

# Parent/Guardian Implementation Tips

*Tool*

**Resource:** Creating Asthma Friendly Environments

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing the program with up-to-date information about their child's/youth's asthma. Information should be provided at the start of each session/season and when the child's or youth's asthma information changes.

The following implementation tips include things you can do to assist in the management of your child's/youth's asthma while participating.

- **Prepare your child/youth for managing asthma during sports and recreational activities :**

Educate your child/youth so that they understand:

- How to identify and reduce exposure to their own asthma triggers.
- When their asthma is worsening and the necessary steps to take to relieve and treat the symptoms.
- Correct technique and dosing of their inhaler(s), if age appropriate.
- When to ask for assistance with their asthma.
- The importance of carrying their medication with them at all times, if age appropriate and not sharing with other students.
- Importance of being physically active.

- **Identify that your child/youth has asthma to the coach/instructor :**

- Tell the coach, program leaders and staff that your child/youth has asthma. When the registration form asks about health information, inform them about your child's/youth's asthma

and/or uses of asthma inhalers to help them breathe.

- Consider having your child/youth wear medical identification (For example, a MedicAlert™ bracelet or similar item) to identify that they have asthma.

- **Ensure your child/youth has easy access to asthma medication**

- Complete and return the [Asthma Management Plan](#) form.
- Your child/youth needs to have easy and quick access to their inhaler at all times. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide the child/youth with a dedicated reliever inhaler for their sports and recreation activities. Some may need more than one additional inhaler so that an inhaler can be kept on them and in the locker, and/or gym bag. All inhalers need to be clearly labelled with the child's/youth's name.
- If your child or youth will be carrying and administering the inhaler, ensure that your child/youth:
  - has the reliever inhaler accessible at all times;
  - knows when and how to use the inhaler correctly;
  - knows the steps to take if the reliever medication does not relieve the symptoms or is not working;
  - knows when to ask for help;
  - does not share medication with friends/teammates;
  - knows when the medication is empty and a new one is needed;
  - tells the coach/staff/instructor every time they take the medication.
- If your child/youth needs help using the inhaler, detail this information on their *Asthma Management Plan* form, and include information about the dosing and how to give the inhaler medications correctly. Meet with coach/staff/instructor to review the accurate technique for administering the medication to your child/youth.
- Prepare your child/youth for off-site games, events and excursions and discuss any issues with the supervising staff. Remember to send the reliever medication (usually blue) and other medications your child/youth may need to take during the trip. If the trip is overnight, remember

to send all asthma medications recommended for asthma control by the health provider.

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

- Complete and return the *Asthma Management Plan* form to coach/recreation leader, which details how to manage your child's/youth's asthma. This form contains your child's/youth's photograph, emergency contacts, information about your child's/youth's asthma triggers and reliever medication (including dosing and where it's located) and how to recognize and respond to asthma symptoms and emergency situations.
- Review with your child/youth the *Asthma Management Plan* form and how to prevent and handle asthma symptoms.

- **Identify and reduce exposure to common asthma triggers for your child/youth:**

- Talk to the instructor/coach/staff about the triggers that affect your child/youth.
- Make sure that the *Asthma Management Plan* identifies your child's/youth's asthma triggers.

- **Encourage your child/youth to participate in physical and recreational activities and competitive sports:**

Talk to your child/youth about the benefits of participating in physical and recreational activities. Do not let your child's/youth's asthma be a barrier to being active.

- **Provide opportunities for asthma education (For example, for staff, coaches, other parents/guardians and volunteers):**

Be an asthma champion and talk to the coach/staff/instructor about how to support your child/youth and create asthma friendly-communities for positive experiences.

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

Work with your health care provider to ensure that your child's/youth's asthma is under good control, that they have a quick relief inhaler for use during sport/recreation activities, and that they have the asthma knowledge and skills to successfully manage their asthma during sport/recreation activities.