



National Asthma Education and
Prevention Program

NATIONAL HEART, LUNG AND BLOOD INSTITUTE
National Asthma Education and Prevention Program
NAEPP School Asthma Education Subcommittee

How Asthma-Friendly Is Your School?

Students with asthma need proper support at school to keep their asthma under control and be fully active. Use this checklist to find out how well your school serves students with asthma:

- Are the school buildings and grounds **free of tobacco smoke** at all times? Are all school buses, vans, and trucks free of tobacco smoke? Are all school events, like field trips and team games (both “at-home” and “away”), free from tobacco smoke?
- Does your school have a policy or rule that allows **students to carry and use their own asthma medicines**? If some students do not carry their asthma medicines, do they have quick and easy access to their medicines?
- Does your school have a **written emergency plan for teachers** and staff to follow to take care of a student who has an asthma attack? In an emergency, such as a fire, weather, or lockdown, or if a student forgets his/her medicine, does your school have standing orders and quick-relief medicines for students to use?
- Do all students with asthma have updated **asthma action plans** on file at the school? An asthma action plan is a written plan from the student’s doctor to help manage asthma and prevent asthma attacks.
- Is there a **school nurse in your school building during all school hours**? Does a nurse identify, assess, and monitor students with asthma at your school? Does he/she help students with their medicines, and help them be active in physical education, sports, recess, and field trips? If a school nurse is not full-time in your school, is a nurse regularly available to write plans and give the school guidance on these issues?
- Does the school nurse or other asthma education expert **teach school staff about asthma**, asthma action plans, and asthma medicines? Does someone teach all students about asthma and how to help a classmate who has asthma?
- Can students with asthma fully and safely join in **physical education, sports, recess, and field trips**? Are students’ medicines nearby, before and after they exercise? Can students with asthma choose a physical activity that is different from others in the class when it is medically necessary? Can they choose another activity without fear of being ridiculed or receiving reduced grades?
- Does the school have **good indoor air quality**? Does the school help to reduce or prevent students’ contact with allergens or irritants, indoors and outdoors, that can make their asthma worse? Allergens and irritants include tobacco smoke, pollens, animal dander, mold, dust mites, cockroaches, and strong odors or fumes from things like bug spray, paint, perfumes, and cleaners. Does the school exclude animals with fur?

If the answer to any question is “no,” then it may be harder for students to have good control of their asthma. Uncontrolled asthma can hinder a student’s attendance, participation and progress in school. School staff, healthcare providers, and families should work together to make schools more asthma-friendly to promote student health and education.

For more information on keeping students with asthma safe at school, see the list of resources on the next page. National and state laws can help children with asthma.

**Asthma cannot be cured but it can be controlled.
Students with asthma should be able to live healthy, active lives with few symptoms.**

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