

BREATHING EASIER *in* ALABAMA



SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE ALABAMA ASTHMA PROGRAM

“Without CDC’s partnership, the asthma program as we know it wouldn’t exist as a collaborative effort. And we can have much more of an impact on asthma together than if we just address it individually.”

MELISSA DEAN

program manager

ALABAMA ASTHMA PROGRAM

THE PROBLEMS:

- The most recent Alabama data find that one in every 10 Alabama adults, or 306,000, suffer from asthma. The data also show that more than 12 percent of Alabama children are living with the chronic respiratory disease at some point in their lives.
- Of the more than 93,400 Alabama children enrolled in the state Children’s Health Insurance Program in 2007, 5.7 percent received care for asthma, costing the state about \$2.2 million.
- According to state Medicaid data, asthma-related hospitalizations were greatest for children and adolescents.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO ASTHMA:

The Alabama Asthma Program and its partners focus on communities with the greatest needs. They increase asthma awareness, educate people on how to avoid environmental asthma triggers, partner with local stakeholders, and help residents manage their own health. And their efforts are paying off.

- The Alabama Asthma Program partners with the University of South Alabama to offer health care providers crucial asthma management training. The free online training, known as Becoming an Asthma Educator and Care Manager, describes optimal asthma care and helps providers empower patients with the knowledge to care for their health at home. The long-term goal of the training is to increase the ranks of Alabama’s certified asthma educators. And Alabama’s program is helping providers outside of Alabama too. Less than a year after the training debuted, about 50 people in seven states had completed the training.
- When members of the American Academy of Pediatrics-Alabama Chapter voiced a need for better asthma resources, the Alabama Asthma Program promptly responded. The program printed 3,000 copies of an Asthma Clinical Guidelines Flipchart adapted from resources at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. The new diagnostic and educational resource is available free for any physician in the state.
- The Alabama Asthma Program is working to create supportive environments in schools too. The program is partnering with fellow agencies to encourage schools to adopt no-idling policies for school buses. Such policies help reduce the pollution that aggravates asthma. The asthma program sent out no-idling signs, brochures, and pledges to 1,500 schools. Other activities include training school faculty on how to identify and correct indoor air quality issues, and offering the Air Quality Flag Program. The flag program uses colored flags based on the day’s air quality index to notify faculty, students, and parents about outdoor air quality.
- In Alabama, asthma results in millions of dollars in health care costs, much of which is preventable through an evidence-based, public health approach to asthma control.



All information and data provided by the Alabama Department of Public Health Asthma Program

CDC’s National Asthma Control Program

Alabama is one of 36 states that receives funding and technical support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Asthma Control Program. Since 1999, CDC has been leading public health efforts to prevent costly asthma complications, create asthma-friendly environments, and empower people living with asthma with the tools they need to better manage their own health. **Find out more at** www.cdc.gov/asthma.

