

# No Idling Event Volunteer Pack



CleanAirDay



# No Idling Event Volunteers Toolkit

## Volunteer Pack

Thank you for your interest in becoming a No Idling volunteer. By volunteering you'll be part of Clean Air Day – and help to make the air cleaner and healthier for everyone.

This pack contains everything you need to know, including:

- Health and safety guidance
- What to do at a No Idling event
- How to engage with drivers
- The truth behind some common idling myths
- The health impacts of air pollution

Air pollution is the largest environmental health risk we face today. But unlike other public health issues, lots of people don't know what causes air pollution, how it affects our health or how to reduce our exposure to it – which is what Clean Air Day is all about.

It's a day to raise awareness, share information and take action to improve air quality.

*Thanks for getting involved. Your help will really make a difference. Have a great event!*

## Contents

Volunteer Pack .....	2
Contents .....	3
What is a No Idling event? .....	4
Why is air quality an issue? .....	6
How to engage drivers .....	7
The truth about pollution: Myths busted .....	9
Top tips for your event .....	10
Data collection/Masurement tool .....	11
Create a buzz .....	13
How to reduce your exposure further .....	14
The impact of air pollution on our health .....	15
Health and Safety Guidance .....	17



## What is a No Idling event?

No Idling events are an easy way of tackling a massive cause of air pollution: transport.

Drivers who leave their engines running may not realise it but they're contributing to the poor air quality we all breathe. By explaining how simply turning their engines off, and getting them to take action, we can lower emissions and reduce air pollution.

On the day, you and the team of volunteers will go along to an idling hotspot, and you and another volunteer will approach drivers in a pair and talk to them. You'll either ask them to stop idling and explain why they should turn their engine off, or thank them for not idling if they've switched off already.

No Idling events have an immediate, tangible effect on air quality, so you'll be helping to create cleaner air for everyone.



# No Idling Event Volunteers Toolkit



## Why is idling a problem?

Air pollution comes from a variety of sources, some of which are local, some are from the city as a whole and some from further afield. The proportion of each one depends on the weather, location, and time of day. So wherever you are you'll breathe in some of this pollution.

When a vehicle's idling, the engine is still running and burning fuel without going anywhere. This creates pollution hotspots where air pollution is particularly bad, and contributes to pollution in the wider area.

By turning the engine off when you're stationary, you reduce the amount of fuel a vehicle uses and the emissions released from the tailpipe. It really is that simple!

## Why a No Idling event?

When we carried out a study with King's College London and the Cross River Partnership into the effects of switching off vehicle engines, we found that no idling can reduce peak concentrations of air pollution by a massive 20 to 30%.

With your help at a No Idling event, we'll be able to reach more drivers and explain to them that leaving their engines running creates more emissions and more air pollution – and encourage them to switch their engines off.

Air pollution is the largest environmental health risk we face today. It causes heart and lung diseases, is linked to low birth weight and children's lung development and may even contribute to mental health issues.

By volunteering you'll be helping to protect thousands of people and make your area a cleaner, healthier place to be.





# No Idling Event Volunteers Toolkit

## Why is air quality an issue?

The World Health Organisation and the UK Government recognise that air pollution is the largest environmental health risk we face today. It causes heart and lung diseases, is linked to low birth weight and children's lung development and may even contribute to mental health issues. Every year, air pollution causes up to 36,000 deaths in the UK.

But our air pollution crisis is solvable, cutting down on the pollution we emit is good for us and good for the planet. Your actions can change the air that people breathe.

## Raising awareness and sharing information

Few people know just how bad air pollution is for our health. So it's vitally important that we raise awareness among the general public, and explain how they can create less pollution, how to talk to other people and act together, and how to avoid the worst pollution.

Although there are simple steps we can all take to wipe out air pollution, understanding and controlling air pollution is complicated. The main air pollutants are carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), ground level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulates (PM10 or PM2.5). Each one has different sources, different health effects and different chemical behaviours.

