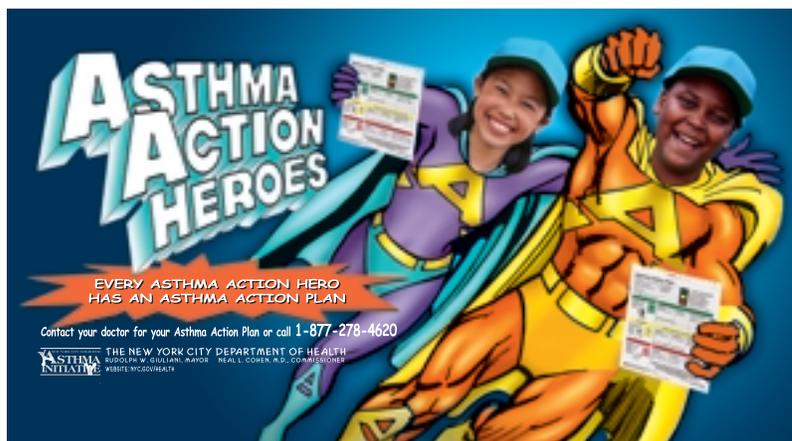


Spreading the Word About Asthma Action Plans

In November the New York City Childhood Asthma Initiative launched a new media campaign focusing on Asthma Action Plans. The campaign's slogan is "Every Asthma Action Hero has an Asthma Action Plan." It provides information about asthma action plans and how to get one. The campaign is running on subways, community billboards and posters available to community based organizations, schools and government agencies. For more information about the campaign or to obtain posters, please call the Asthma Action Line at 1-877-ASTHMA-0 (1-877-278-4620).



Every Asthma Action Hero has an Asthma Action Plan



From the Director
Louise Cohen

Dear Readers,

The tragic events in the months since our last newsletter have had a lasting impact on our city and nation. On behalf of the New York City Childhood Asthma Initiative I would like to express heartfelt sorrow for the tremendous losses and wish you strength as we face the challenges of rebuilding and reshaping our way of life.

During this time the Initiative will continue to provide leadership in addressing respiratory health issues throughout the city. We are therefore pleased to be back in touch with you and to bring you this third issue, which starts off our second year of Asthma Initiative Info.

The current issue emphasizes the importance of Asthma Action Plans for children with asthma and what the Initiative is doing to increase their use.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Spreading the Word About Asthma Action Plans

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Asthma Training for Community Healthworkers

Your Road Map to an Asthma Action Plan

The Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Childhood Asthma Initiative

New York City Asthma Partnership Update: Making Policy Progress

In celebration of its one-year anniversary and in recognition of its first coalition-wide advocacy success, the New York City Asthma Partnership (NYCAP) held its second Semi-Annual Meeting on December 12, 2001 at the New York Marriott Brooklyn. Health Commissioner Dr. Neal L. Cohen welcomed NYCAP members and presented awards to individuals who were instrumental in advocating

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Community Health Workers Receive Training on Asthma and Case Management

Community health workers (CHWs) are at the heart of the Initiative's community-based programs. CHWs work directly with community members to improve and promote health. Last fall, the Initiative's Training Unit provided a three-week asthma training for CHWs from both the Department of Health and community-based partner organizations. This training exemplifies the Initiative's commitment to provide technical assistance and improve asthma case management services throughout the city.

The aim of the training was to enhance the ability of CHWs to help families manage childhood asthma. The training covered topics such as: causes and mechanisms; triggers and their control; medications and equipment; the basics of an Asthma Action Plan (see insert); the role of CHWs in home visits, interviewing clients and gathering information; confidentiality; cultural competency; communicating with medical providers; and asthma case management. A portion of the training also involved shadowing other asthma case managers to learn from their experiences in the field.

In their evaluation forms, 85% of the participants said they were very satisfied that the training program prepared them for asthma case management work. As a result of its tremendous success, this training will serve as a model for future training sessions for CHWs from other city agencies, health organizations, community-based organizations and schools.

