

Tobacco Alliance FAQ: Children's Services

What is a Tobacco Control Alliance?

Tobacco control is a co-ordinated, comprehensive approach to reduce smoking prevalence. Tobacco control alliances are local partnerships within local authority boundaries working together to effectively reduce smoking rates and tackle health inequalities.

How does tobacco affect young people?

- Smoking is an addiction of childhood; two-thirds of adult smokers report taking up smoking before the age of 18, and smoking significantly effects outcomes in adult life ([ASH, Young people and smoking](#))
- Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of SHS exposure, which is linked to an increased risk of a range of illnesses like asthma and sudden infant death syndrome.
- Nationally 27% of households with a smoker fall below the poverty line. If these smokers quit, **324, 530** dependent **children** would be **lifted out of poverty** ([ASH, 2015](#)).



Young people protest outside the British American Tobacco AGM

The role of Children's Services in tackling tobacco

Under the Children's Act 2004, local authorities have a duty to promote co-operation between each of the authority's relevant partners to improve the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes for children. Reducing smoking rates by playing an active role in the work of a local tobacco alliance can contribute positively towards achieving these outcomes. Additionally, as a statutory member of local health and wellbeing boards, the Director of Children's Services has a role in driving the development of the local joint health and wellbeing strategy.

What can Children's Services gain from being on the alliance?

Evidence shows that the best way of reducing youth smoking is to have comprehensive tobacco control policies in place that apply to the whole population (see [NICE, PH14](#)). By joining the local tobacco control alliance, Children's Services can contribute and benefit to strategies to both reduce smoking prevalence and prevent youth uptake. Examples of work include:

- **Deliver activity to help parents quit** through children's centres and similar locations
- **Supporting the development of smokefree parks** and play areas
- **Supporting the development of policies to help foster families and adopters to quit or to keep homes and cars smoke free**
- **Input and expertise from other alliance partners**, for example smoking cessation services may be able to provide training and information on very brief advice to help parents stop smoking.



'Play Smokefree' – Smokefree Coventry

What can Children's Services contribute to the alliance's work?

- The presence of Children's Services on the alliance will **strengthen advocacy calls around measures to reduce youth smoking**.
- **Contributing to work on reducing youth smoking prevalence** alongside alliance partners in education, schools, etc.
- Providing information to trading standards to help **take action on illicit and niche tobacco**.

