

**National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
National Asthma Education and Prevention Program
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 the questions below to find out how well your school serves students with asthma:

1. 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?
2. 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?
3. 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?
4. 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.
5. 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?
6. 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?
7. 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?
8. 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 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 or feathers?

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 below. 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.

Resources for Families and School Staff

National Asthma Education and Prevention Program National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Information Center
(301) 251-1222

Internet: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>
NAEPP School materials
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/lung/>

Allergy & Asthma Network
Mothers of Asthmatics
(800) 878-4403 or (703) 641-9595
www.breatherville.org

American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology
(800) 822-ASMA or (414) 272-6071
www.aaaai.org

American Academy of Pediatrics
(800) 433-9016 or (847) 228-5005
www.aap.org

American Association for Respiratory Care
(972) 243-2272
www.aarc.org

American Association of School Administrators
(703) 528-0700
www.aasa.org

American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
(800) 842-7777 or (847) 427-1200
<http://www.acaai.org>

American Lung Association
For the affiliate nearest you, call
(800) LUNG USA
www.lungusa.org

American School Health Association
(330) 678-1601
www.ashaweb.org

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
(800) 7-ASTHMA or (202) 466-7643
www.aafa.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Division of Adolescent and School Health
(800) CDC-INFO
www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/asthma

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Environmental Health
Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects
(800) CDC-INFO
www.cdc.gov/asthma

National Association of School Nurses
(866) 627-6767
www.nasn.org

National Association of State Boards of Education
(703) 684-4000
www.nasbe.org

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights, Customer Service Team
(800) 421-3481 or (202) 205-5413
www.ed.gov/offices/OCR

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Indoor Environments Division
(202) 233-9370
www.epa.gov/iaq/schools

Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse
(800) 438-4318
www.epa.gov/iaq