

BREATHING EASIER *in*

INDIANA



SUCCESS STORIES
FROM THE INDIANA
ASTHMA PROGRAM



“When children miss school because of asthma, parents also have to miss work, making asthma not only a health issue but an economic issue. Asthma is also more prevalent among minority, low-income populations...which speaks to housing conditions and where people live. It's an issue of environmental justice. Our program has had a big impact and CDC's partnership has been essential.”

BARBARA LUCAS

director

INDIANA ASTHMA PROGRAM

All information and data provided
by the Indiana State Department of
Health Asthma Program

THE PROBLEMS:

- In 2010, more than 457,600 Indiana adults, or one in 11, were living with asthma. That same year, more than 136,200 Indiana children, or one in 13, were living with the chronic respiratory disease.
- In 2010, nearly 30,200 people visited the emergency room due to asthma, and 38 percent of such visits occurred among children.
- Asthma is the fourth leading cause of hospitalization in Indiana, with more than 8,300 asthma-related hospitalizations in 2010.
- In 2009, asthma-related hospitalizations cost \$122 million, while emergency room visits totaled \$46 million.



THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO ASTHMA:

The Indiana Asthma Program and its partners focus on groups 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.

- Since 2010, the Indiana Asthma Program has been encouraging schools to adopt the Fly a Flag for Clean Air Program. Participating schools are given a set of flags to notify the school and neighborhood about each day's air quality index. Participating schools must also adopt no-idling policies and make their campuses tobacco-free. Thanks to the program, the rate of tobacco-free schools went from 50 percent to 90 percent. In addition, more than 100 schools adopted a no-idling policy. Thus, when in 2011 state lawmakers passed requirements for schools to enact such measures and to engage in air quality management, many schools were ready.
- The Indiana Asthma Program partners with the state's Department of Education to train school nurses in asthma care. As part of the effort, the program developed small asthma emergency cards that school nurses can give to teachers and coaches. In 2012, about 175 nurses received training. Also, the program has distributed about 23,000 asthma emergency cards.
- The Indiana Asthma Program provided funding and technical assistance to the Asthma Call-back Program at Fort Wayne's Parkview Hospital. The hospital, which serves populations with high asthma rates, was experiencing a high volume of asthma-related emergency visits. In response, nurses began following up with asthma patients by phone and mail, inquiring about their health and medication access, and offering to do in-home visits. As a result, fewer patients returned to the emergency room, and fewer days of school or work were missed due to asthma. The hospital saved more than \$1.8 million in 2011-2012 alone by preventing asthma re-admissions.
- In Indiana, asthma results in millions of dollars in health care costs — costs that are largely preventable through an evidence-based, public health approach to asthma control.

CDC's National Asthma Control Program

Indiana 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.