If you work with children with asthma and/or their families, please consider contacting us to discuss staff training possibilities. Training guidelines and educational materials are also available. For further information please contact Sheri-Lynn Meikle, Senior Public Health Educator, at 212-788-5002.

FOR MORE
INFORMATION
CALL THE
ASTHMA ACTION LINE
TOLL FREE AT
1-877-ASTHMA-0
(1-877-278-4620)

From the Director

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It also contains an introduction to our newest media campaign "Every Asthma Action Hero Has An Asthma Action Plan." In accordance with our new media message, the newsletter insert provides a "road map" for utilizing an Asthma Action Plan. Please share this information with anyone who needs it.

In this issue we also profile a recent training held by the Initiative's Training Unit and highlight the successes of one of our community-based partner agencies, the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Childhood Asthma Initiative/Central Brooklyn Childhood Asthma Partnership.

We look forward to our second year of Asthma Initiative Info and to keeping you informed about our various activities. We invite you to let us know what you think. If there is anything you hope to see covered in the next newsletter, please contact us by calling the Asthma Action Line at 1-877-ASTHMA-0 (1-877-278-4620). We look forward to hearing from you.

YOUR ROAD MAP to AN ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

The Asthma Action Plan is a patient education tool that can help keep families on track in managing asthma symptoms. Here are some of the key features designed to ensure that every child with asthma is on the road to asthma control:

- The form is filled out by the physician and individualized for each patient.
- Physician contact numbers and emergency information are readily available at the top of the form.
- The form is triplicate so all members of the asthma team keep a copy; Families can hang theirs on the refrigerator door!
- Asthma symptoms are divided into three color-coded zones like a traffic light.
- Each zone has information about symptoms, peak flow levels, and medicines prescribed by the doctor.
- Asthma Action Plans are available free of charge in nine languages commonly spoken in New York City.

Having an Asthma Action Plan makes it easier for families to follow individualized health care guidelines and treatment plans, keeping the child's asthma under control.

For more information or to order Asthma Action Plans today, call the Asthma Action Line at 1-877-ASTHMA-0 (1-877-278-4620).

Asthma Action Plan

Name	Date
Doctor	Medical Record #
Doctor's Office Phone Number: Day	Night/Weekend
Emergency Contact	
Doctor's Signature	



The colors of a traffic light will help you use your asthma medicines.

Green means Go Zone!
Use preventive medicine.

Yellow means Caution Zone!
Add quick-relief medicine.

Red means Danger Zone!
Get help from a doctor.

Personal Best Peak Flow _____

GO

You have **all** of these:

- Breathing is good
- No cough or wheeze
- Sleep through the night
- Can work and play



Peak flow from _____

to _____

CAUTION

You have **any** of these:

- First signs of a cold
- Exposure to known trigger
- Cough
- Mild wheeze
- Tight chest
- Coughing at night



Peak flow from _____

to _____

DANGER

Your asthma is getting worse fast:

- Medicine is not helping
- Breathing is hard and fast
- Nose opens wide
- Ribs show
- Can't talk well



Peak flow below _____

Use these daily preventive anti-inflammatory medicines:

MEDICINE	HOW MUCH	HOW OFTEN / WHEN

For asthma with exercise, take:

--	--	--

Continue with green zone medicine and add:

MEDICINE	HOW MUCH	HOW OFTEN / WHEN

CALL YOUR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER.

Take these medicines and call your doctor now.

MEDICINE	HOW MUCH	HOW OFTEN / WHEN

Get help from a doctor now! Do not be afraid of causing a fuss. Your doctor will want to see you right away. It's important! If you cannot contact your doctor, go directly to the emergency room. **DO NOT WAIT.** Make an appointment with your primary care provider within two days of an ER visit or hospitalization.