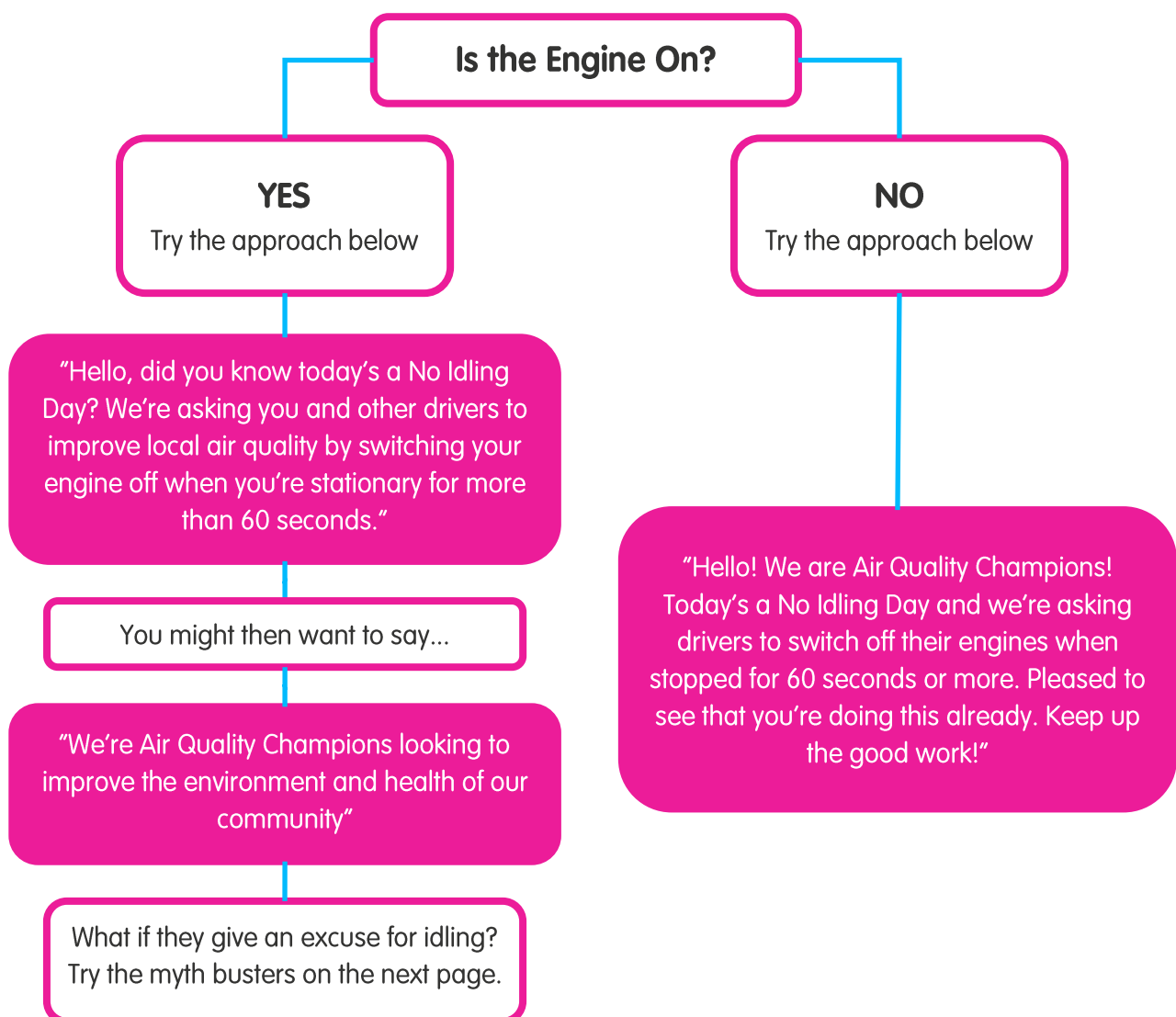
But we do know that by reducing air pollution we are helping people live longer, healthier lives. And a No Idling event is a great way of encouraging drivers to clean up their act.

