

SHPD Asthma Project

SHPD PROGRAM/SERVICE

Nearly **6.8 million children** in the United States have asthma.

Asthma is the **most common chronic disease** of childhood.

* 5-10% of children in US have asthma

Asthma is a **leading cause of school absences** due to chronic illness: 15 million missed school days/ yr in the US; A child with asthma **misses about 16 days/year**

Historical Background: Asthma is a chronic disease characterized by inflamed airways that result in recurring episodes of breathing difficulties. Fortunately, asthma can be controlled through proper clinical and environmental management. Since school aged children spend a large part of their day in school, it is optimal for school personnel to help children and youth manage their asthma.

Since the 1990's, when a high incidence of asthma was recognized, SFUSD and community partners have been working together to improve school asthma management, particularly in the Bayview/Hunter's Point schools. George Washington Carver Elementary School was one of the first schools to benefit from the effort of this coalition. The school experienced a significant reduction in the incidence of asthma episodes following implementation of asthma self management education using the American Lung Association's "Open Airways For Schools" and improvement in indoor air quality using the Environmental Protection Agency "Tools for Schools." Throughout the rest of the 1990's additional schools went on to implement Open Airways for School and Tools for Schools.

The ongoing prevalence of asthma in SFUSD school children and the positive results experienced in the schools that implemented Open Airways and/or Tools for Schools lead the coalition to recognize the need for financial support to coordinate the school based asthma efforts. Funding was sought and in October 2002 the SFUSD/SHPD Asthma Project (a three year cooperative agreement) was funded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

What are the goals of the SFUSD Asthma Project?

- Help elementary students learn to manage their asthma.
- Help school staff understand asthma, asthma action/emergency care plans, the needs of students with asthma, and indoor air quality.
- Facilitate communication between the medical community, parents and schools regarding children with asthma, school asthma protocols, school district medication forms and asthma emergency care plans.
- Collaborate with the San Francisco Asthma Task Force (ATF), the Health and Environmental Resource Center, the American Lung Association and other community efforts to ensure high quality of care for children with asthma.

For further information, contact:

School Health Programs Department

1515 Quintara Street, San Francisco, CA 94116-1273

(415) 242-2615 ■ FAX (415) 242-2618

www.healthiersf.org

What are the Asthma Project Activities?

- Work with the American Lung Association and other community agencies to identify and train community volunteers as Open Airways For Schools instructors. A major partner in this activity has been the San Francisco Fire Department Paramedics.
- Bring Open Airways for Schools (a self management curriculum for 3rd to 5th grade students with asthma) to San Francisco Unified School District elementary schools.
- Coordinate asthma self management education for the Comprehensive Asthma Management Program (Asthma Telemedicine Program) schools.
- Work with parents and health care providers to complete asthma emergency care plans and medications forms for all students who attend Open Airways for Schools classes.
- Provide asthma and indoor air quality education for school faculty and staff.

Project status (2002-2008):

- 40 Schools have implemented Open Airways For Schools (OAS)
- Over 400 Third – fifth grade student with asthma have graduated from OAS
- 63 OAS instructors have been trained
 - School District Nurses, SF Fire Department Paramedics, and Community Health Workers, Asthma Nurses, Respiratory Educators.
- Over 150 health care providers have received presentations on SFUSD school health services including school asthma management.
 - Pediatric Departments at UCSF, Kaiser, CPMC, SFGH, Saint Lukes
- Over 375 school professionals have received asthma management education.
- EPA's Tools for Schools program has been implemented in 31 SFUSD schools/Child Development Centers.

District Services That Support the SFUSD Asthma Project Goals: School district nurses (SDN) and the Nurse of the Day (NOD) assist schools in the identification of students with asthma, creation of site-based asthma rosters; distribution, review, and implementation of *Asthma Emergency Care Plans* (AECP's); case management of students with asthma; implementing 504 plans for students for whom asthma significantly interferes with learning; and providing asthma education for students, staff and parents. The Comprehensive Asthma Management Program (Asthma Telemedicine Program) provides comprehensive asthma services in 5 schools (see Comprehensive Asthma management Program Overview).

Activities within SFUSD and School Health Programs Department that support asthma management and education:

- District Asthma Team
- Section 504
- SDNs (School District Nurses)
- First Aid Flip Chart
- TUPE (Tobacco Use Prevention Ed.)
- EPA Tools for Schools (An Indoor Air Quality program)
- SST (Student Success Team)
- SAP (Student Assistance Program)
- School Health Manual
- BOE (Board of Ed.) policies for Asthma Action Plans
- BOE policies for Indoor Air Quality
- Medication administration policy
- Family Guide
- Nurse of the Day