

Student Implementation Tips

Tool

Resource: Creating Asthma Friendly Environments

Students with asthma need to understand how to manage their asthma at school. Students who learn how to manage and control their asthma should be full participants in all school activities- learning, sports and recreation, physical activity and socializing.

- **Identify yourself as a student with asthma:**

- On your school registration forms, indicate that you have asthma and/or use asthma medicines. Also, let your principal, teachers and coaches know that you have asthma. It is also a good idea to let your close friends know that you have asthma.
- Tell supply/substitute teachers that you have asthma, what to do if your asthma gets worse and where your medication is kept.

- **Supporting a student with asthma is a collaborative effort:**

The *Plan of Care* is a form that helps empower and support students with prevalent medical conditions. The *Plan of Care* is part of the Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 161: Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy) in Schools and requires that school boards develop a *Plan of Care* to support students with asthma. This form requires participation from school boards, school staff, educators, parents/guardians and students.

- **Ensure you have easy access to your asthma medication:**

If you carry your inhaler, know how and when to use it safely by the following these guidelines:

- Make sure your inhaler has at least 20 doses remaining, your name is on your inhaler, and that it has not expired.
- Know how to respond to worsening asthma and when to ask for assistance.
- Tell your teacher/coach when you used your inhaler to treat symptoms and if your symptoms did not improve, be certain to let them know this.
- Tell your teacher or coach if you need assistance taking your medication.
- Do not share your medication with anyone.
- **Establish a process for handling worsening asthma :**
 - Talk with your teachers, coaches, and school staff about your asthma and how it is managed. Tell your teacher when your asthma is bothering you.
 - Participate in developing and providing a *Plan of Care* to your principal/teachers/coach/recreation leader so they will know about your triggers, medications and what to do when your asthma gets worse. This *Plan of Care* contains your photograph, emergency contacts, information about your asthma triggers and reliever medication and dosage (including where it's located), and how to recognize and respond to asthma symptoms and emergency situations.
 - Keep track of how many times you have used your inhaler.
- **Identify and reduce common asthma triggers within the school :**
 - Know what triggers your asthma (what makes your asthma worse) and have a plan for handling your asthma triggers.
 - Make sure that your *Plan of Care* identifies your asthma triggers, especially if you have life threatening allergies.
 - Let your teachers and coaches know your asthma triggers. If you have food allergies, make sure that you also talk to the cafeteria and lunch room staff about your food allergies.
- **Participate in physical activity and play:**

- Do not let asthma get in your way of being physically active or enjoying outdoor play, sports and leisure activities. If asthma symptoms start with an activity, stop the activity and take your reliever inhaler. Only return to the activity when you are fully recovered from the symptoms experienced.
- Be sure to talk to your teachers/coaches about your asthma and how it can impact how you play/perform.

- **Engage in asthma education:**

Learn about asthma by attending asthma education programs, seeing your asthma health care provider on a regular basis, and checking out www.asthmakids.ca.

- **Collaborate with others (such as health care providers, public health, parents/guardians and community partners) to create an asthma friendly school:**

Talk to your teachers, coaches, health care providers and parents/guardians about your asthma and how you are feeling. If it is limiting your ability to do things, let them know. Also let them know how often you need to use your reliever inhaler and experience asthma symptoms, including waking up at night.