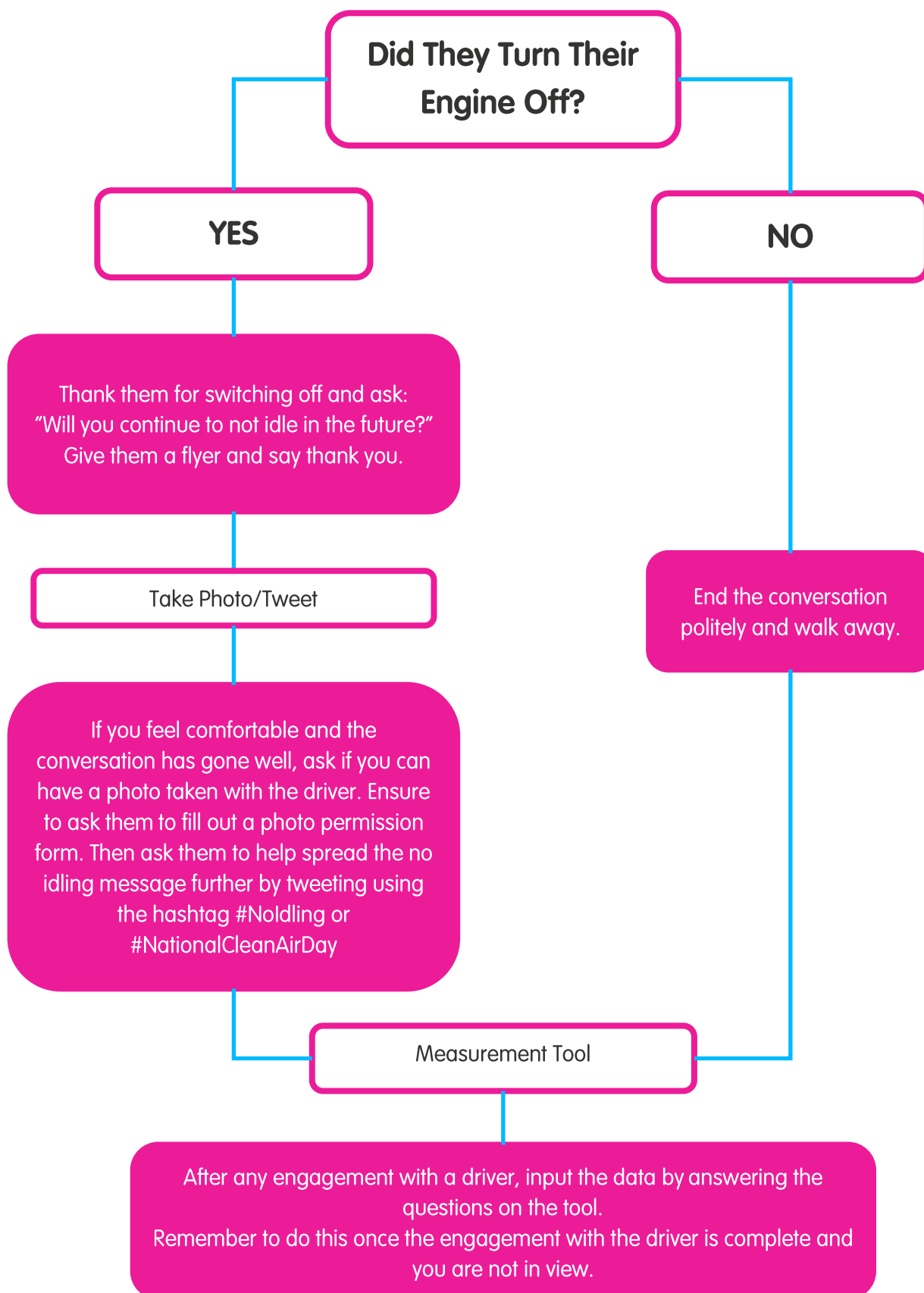
## How to engage drivers

OK. So you're all set. You're equipped with the facts about air pollution and you're ready to make a difference.

Some people may not want to talk to you but by being friendly and positive you'll find that lots of people do and even if some people don't engage you'll still have an enjoyable day.

Use the scripts below as a guide – feel free to stamp your own personality on it. Our top tip? Be natural and let the conversation flow.







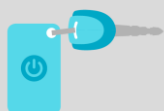
## The truth about pollution: Myths busted



Idling is a significant contributor to local air pollution. It is less polluting to turn your engine off and restart it after a minute or longer than to leave your engine running.



Modern batteries need less engine running time to work and don't need the engine on constantly to keep them charged.



Idling dirties your engine with incomplete combustion increasing wear and tear. Maintaining your vehicle is important for preventing breakdowns and reducing air pollution. Modern cars have much better ignitions and can be turned on and off without unnecessary wear on the engine.



