



# America Breathing Easier

## THE CHALLENGES OF ASTHMA CONTINUE

While asthma can be managed on an individual basis, one-on-one care is not enough and is only one component of effective asthma control.

CDC's National Asthma Control Program has made great inroads, but more is required to reach all those in need and to sustain positive trends. With continued funding, CDC's asthma program can carry on its support of successful asthma control efforts, expand asthma surveillance, and increase the role of proven public health-based approaches.

Asthma is not going away — in fact, the number of Americans diagnosed with asthma grew from 20.3 million in 2001 to 24.6 million in 2009. Almost 10% of U.S. children are living with asthma. CDC's work to control asthma and its costly impact are more important than ever. Managing asthma and its impact is well within our power. CDC's public health approach is vital to facing — and overcoming — the continuing challenges of asthma.

→ To learn more, visit [www.cdc.gov/asthma](http://www.cdc.gov/asthma)



## *Successes of CDC's National Asthma Control Program*

It's a disease whose cause is unknown and for which there is no cure. Thousands of Americans die each year from its complications and millions seek help in doctors' offices, emergency rooms and hospitals. → The disease is asthma. Today almost 25 million adults and children in the United States live with asthma. Asthma alone costs the nation \$56 billion every year.



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**Protect, Prevent, Live Well**

# NATIONAL ASTHMA CONTROL PROGRAM: State Success Stories

Like many diseases, asthma and its burden are tied closely to the environments in which people live, work and play. In turn, asthma control activities must continue to expand outside the doctor's office and to incorporate a public health-based approach. At the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a nationwide asthma program is doing just that. → *And the efforts are working.*

## HAWAII

Asthma in Hawaii has been linked to about \$10.5 million in emergency room visits and \$24.4 million in hospitalizations. But with support from CDC's NACP, Hawaii is turning around its asthma rates: the state saw a 28% decrease in asthma hospitalizations from 2003 to 2008. The news means that even as prevalence has increased, Hawaii's asthma control program interventions are working.

CDC funds help sustain the Hawaii Volcano Helpline, which offers daily updates on volcanic emissions and tips for people with asthma. The helpline has received more than 15,000 calls.

In rural Hawaii, CDC asthma funds support Hawaii's Childhood Rural Asthma Project. This project trains outreach workers to help families rid their homes of asthma triggers. In less than two years, 200 families have taken part resulting in fewer daily asthma symptoms and doctor visits and reduced medication use.

## TEXAS

The Texas Asthma Control Program is supported 100% by CDC asthma funds. More than 1 million Texas adults and 500,000 children live with asthma. The program brings asthma services to places where none existed before. One such place is the Lower Rio Grande Valley region, where asthma hospitalization rates were among the highest in the state.

In turn, the program worked with local universities to form the McAllen Asthma Coalition. This coalition uses respiratory therapy and nursing students for outreach in local schools and trains Spanish-speaking community health workers in asthma education.

The program also supports local hospital systems in Travis and Hays counties that offer in-home asthma education, resulting in a 39% reduction in emergency room visits and a savings of \$5 for every \$1 invested in the intervention.

## ILLINOIS

More than 1.2 million Illinois residents have been diagnosed with asthma. The more than 18,500 asthma-related hospitalizations in 2007 cost \$280 million in health care.

CDC's NACP funding led to the creation of the Illinois Asthma Partnership to help reduce this health care burden. The Illinois asthma control program and their partners conduct successful interventions like Gadget Training — hands-on training with the different devices used to control asthma — every fall across the state for school health personnel. Almost 900 people were trained in the fall of 2010.

The state has seen positive trends with the Illinois Asthma Program. Since 2000, asthma hospitalization has declined by almost 18% and asthma mortality rates hit their lowest levels ever in 2007.

## NEW JERSEY

New Jersey schools are healthier environments for students with asthma because of support from CDC's NACP.

New Jersey's asthma control program joined a coalition working to improve asthma-related school conditions and to support the more than 200,000 New Jersey children with asthma.

In 2001, the state passed a law requiring asthma education for school nurses and faculty. Today, with support from the state's asthma control program, hundreds of schools are setting standards to improve asthma control, such as having a nebulizer on site, requiring asthma and indoor air quality training of school nurses and faculty, and signing a "No-Idling Pledge" so bus engines will be turned off when loading-unloading students.

For many states and their residents, CDC asthma funds represent a literal lifeline.