

Views on Smoke-Free Policies

2011 survey of licensed foster care providers in
Cottonwood, Jackson, and Redwood Counties

Family Services Network – Start Noticing, a coalition working to eliminate the harmful effects of tobacco use and exposure, especially among vulnerable youth, through community engagement, education, and policy implementation, received a Tobacco-Free Communities grant from the Minnesota Department of Health. Start Noticing contracted with Wilder Research to conduct research and evaluation as a part of this grant, including studying issues related to current tobacco use practices and policies, as well as attitudes about tobacco use practices and policies. This summary provides results of surveys conducted in the fall of 2011 with foster care providers in Cottonwood, Jackson, and Redwood counties. All providers are licensed by the Department of Human Services except one provider who is licensed by Lutheran Social Services.

Study results will inform Start Noticing’s ongoing efforts to engage and educate its communities to promote smoke-free policies that protect vulnerable populations. While findings differ across counties and demographic sub-groups, this summary highlights combined data due to the small sample size. Please refer to the last page of this report for more information about study methods and demographics of study participants.

Overall perceptions

The study found strong support among licensed foster care providers for smoke-free policies. Of those who responded to the survey, the majority of licensed foster care providers:

- Believe smoking should not be allowed at all in licensed foster care homes (82%).
- Believe “the risk of harm is always there once smoking is allowed in a home” (82%).

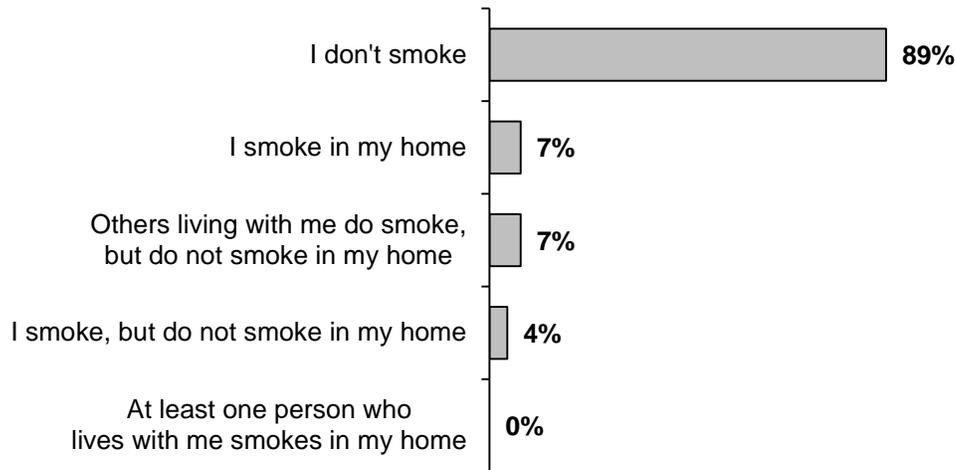
A potential issue to address when introducing smoke-free policies in licensed foster care homes in Cottonwood, Jackson, and Redwood counties is:

- Less awareness of thirdhand smoke in general as well as less awareness of its harmful effects when compared to awareness of secondhand smoke.

Current tobacco smoke practices and policies

The majority of licensed foster care providers do not smoke at all (89%). Of the respondents who do smoke (11%), few do so in their homes (7%). Few respondents also live with smokers (7%).

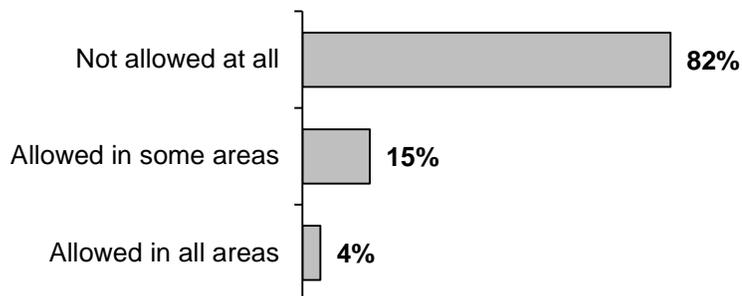
1. Current smoking activity in home (n=27)



