



**The Asthma Foundation
of Western Australia Inc**

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...Helping People Breathe Better...



MEDIA RELEASE
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IS YOUR BABY CHOKING WHILE YOU ARE SMOKING?

New statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reveal that over 42% of teenage mothers smoke and this is despite repeated warnings that smoking while pregnant and around newborns increases the risk of the baby developing Asthma, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and being born an unhealthy birth weight.

The Asthma Foundation of WA's Newborn Asthma Parental Smoking (NAPS) Project aims to promote the message "Care for my air" and encourages pregnant women and new mothers and fathers to create smoke free environments for their fetus and newborn.

Senior Health Promotion Officer, Cherise Hawkins said "Smoking during pregnancy makes it harder for an unborn baby to get the oxygen and nourishment the baby needs to survive and it is alarming to hear that across all ages, 20% of non-Indigenous pregnant women smoke and over 50% of Indigenous pregnant women smoke".

Some tips on how to make your home smoke free: Try to quit smoking (this includes your partner), smoke outside and not in the car, ask people to not smoke around you and your baby, and remove all ashtrays from inside your car and home.

"Quitting smoking at any stage during pregnancy will provide health benefits for both the woman and her baby, however there is no safe level of smoking, as even a few cigarettes a day means many poisons will be in your growing baby's food supply. There are over 4000 poisonous chemicals in cigarettes and cigarette smoke", Cherise said.

Educators from the Asthma Foundation of WA's West Perth office were in Kununurra on Wednesday 23rd April conducting Brief Intervention Training for Smoking Cessation to the staff at the Kununurra Regional Hospital.

If you need help with quitting smoking or would like more information on the NAPS Project please contact the Asthma Foundation of WA on 9289 3641 or hpo@asthmawa.org.au. Alternatively please visit the website at www.smokefreebaby.org.au.

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Please see the attached photo featuring NAPS staff and the Asthma Foundation CEO. From left to right: Cherise Hawkins (Senior Health Promotion Officer), John Gummer (CEO), Amy Murphy (Health Promotion Officer)