Catalytic converters retain their heat for about 25 minutes after an engine is switched off. You don't need to keep the engine switched on for them to work properly. It can also take up to an hour for an engine to cool down. Turning off your engine but keeping the ignition on and the fan blowing will provide warm air for some time.



Over 50% of particulate matter (PM) in London comes from taxis and cars.



Walking or cycling on roads with less traffic can reduce your exposure to air pollutants by 50% or even more.

## Top tips for your event

### Are there any vehicles I shouldn't approach?

It's best not to approach taxis on rank that are slowly moving forwards in a queue but you can approach taxis that are clearly parked. And don't approach vehicles at traffic lights.

### What do I do if someone is aggressive?

Walk away. Dealing with aggressive behaviour is not part of your role. Make a note of what has happened and report it to one of the organisers if you have any cause for concern.

### What if a driver is concerned their details are being recorded?

Reassure them that the information you are noting will not be used to identify them, it's for research purposes only to help us measure the impact of the day.

### What if they want to find out more?

Tell them to visit the website [cleanairday.org.uk](https://cleanairday.org.uk) to find out more about Clean Air Day and all of the pollution busting events taking place.

**Start early! There seemed to be more drivers idling in the morning**

**Be really positive & friendly (but ready to back up what you're asking with facts!)**

**Focus on the areas where drivers are known to idle**

**Know your facts**



**Wear high-vis jackets and dress appropriately**

## Data collection/Measurement tool

By collecting a range of data you'll help your event organisers to understand where key hotspots are that they should target in the future, and help you to celebrate the success of your events.

Please make a note of:

- Number of people in vehicle
- Type of vehicle
- Response to being asked to switch off

There's a table on the next page for you to use. Please hand your sheet to the event organiser at the end of the day and they'll work out the combined impact your event has had.

*Use the paper form on  
the next page, or use  
the online form from a  
tablet or smartphone.  
[cleanairday.org.uk](http://cleanairday.org.uk)*





# No Idling Event Volunteers Toolkit

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**When did the driver switch off?** Tally how many vehicles you've engaged

Vehicle	Before we asked	When we asked	After the myth busting	Didn't switch off	N/a
Car					
Van					
Taxi					
Waste Compactor					
Motorbike					
Ambulance					
SUV					
Lorry					
Refrigerated vehicle					
Bus/Coach					
Minibus					

No. of people engaged (how many people in the vehicles)

How many people pledged to turn the engine off in the future?



## Create a buzz

Help us spread the #NoIdling message far and wide and reach as many people as we possibly can. If you use social media you have a vital role to play! If social media is not for you then just do the old fashioned thing of telling everyone you know about the campaign, and sharing your stories and pictures with your friends, family and colleagues.

### Twitter

Follow Clean Air Day's Twitter @cleanairdayUK and tag #CleanAirDay in your tweets.

Here are some example tweets to share to help you talk about No Idling events.

- 🐦 I'm helping my community breathe cleaner air by taking part in #CleanAirDay \*include a photo of yourself!\*
- 🐦 Save money, improve air quality and health by switching off your engines when parked. Be the key to cleaner air #NoIdling #CleanAirDay
- 🐦 I'm improving my town's air quality by asking drivers to switch off their engines when parked #NoIdling #CleanAirDay

For wider communications around Clean Air Day, you can also share the following tweets:

- 🐦 Air pollution affects us from our first breath to our last. Find out how to protect your health and get involved in #CleanAirDay on 17 June. We can all have a cleaner air day. [www.cleanairday.org.uk](http://www.cleanairday.org.uk)
- 🐦 Join in with #CleanAirDay and take simple steps to wipe out air pollution. If we all work together we could have clean air. [www.cleanairday.org.uk](http://www.cleanairday.org.uk)
- 🐦 Simple steps can make a huge difference this #CleanAirDay. If we all work together we could have clean air [www.cleanairday.org.uk](http://www.cleanairday.org.uk)
- 🐦 Make a pledge to reduce the pollution you create this #CleanAirDay. [www.cleanairday.org.uk](http://www.cleanairday.org.uk)
- 🐦 On 17 June people around the UK will join together to take action on air pollution on #CleanAirDay. Join us: [www.cleanairday.org.uk](http://www.cleanairday.org.uk)
- 🐦 Give your car a day off on 17 June - reducing air pollution and protecting your health. #CleanAirDay [www.cleanairday.org.uk](http://www.cleanairday.org.uk)





# No Idling Event Volunteers Toolkit

## How to reduce your exposure further

If you live or work in a polluted area there are some simple things you can do to have a positive impact on air pollution for yourself and your family.

