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Even smokers favour car-ban plans



SMOKERS and non-smokers alike have drawn the same conclusion – that lighting up in cars with [children](#) present is a bad thing.

The vast majority of shoppers the Gazette approached in King Street, South Shields, gave their backing to the ban proposed in Parliament this week.

There was only one dissenting voice claiming the yes vote was another example of the nanny state curbing our personal liberties.

The free vote was approved by 376 to 107 in the House of Commons.

The result gives Jeremy Hunt, the Health Secretary, the authority to make it illegal to light up in a vehicle if a child is present, but it does not compel him to bring in the legislation.

The move came after 700 health experts wrote to MPs urging them to support the proposed ban.

They say hundreds of thousands of youngsters would be saved from exposure to smoke if the practice is outlawed.

Similar bans are already in place in the US, Canada and Australia.

Retired postman **Joe Armstrong**, a smoker for 60 of his 76 years, said: "It's too late for me to pack in now.

"There would be no benefits in it for me, but I'm fully supportive of a ban when kids are around."

Joe, of Whiteleas, South Shields, added: "There is still a bit of double standards, though. What would the politicians do without the taxation they make from smokers?"

Alan Steele, 56, a worker in the Re-design charity shop in Fowler Street, South Shields, packed in smoking last year.

He said: "I saw a bairn have an asthma attack in Jarrow when they were in a car in which someone was smoking, so I know it's a dangerous thing.

"I've felt so much better myself since I quit, and it's saved me a lot of money. I can afford to buy things for my home instead."

Jarrow-based charity support worker **Eddie Ainsley**, 50, was the only voice of scepticism.

He said: "I have never smoked, never have and never will. It's an awful habit. But this vote has something of the nanny state about it. It's Parliament telling us what we can and cannot do.

"If the car window is open, the smoke will be drawn out through circulation.

"I'm a little uneasy at a total ban."

Unemployed **Les McIntyre**, 58, quit the dreaded weed nine years ago. He said: "Now, I really hate smoking, and smoking in a car where there are kids is completely wrong.

"Even when I was a smoker, I would never light up in front of my two kids.

"Children need to be protected, and I support this legislation 100 per cent."

Young mum **Carly Mordue**, 21, of Hedworth in Jarrow, agreed.

She said: "I'm a smoker, but I would never smoke in the house when my [child](#) is there. It's the same in the car.

"My dad drives us around, and he never smokes when he is driving with us. It sets such a bad example."

Alex Halliday, 20, of South Shields, added: "Smoking in cars is just really, really wrong.

"My son Lewis is almost two, and I'd hate for him to be exposed to it.

"Who knows the damage it would do to him?"

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