

ACTIONS FOR THE PRINCIPAL

Help Children with Asthma and Their Families Manage Asthma

- Involve your staff** in the school's asthma management program. Many members of the school staff can play a role in maintaining your school's asthma management program, although the principal or the school nurse may be most instrumental in getting a program started. A school asthma management is a cooperative effort that involves the students, parents, teachers, school staff, and health care providers. Take the steps listed below to help set up an asthma management program in your school.
- Develop a clear policy** on medication administration that is safe, reliable, and effective. Work with parents, teachers, the school nurse, and others to provide the most supportive policy that your school system allows so that the student can get the medication he/she needs. **If appropriate, allow students to carry quick-relief inhaler or epinephrine.** Consult state regulations and nursing practice acts to ensure appropriate professional standards for student care.
- Designate one person** on the school staff, preferably the school nurse, to be responsible for maintaining each student's asthma action plan and for educating appropriate staff members, including teachers, about each student's individual asthma action plan. **Have a backup plan** for emergencies in case the designee is not immediately available.
- Provide health alerts and institute appropriate guidance for outside play designed to protect students from extreme temperatures, high pollen counts, and air pollutants that may affect asthma.

Teach Staff, Students, and Families about Asthma

- Make sure that staff members **understand the school's responsibilities** under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), and where applicable, Title III of the ADA, which applies to nonreligious private schools. In addition, staff should be familiar with any applicable state and local legal requirements.
- Provide opportunities for staff to learn about managing asthma and allergies.** You may get assistance from your school nurse, your local pediatrician or specialist, or a local hospital or medical society. Other sources of information are the American Lung Association, Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, National Jewish Health, and the Allergy and Asthma, Network Mothers of Asthmatics.
- Develop and **present an information program for all students** to make them aware of the symptoms of asthma. Involve the public health nurse and/ or school nurse.
- Support and **encourage communication** with parents or guardians and health care providers to improve school asthma services.
- Arrange** for the development of **an asthma resource file** for parents or guardians, students and school personnel.

Source: Managing Asthma: A Guide for Schools. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), National Institutes of Health, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Fund for the Improvement and Reform of Schools and Teaching, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education (1991) revised July 2003. Publication No. 91-2650. Reviewed by Asthma Ready® Communities staff (2010)