### Make cleaner air travel choices

- 1) Give your car a day off** – Walk, cycle or take public transport to work or school, or work from home if you can.
- 2) Discover the side streets** – Use quieter streets when you're on a bike or on foot to avoid polluted main roads.
- 3) Go electric** – There are lots of ways you can travel electric. Hire an electric car, taxi or test drive an electric vehicle today.
- 4) Don't idle** – If you drive, turn off your engine when your vehicle is stationary, and it is safe to do so.

### Make cleaner air decisions in the home

- 1) Ventilate your home** - Open windows and use extractor fans when cooking or using cleaning products, but close windows near busy roads during rush hours.
- 2) Use fragrance-free milder cleaning products.**
- 3) Only burn dry, well-seasoned wood or smokeless fuel on your stove, open fire or barbeque.**
- 4) Choose paints and varnishes that are labelled low volatile organic compounds (VOCs).**

## The impact of air pollution on our health

Air pollution is damaging you and your family's health. Every year, up to **36,000 people die from air pollution in the UK.**

The connection between air pollution and our health has been studied for decades. Air pollution increases the risk of certain health problems, and makes some existing conditions worse:

- Air pollution increases the risk of lung cancer<sup>1</sup>
- Breathing air pollution over the long term is linked to the development of cardiovascular disease in adults, including furring of the arteries<sup>2</sup>
- Air pollution may increase the risk of bladder cancer<sup>3, 4</sup>
- Air pollution increases risk of death from cardiac, and respiratory causes, particularly among people with pre-existing cardiac or respiratory conditions<sup>5</sup>
- Air pollution leads to increased hospital admissions and emergency visits<sup>6, 7</sup>
- There is emerging evidence that air pollution may increase the risk of Type 2 Diabetes<sup>8, 9</sup>
- Air pollution also potentially increases the risk of getting dementia<sup>10, 11</sup>
- There is an association between exposure to the air pollutant NO<sub>2</sub> and cough and phlegm symptoms in adults.<sup>12</sup>
- Air pollution is linked to high blood pressure.<sup>13</sup>
- Studies are showing that there may be an association between air pollution and poor mental health, but more evidence is needed<sup>14, 15, 16</sup>
- Exposure to air pollution is also linked to increases in coughs and bronchitis<sup>17</sup>
- Air pollution can increase the risk of bacterial pneumonia<sup>18</sup>

---

*Professor Frank Kelly, Director of the Environmental Research Group at King's College London: "All of the organs in the body seem to be affected in some way by breathing in air pollution."*

---

<sup>1</sup> Cancer Research UK, How air pollution can cause cancer

<sup>2</sup> Every breath we take: the lifelong impact of air pollution, Feb 2016

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/pdf/pr221\\_E.pdf](http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/pdf/pr221_E.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of carcinogenic risks to human, 2016

<sup>5</sup> Short-Term Effects of Nitrogen Dioxide on Mortality and Susceptibility Factors in 10 Italian Cities: The EpiAir Study, 2011

<sup>6</sup> Monitoring the effect of air pollution episodes on health care consultations and ambulance call-outs in England during March/April 2014: A retrospective observational analysis, July 2016

<sup>7</sup> The impact of acute air pollution fluctuations on bronchiectasis pulmonary exacerbation. A case-crossover analysis, 2018

<sup>8</sup> RCP, Every breath we take: the lifelong impact of air pollution, Feb 2016

<sup>9</sup> Effects of air pollution exposure on glucose metabolism in Los Angeles minority children, Dec 2016

<sup>10</sup> Living near major roads and the incidence of dementia, Parkinson's disease, and multiple sclerosis: a population-based cohort study, Feb 2018

<sup>11</sup> Are noise and air pollution related to the incidence of dementia? A cohort study in London, England, 2018

<sup>12</sup> Green Facts Air Pollution Nitrogen Dioxide as retrieved 31/07/2015

<sup>13</sup> Global association between ambient air pollution and blood pressure: A systematic review and meta-analysis, Apr 2018

<sup>14</sup> Ambient air pollution and daily hospital admissions for mental disorders in Shanghai, China, Feb 2018

<sup>15</sup> Spatiotemporal influence of temperature, air quality, and urban environment on cause-specific mortality during hazy days, Mar 2018

<sup>16</sup> The association between daily concentrations of air pollution and visits to a psychiatric emergency unit: a case-crossover study, Jun 2017

<sup>17</sup> WHO (2005) Effects of air pollution on children's health and development

<sup>18</sup> RCP, Every breath we take: the lifelong impact of air pollution, Feb 2016

## Children are especially at risk

Our lungs develop in three stages: in the womb, from birth up to the age of three, and then up to adulthood. Because young lungs aren't fully developed, exposure to air pollution has a more pronounced impact on children's health.

