No Smoking in Public Places

Every year, secondhand smoke kills about 3,400 people from lung cancer; 46,000 people from heart disease ad 430 infants from SIDS. Historically, smokers have been able to smoke wherever they wanted, but in recent years smoking in public places has become a big issue. Studies show that on average 126 million nonsmokers are exposed to secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke is the act of a nonsmoker breathing in someone else’s smoke. Recently, new laws have been passed that forbid smoking in public places. The decision to ban smoking in public places was a valid decision that protects many people’s health.

The health risks of secondhand smoke are dangerous to adults, but even worse to children. “On June 27th, 2006, the Surgeon General released a major new report on involuntary exposure to secondhand smoke, concluding that secondhand smoke causes disease and death in children and nonsmoking adults. The report finds a causal relationship between secondhand smoke exposure and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and declares that the home is becoming the predominant location for exposure of children and adults to secondhand smoke.” The health risks from secondhand smoke are worse for children because their bodies are still developing and they have no control over the living conditions in the home. Secondhand smoke can cause children to develop asthma, sudden infant death syndrome, bronchitis and middle ear infections.

Families should be able to go out in public for a meal and not have to deal with smoke. In Michigan, prior to 2009, people had to deal with this very often, and could do nothing about it. Now that the new law has passed, families can eat in a smoke free environment. Though it is not uncommon for smokers to find a place outside where they can still smoke. The new law is a minor inconvenience for smokers and a major relief for nonsmokers. Smokers still have a place to smoke but it is not where they want, and nonsmokers do not have to deal with breathing in all the smoke.

However, business owners feel that their rights are being violated. Smokers believe that they also have rights. “Some ordinances have been passed that ban smoking in all restaurants, directly impacting the owner’s right to make decisions regarding how his or her business is run.” These are valid concerns, however, points were made saying “We can ban smoking