

Children's Health Update

Greater Communication Needed Between Parents And Schools About Asthma Care

(NAPSA)—According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), asthma is a leading chronic illness affecting an estimated 24.6 million people in the U.S., more than 7 million of them children. With the high asthma prevalence rate among children, the American Lung Association (ALA) has found that it is one of the main reasons students miss or are absent from school, making it imperative for parents and schools to communicate effectively about the condition.

In fact, a recent survey conducted by the ALA found that there is a lack of communication about asthma between parents and schools. Specifically, the survey showed that 58.7 percent of parents were unaware if their state had a law allowing students to carry inhalers with them at school.

The lack of communication between parents and schools can make it difficult for parents to ensure their children get the best care possible. An educational program called Everyone Breathe (sponsored by Sunovion Pharmaceuticals Inc.) aims to arm parents with the tools and information they need to advocate for their child's health with teachers and school administrators. The program website, www.EveryoneBreathe.com, offers a variety of resources, including a printable asthma diary to track symptoms, a caregiver checklist, a doctor discussion guide and an Asthma Action Plan for parents to fill out with their healthcare professional (HCP) in order to help manage their child's asthma. Parents can use these materials to educate teachers about their child's asthma and help make sure the school administration knows what steps to take in case of an asthma-related emergency.

"As a parent of a child with asthma, I worried every time I



Parents should be proactive about managing their child's asthma symptoms or attacks while at school.

sent my son off to school. Would the teachers know what to do if Nicholas had an asthma attack?" said tennis Olympic Gold medalist and Everyone Breathe spokesperson Mary Joe Fernandez. "With the resources available at [EveryoneBreathe.com](http://www.EveryoneBreathe.com), parents can advocate for their child's care while he or she is at school."

Parents of children with asthma should frequently evaluate their child's treatment plan to ensure he or she is getting the best care possible. Many parents find it helpful to have a conversation with his or her child's HCP during their annual physical.

Asthma symptoms fluctuate by season and it's important for parents to educate themselves on the potential triggers their child may face at any time of year.

"It's vital that parents connect with their child's physician numerous times throughout the year," said William E. Berger, M.D., a clinical professor at the University of California, Irvine, School of Medicine. "That way, parents can stay up to date on the latest treatment news pertaining to asthma."

For more information on managing your child's asthma symptoms and to learn more about Fernandez's experience as both a patient and a parent of a child with asthma, visit www.EveryoneBreathe.com.