Attitudes about tobacco smoke practices and policies

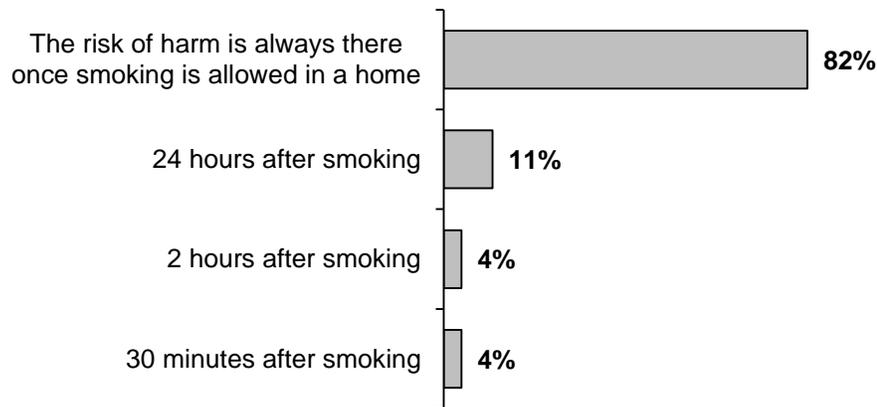
The majority of licensed foster care providers think smoking should not be allowed at all in licensed foster care homes (82%). The remaining respondents believe it should be allowed in “some areas” (15%) or “all areas” (4%).

2. “In licensed foster care homes, do you think that smoking should be...”



When asked questions about their attitude and awareness of secondhand smoke, thirdhand smoke, and its associated risks, licensed foster care providers are more aware of the risks caused by secondhand smoke than thirdhand smoke. Most providers believe the harm caused by secondhand smoke “is always there once smoking is allowed in a home” (82%); a few believe there is no harm after 24 hours (11%). The remaining few believe there is no harm two hours after smoking (4%) and thirty minutes after smoking (4%). Over half knew about thirdhand smoke prior to the survey (58%). Please see Table 3-5.

3. “In a home, do you think the harm caused by secondhand smoke ends...” (n=101)



4. Attitudes about secondhand smoke

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
It could be harmful to my health.	93%	7%	0%	0%
It is an annoyance	85%	7%	4%	4%
It is not something I worry about	7%	11%	4%	78%

5. Attitudes about thirdhand smoke

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
It could be harmful to my health.	64%	28%	4%	4%
It is an annoyance	69%	23%	0%	8%
It is not something I worry about	8%	21%	25%	46%

Study methods

Licensed foster care providers in Cottonwood, Jackson, and Redwood counties were invited to complete surveys about tobacco smoke practices and policies. Start Noticing mailed survey packets to providers and followed up with reminder notices two weeks later.

Providers were also invited to complete the survey over the phone, if desired. Start Noticing provided a drawing for a \$75 grocery gift card in each county as incentive for participation. The surveys were mailed to 44 licensed foster care providers and 26 were completed.

Wilder Research provided consultation, developed and modified data collection instruments, oversaw the data collection process, provided data entry, analysis, and reporting.

Demographics

6. Licensed foster care providers' county of residence (n=27)

Cottonwood	Jackson	Redwood
26%	22%	52%

7. Licensed foster care provider demographics

Gender	n=27
Female	100%
Male	0%
Age	n=27
18-25	0%
26-64	93%
65+	7%
Race/Ethnicity*	n=26
Caucasian	100%
Of Color	0%
African/African American/Black	0%
American Indian/Native American	0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0%
Hispanic/Latino	0%
Other	0%
Household size	n=26
1	4%
2	19%
3-4	38%
5+	38%

Length of time licensed foster care provider	n=27
6 months or less	4%
1-2 years	4%
3-4 years	35%
5+ years	54%
Number of children five years or younger living in home	n=27
No children	48%
1 child	23%
2 children	19%
3+ children	11%
Number of children 6 to 17 years old living in home	n=26
No children	35%
1 child	27%
2 children	23%
3+ children	15%

**Respondents were asked to check all that apply.*

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For more information: This summary presents highlights from surveys conducted in 2011 in Cottonwood, Jackson, and Redwood County. For more information about this report, contact Denise Huynh at Wilder Research, 651-280-2012.

Author: Denise Huynh, March 2012