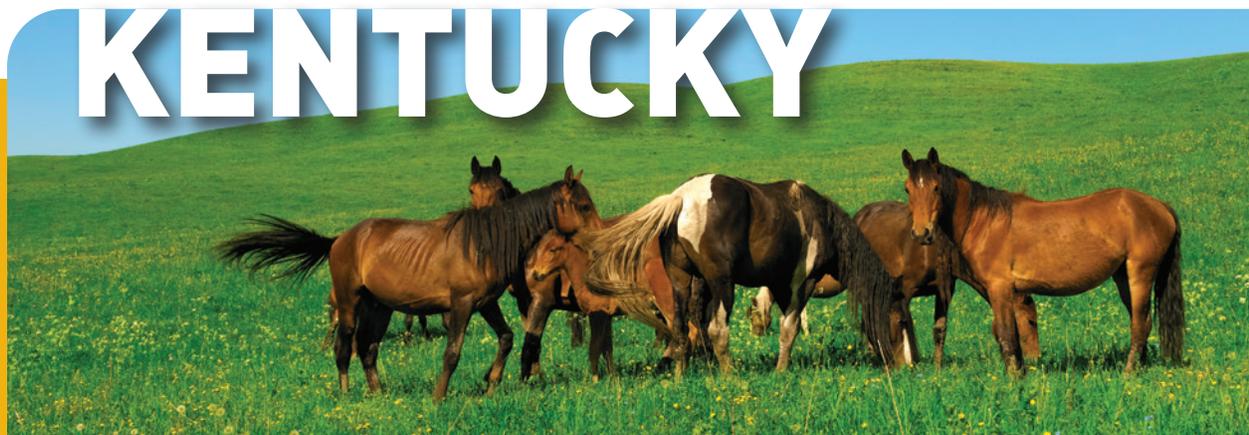


BREATHING EASIER *in* KENTUCKY



SUCCESS STORIES FROM
THE KENTUCKY RESPIRATORY
DISEASE ASTHMA PROGRAM



“The amount of dollars spent in the course of treating (asthma) is huge. Asthma can be controlled, ER visits can be decreased, hospitalizations can go down and public health has a role. Kentucky has one of the highest rates of asthma, so if we couldn't partner with CDC that would really affect us.”

DEEPA VALVI

epidemiologist

KENTUCKY'S RESPIRATORY
DISEASE ASTHMA PROGRAM

THE PROBLEMS:

- In 2009, 10.6 percent of Kentucky children 11 years old and younger, 13.6 percent of middle school students, 11.8 percent of high school students, and 8.6 percent of adults were living with asthma.
- Residents living in the Appalachian region reported a higher prevalence of both current and lifetime asthma, with 135,000 adults reporting current asthma in 2009. Appalachian residents also experienced significantly more asthma-related hospitalizations as well as a higher related mortality rate.
- Asthma-related hospitalizations cost the state \$62 million annually.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO ASTHMA:

The Kentucky Respiratory Disease 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.

- When the Kentucky Respiratory Disease Asthma Program began, the state had one certified asthma educator. Today, thanks to a partnership between the state program and the Kentucky Asthma Partnership, 10 educators are working at eight pilot sites. Efforts include working with local health departments, physicians, allergists, and schools.
- In 2010, the Kentucky Respiratory Disease Asthma Program launched its Creating Asthma-Friendly Schools Resource Guide, a toolkit to help schools institute tobacco-free policies, recognize asthma triggers, implement asthma self-carry laws, and much more. The resource guide was distributed to every school in the state and it's having an impact: Since its debut, the number of schools adopting tobacco-free policies is on the rise.
- The Kentucky Respiratory Disease Asthma Program is working with the state's Healthy Homes Training Program in the eastern part of the state, an industrial region home to high rates of air pollution. The newly launched effort will connect people living with asthma to a healthy home specialist who can help them mitigate environmental asthma triggers.
- The Kentucky Respiratory Disease Asthma Program convenes and supports the Kentucky Asthma Partnership, a diverse coalition of local stakeholders. For example, some members are involved in the Louisville Asthma Data Innovation Project, a voluntary effort to monitor patients' asthma medication use via sensors attached to their inhalers. The data will help strengthen asthma surveillance and inform better interventions.
- In Kentucky, 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. Thanks in part to the Kentucky Respiratory Disease Asthma Program, childhood asthma hospitalization has been decreasing in some parts of the state.



All information and data provided by the
Kentucky Department for Public Health
Respiratory Disease Asthma Program

CDC's National Asthma Control Program

Kentucky 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.

