

REASONS WHY TOBACCO-FREE ZOOS ARE IMPORTANT

- Children model the behaviors they see in adults. What we allow, we teach. Observing adult tobacco use sends a message to youth that it is an acceptable behavior.
- By the time they reach 12th grade, about (#) % of our state's students use tobacco – more than (#) out of every (#).
- If we want to encourage youth not to use tobacco, we must send consistent messages. At their schools, students are in a learning environment where tobacco use is not allowed on any school property, at any time. In other outdoor recreation settings - such as parks – (#) policies have been adopted in our state that restrict tobacco use.
- Zoos are another outdoor recreation setting where tobacco-free policies have become common. According to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, about one-third of their member zoos have become smoke-free. As of (date), (#) other zoos in our state have tobacco-free policies.
- As is the case in parks and other outdoor recreation settings, cigarette litter is a major contributor to the garbage that pollutes the landscape. The litter ruins the appearance of the beautiful, natural settings of a zoo and can be a potential fire hazard. In addition, it increases maintenance costs and poses a risk of ingestion by animals and toddlers.
- Visitors to the zoo are regularly exposed to secondhand smoke while moving about the many outdoor venues on the property. Not only is the bad smell annoying, it is damaging to the visitor's health. The U. S. Surgeon General has stated that there is no risk-free level of exposure to tobacco smoke. Studies have also shown the damaging effects to the hearts and lungs of animals.