

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on children and young people.

Smoking impacts on the lives of children and young people throughout their childhood, from pregnancy to adolescence. In Wales, 17% of pregnant people are recorded as smokers at their initial assessment, which is known to increase the risk of complications during pregnancy and beyond such as low birth weight, premature birth and stillbirth¹. We know that the majority of children do not smoke, however 4% of 11-16 years olds identify as current smokers, and this rises with age with 9% of 15-16 year olds currently smoking in Wales². We also know that exposure to smoking in pregnancy, early childhood and adolescence is not equally distributed across society. Children and young people from the most deprived areas are much more likely to be exposed to smoking throughout their childhood, increasing their harms from second-hand smoke and risk of taking up smoking themselves. This contributes to generational smoking patterns which worsen health inequalities.

Future Generations is one of the key themes of Smoke-Free Wales Tobacco Control Strategy, and there is a focus on undertaking an integrated approach to tobacco control to enable a smoke-free childhood for all children in Wales. This includes work in the following areas by 2030:

- Create an environment where smoke-free is the norm for all children and young people in Wales.
- Increase the proportion of smoke-free pregnancies in Wales.
- Promote a smoke-free childhood and aim to break generational smoking patterns to achieve a smoke-free generation.
- Make smoke free the norm to deter social smoking amongst children and young people.
- Increase the proportion of teenagers and young people who remain smoke-free by reducing the uptake of smoking, whilst also discouraging the uptake of e-cigarettes or other nicotine products in teenagers and young people.
- Identify the groups of children and young people who are at higher risk of taking up smoking, and work with them to identify ways to help them to remain smoke-free.

¹ Welsh Government. 2020. Maternity and birth statistics: 2020. Available at: <https://gov.wales/maternity-and-birth-statistics-2020-html#section-70306>

² SHRN. 2021. Student Health and Wellbeing in Wales: Report of the 2019/20 School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing Survey. Available at: https://www.shrn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SHRN-NR-FINAL-23_03_21-en.pdf

- Identify priority groups of children and young people who have a higher prevalence of smoking, and work with them to understand their reasons for smoking, and provide evidence based targeted support to quit smoking.

The strategy and delivery plans will therefore have positive impacts for children and young people. No negative impacts for children and young people have been identified.

The strategy and the first delivery plan have been developed by the Tobacco Control Action Plan Implementation Group and overseen by the Tobacco Control Strategic Board, which include representatives from a broad range of organisations. The impact of tobacco on children and young people has been considered throughout the development.

The draft strategy and first delivery plan are being published for consultation on 8 November 2021. This will include a stakeholder conference and engagement work to gather views from the general public including priority groups who have a greater impact from smoking such as pregnant people and children and young people.

Explain how the proposal is likely to impact on children’s rights.

The tobacco control strategy and delivery plans support the following articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- Article 3 – the best interests of the child
- Article 24 - a child's right to the best possible health and protection in consideration of the dangers and risks of environmental pollution.

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themselves. This contributes to generational smoking patterns which worsen health inequalities.

This proposal aims to protect the health of children and young people and this is the main issue that the CRIA focuses upon.

This work helps to maximise the outcomes within the articles of the UNCRC.