

# Children/Youth Implementation Tips

## Tool

**Resource:** Creating Asthma Friendly Environments

Children/youth with asthma need to understand how to manage their asthma. Children and youth who learn how to manage and control their asthma are able to participate in physical and recreational activities and competitive sports.

- **Identify that you have asthma to your coach/instructor/teacher:**
  - On the health section of your registration package/form, indicate that you have asthma and/or use an inhaler to help you breath.
  - Tell your coach/instructor/teacher that you have asthma.
  - Have your parent/guardian complete an [Asthma Management Plan](#) form that explains how to manage your asthma.
- **Ensure you have easy access to your asthma medication:**
  - Have your reliever inhaler with you at all times or know where it is located and how to get it quickly. It should be easy to get during practice and play.
  - Know how and when to use your inhaler safely by 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 coach/instructor/teacher when you used your inhaler to treat symptoms and if your symptoms did not improve, be certain to let them know this.

- Tell your coach/instructor/teacher if you need assistance taking your medication.
- Do not share your medication with anyone.

- **Establish a process for handling worsening asthma:**

- Give your coach/instructor/teacher a copy of your *Asthma Management Plan*
- Tell your coach/instructor/teacher when your asthma is bothering you.
- If you have forgotten your inhaler or don't have one with you, let the coach/instructor/teacher know.
- Know how to:
  - Recognize when your asthma is worsening.
  - Correctly use your inhaler.
  - Identify an asthma emergency and when to ask for assistance. For instance, when your reliever inhaler is not providing you relief from symptoms.

- **Identify and reduce common asthma triggers:**

- Know what triggers your asthma (what makes your asthma worse) and have a plan (know the steps to take) for handling your asthma triggers.
- If you think something is triggering your asthma and causing you to have trouble breathing or coughing, let your coach/instructor/teacher know.
- Be aware of the air quality and allergy index before doing strenuous physical activity outdoors. If these are triggers for you, you may need to modify your activity and/or pre-treat (use your reliever inhaler 10-15 minutes) before the activity.

- **Participate in physical and recreational activities and competitive sports:**

- Do not let your asthma get in your way of being physically active or enjoying recreational activities.
- Incorporate a warm-up period and a cool-down period with all strenuous physical activity.

- If asthma symptoms start, stop the activity and take your reliever inhaler. Only return to your activity if your symptoms are completely gone.
- If after using your reliever inhaler you still experience asthma symptoms, tell your coach/instructor/teacher that you are still having symptoms despite using your inhaler.

- **Engage in asthma education:**

- Learn about asthma by:
  - attending asthma education programs;
  - seeing your health care provider on a regular basis; and
  - checking out [www.asthmakids.ca](http://www.asthmakids.ca).
- If you feel comfortable talking about asthma, let your peers know that you have asthma, what it means and how they can help you.