IN PUBLIC PLACES

The vast majority of Louisiana residents would support an ordinance in their city or parish restricting smoking in most indoor or public places, but their level of support could be strengthened. Only about one out of every 10 Louisiana residents strongly agrees that they would support local ordinances restricting smoking in most indoor or public places.



While there is clear support for smoking bans at indoor sporting events, there is less support for smoking bans in restaurants, and even less support for smoking bans in bars and taverns. Less than half of Louisiana residents support smoke-free policies for bars and taverns.



SUMMARY:

Louisiana residents seem to have a good deal of general knowledge about the dangers of secondhand smoke exposure. The majority have already made efforts to protect themselves in their homes and cars.

However, despite their knowledge, many non-smoking Louisiana residents seem to tolerate and make concessions for smokers. Even though they support local smoke-free ordinances, many non-smokers do not support smoking bans in bars and taverns.

Youth are at substantial risk for secondhand smoke exposure. It appears that knowledge about the impact of secondhand smoke exposure on children in particular can be strengthened, especially among smokers.

Finally, many Louisiana workers are being exposed to secondhand smoke at work. Smoke-free workplace policies need to be strongly encouraged.

DATA SOURCES:

2003-04 Louisiana Social Climate Survey