- High air pollution is linked to low birth weight and can lead to premature birth and pregnancy loss<sup>19, 20, 21</sup>
- Exposure to air pollution, both during pregnancy and after birth, can affect children's lung function development. In areas of high air pollution, it could be setting some children up for health problems throughout their lives<sup>22</sup>
- There is a strong link between air pollution and the worsening of asthma symptoms and it also plays a part in causing asthma in some individuals<sup>23</sup>
- Amongst children with asthma, those exposed to higher levels of air pollution suffer more frequent chronic respiratory symptoms<sup>24</sup>
- Research is beginning to point towards effects of air pollution on the developing brain, but more research is needed.<sup>25</sup>

---

*Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General of the WHO. "[Children's] developing organs and immune systems – and smaller bodies and airways – make them especially vulnerable to dirty air and water."*

---

<sup>19</sup> WHO (2005) Effects of air pollution on children's health and development

<sup>20</sup> Ambient air pollution and pregnancy outcomes. A comprehensive review and identification of environmental public health challenges, Nov 2018

<sup>21</sup> Acute effects of air pollutants on spontaneous pregnancy loss: a case-crossover study, Feb 2019

<sup>22</sup> Impact of London's low emission zone on air quality and children's respiratory health: a sequential annual cross-sectional study, Jan 2019

<sup>23</sup> RCP, Every breath we take: the lifelong impact of air pollution, Feb 2016

<sup>24</sup> Green Facts Air Pollution Nitrogen Dioxide as retrieved 31/07/2015

<sup>25</sup> Every breath we take: the lifelong impact of air pollution, Feb 2016



## Health and Safety Guidance

- When you're speaking to a driver, stand on the kerb side to keep away from the traffic. Never go onto the road.
- Don't approach drivers at traffic lights, this isn't a safe place to speak to them.
- Be aware of your energy levels and your health and safety during the event and take any appropriate action. Cross roads safely, stick to normal pedestrian safety rules and please take a rest or stop if you start to feel tired or unwell.
- Always work as part of a pair or a team, don't approach drivers on your own.
- Wear a high visibility jacket so that drivers and road users can see you more easily.
- Make sure you have an emergency contact number for the event organiser with you on the day.
- Be non-confrontational at all times: approach vehicles tentatively, speak in a calm tone of voice and be polite. Don't knock on car windows, but wave at drivers. Don't write down any vehicle registration details or be authoritarian. Nobody likes being told what to do – always ask rather than instruct.
- The aim of the event is to raise awareness not enforce change so just walk away if a driver doesn't want to engage with you, if, for example, they're on the phone.
- Be aware that drivers may react aggressively. If they seem angry or aggressive don't carry on trying to speak to them, just walk away.
- Report any instances of aggression or anything that concerns you to the event organiser. If it's appropriate, you can let them know at the end of the session.
- Ask for additional support or supervision from the event organiser if you need it before or during the event.

Please also be aware of your own exposure to air pollution, particularly if you have asthma or another health issue associated with air pollution. Take any necessary precautions to make sure you don't put yourself in a vulnerable situation. For example, if you use an inhaler make sure you have it with you and stop if you start feeling ill.

## Thank You

Thank you for getting involved in Clean Air Day. Do tweet or email us to tell us about your experiences. Air pollution is seriously affecting our nation's health and we can only get the message out with the help of committed people like you. On behalf of everyone who your messages have reached: THANK YOU.





# CleanAirDay

Clean Air Day is a collaboration of 200+ health institutions, charities, local government bodies and universities.

It is co-ordinated by environmental change charity, Global Action Plan.

To find out more, visit  
[www.cleanairday.org.uk](http://www.cleanairday.org.uk)