

The ABCs of Asthma Are All 'Bout Control

Curriculum Guide

Goal: To support student management of asthma in the classroom through teacher education and to meet the requirement set forth in NJ law for asthma education for school faculty. (Refer to the PACNJ website, at www.pacnj.org, for the text of the New Jersey Law concerning self-administration of medication by school pupils for asthma.)

Objectives:

At the end of this program, school faculty will be able to:

1. Recognize that changes occur in the lungs during an asthma episode.
2. List the common symptoms of asthma.
3. Define what is meant by an "asthma trigger."
4. Identify asthma triggers in their classrooms.
5. Identify environmental changes they can make to reduce or eliminate triggers in their classrooms.
6. Recognize other actions (in addition to environmental changes) in the classroom that support asthma management.
7. Recognize the importance of establishing school/home/healthcare linkages in the control of asthma.

Advance Preparation for the Program

1. Follow your school system's procedures for obtaining Professional Development Hours for this faculty in-service program and produce certificates.
2. Reproduce the following handouts from the enclosed floppy disc for the number of participants attending the program.
 - *Early Signs of an Asthma Episode and The Teacher's Role in Asthma Management* – copy these two pages front to back on colored paper
 - *Common Asthma Triggers and Clean Classroom Checklist* – copy these two pages front to back on another color
 - *Asthma and Federal Law and Asthma and the Law in New Jersey* – copy these two pages front to back on a third color
 - *Pets in the Classroom and Resources* – copy these two pages front to back on a fourth color
3. Please preview the video and prepare to respond to questions from your faculty.
4. If possible, have available different types of inhalers, spacers and peak flow meters to display as visual aides.

This program was pilot tested in six New Jersey schools. The faculty raised several important questions. Please review the questions listed below and prepare to respond based on procedures and policies specific to your school.

Most Frequently Asked Questions

1. In the video the school nurse says that she cannot inform the teacher of a child's medical condition without permission from the parents. This generated the following questions from school faculty who viewed the pilot program:

- A. What is your procedure for informing your teachers when they have students with medical conditions such as asthma?
- B. What is your procedure for getting permission from parents to share their child's medical information with that child's teachers?
- C. How often do you have parents who refuse to have their child's medical information shared?

For each of these questions, inform your faculty of the policies adopted by your school district. Also let them know your personal experience in regarding the ease with which these issues are handled.

2. What is the procedure when a teacher becomes aware that a student has used his/her inhaler?

- A. Reinforce the message to your faculty that they are always to inform you, the school nurse, when they know a student has used an inhaler and that you will monitor that child throughout the day.
- B. Impress upon your faculty that it is important for you to know each time a child uses an inhaler so that you can track the asthma severity and respond based on the child's Asthma Action Plan.
- C. Faculty should rely on you, the school nurse, to communicate with other faculty on a "need to know" basis if a child has used his/her inhaler during a class.

The key element to convey to your faculty is that you, the school nurse, are the key resource for any student who has asthma.

3. Does an asthma episode happen suddenly?

- A. There are early warning signs that can signal the onset of an asthma episode. These are discussed in the video and on a handout. You can note what is said when previewing the video.
- B. The key element to convey is that an asthma episode usually doesn't happen suddenly, so responding to the early warning signs can help prevent an asthma episode.

4. What do we do if a student in our class has an asthma episode?

A. Please inform them of your school policy regarding an emergency response to respiratory distress.

B. Prepare a handout to distribute regarding your school's procedure.

5. The video says certain animals are triggers for asthma. Where can we get more information on pets that are acceptable for the classroom?

A. Refer to the National Association of School Nurses "Managing Asthma Triggers Training Manual." It is an excellent resource that covers the complexity of this concern and offers suggestions. They are listed on the "Resources" handout and you may want to acquire this for your own reference.

B. In preparation for this program, review this section of the manual.

6. What is the law regarding students carrying their inhalers?

The video does not address the NJ law regarding self administration of medication. Distribute the handout from the floppy disc "Asthma and the Laws in New Jersey" which outlines the law and other laws related to health and safety in schools.

Conducting the Program

Now you are ready to conduct the program

The first step is to introduce the program. It is important to read the following sections as stated. This is a legal requirement for disclosure.

A. The Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey, sponsored by the American Lung Association of New Jersey, developed this program.

B. This publication was supported by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, with funds provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under operative Agreement U59/CCU217776. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services or the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

C. Although this video has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under agreement XA98284401-0 to the American Lung Association of New Jersey, it has not gone through the Agency's publications review process and therefore, may not necessarily reflect the views of the Agency and no official endorsement should be inferred.

D. Introduce the faculty and include all of their credentials and credits as follows:

Marilyn Kent, MSN, RN, Office of Educational Support Services, New Jersey State Department of Education

Laraine G. Koehler, Radon & Indoor Air Coordinator,
US Environmental Protection Agency
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Carol McGotty, RN, MS, Past President, NJ State School Nurses Assn.

Rosa Sanchez, MS, Dover Classroom Teacher

Arthur J. Torre, MD, (Read it entirely. Again, there are legal issues of disclosure.)
Clinical Associate Professor, UMDNJ – New Jersey Medical School; Chairman,
Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of NJ; National Spokesperson, American Lung
Association; National Faculty, NHLBI – National Asthma Education Program;
Medical Director, Outreach Services, Allergy & Asthma Network/Mothers of
Asthmatics; Chairman, Asthma Committee, American Lung Association of NJ,
and a speaker for AstraZeneca, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, Pfizer, Schering-Key
and Sepracor

1. Show the video (20 Minutes)
2. Distribute the handouts and invite discussion (25 minutes)
Anticipate a lively discussion. Many of the issues in the “Frequently Asked Questions” will be raised.
3. Distribute your certificates for Professional Development Hours

After the Program

This video belongs to your school so you can lend it to faculty who are unable to attend your in-service and to newly hired faculty. If you have any questions, please contact the Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey through our website at www.pacnj.org.