The City of New York Department of Health
Rudolph W. Giuliani, Mayor Neal L. Cohen, MD, Commissioner
Website: <http://www.ci.nyc.ny.us/health>

New York City Childhood Asthma Initiative
Adapted from the NHLBI
3/99

COPY FOR PATIENT

TAKING ACTION *with an* ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

"Writing the plan down for the patient makes the biggest difference. When it is written down, the families can't forget it."

*Dr. Acklema Mohammed,
Physician with the Urban
Health Plan in the Bronx*

An Asthma Action Plan (AAP) is a written guide designed to help families follow an individualized asthma management plan. The AAP form is filled out by the healthcare provider and provides recommendations for monitoring and responding to a child's asthma symptoms. Studies show that asthma self-management programs that include a written AAP consistently lead to improved health outcomes.

The AAP divides asthma symptoms into three levels or "zones" determined by their severity and associated peak flow levels. Each zone includes information about symptoms, peak flow levels, medications and medication doses, and provides guidelines for making decisions about treatment and seeking professional help.

The Green Zone is for when the child is doing well. She or he is not coughing, wheezing or experiencing other asthma symptoms and is able to engage in normal activities. If peak flow is measured, it is 80% or more of the child's personal best. Long-term-control or preventive medicines should be taken in accordance with the indicated amounts at the times listed, even when the child is feeling fine.

The Yellow Zone signifies that asthma is getting worse. The child is experiencing mild to moderate symptoms and may wake up at night due to coughing. The child is able to participate in some, but not all, of his or her usual activities. Peak flow is in the 50-80% range. Instructions for taking quick-relief medicines should be followed. If the child does not improve or respond to those medications, the primary care provider should be called.

The Red Zone signals a medical alert. The child is very short of breath and cannot do his or her normal activities. Quick-relief medications have not helped and symptoms are getting worse. The peak flow is 50% or below 50% of the child's personal best. The instructions for taking emergency relief medicines are indicated as well as instructions for seeking immediate medical attention. The doctor should be contacted right away, and if the doctor cannot be reached the child should be taken to the emergency room. A follow-up doctor's appointment is necessary within two days of an asthma-related hospital visit.

Having a written Asthma Action Plan makes it easier for the family to follow the plan of care. It helps families assess the child's condition and make informed treatment decisions. The forms are triplicate so that all members of the patient's asthma team can be made aware of the appropriate action steps. There is a copy for the patient, one for the school or day care center, and another for the health care provider. Asthma Action Plans are currently available in English, Spanish, French, Chinese, Russian, Polish, Creole, Arabic and Urdu.

Dr. Acklema Mohammed, a physician who was involved in helping NYCCAI to develop its Asthma Action Plan talked about its importance: "Writing the plan down for the patient makes the biggest difference. When it is written down, the families can't forget it." Under her leadership, the Asthma Action Plan is now a required component of asthma care at the three Urban Health Plan facilities in the Bronx. Given its success, the Asthma Action Plan is also being used with adult asthma patients.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION IN ACTION: The Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Childhood Asthma Initiative

The Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Childhood Asthma Initiative (BSRCAI) formally introduced itself to the community at its kick-off town meeting in June, 2001. The day included addresses by local elected officials, an asthma education health fair, events for children, displays by pharmaceutical companies that provided asthma education materials and supplies, and entertainment by the Restoration Youth Arts Academy. After this successful introduction to the public, BSRCAI gained recognition as a pivotal provider of community-based services for children with asthma and their families in the Bedford Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn.

BSRCAI is a working example of community-level partnership. The program is one of five local asthma initiatives to receive funds from the New York City Childhood Asthma Initiative. The program's lead agency, Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, was the nation's first community development corporation and has been a leader in local economic development issues since being founded in 1967. BSRC's long history of working in the community fostered its collaboration with the Bedford Stuyvesant Family Health Center and the Weatherization Assistance Program to form the BSRCAI.

The core of the BSRCAI is formed by the Central Brooklyn Childhood Asthma Partnership, a network of local agencies, health centers, schools, libraries and churches with a commitment to helping children in the community. The Partnership's mission is to "promote the development of an environment where children with asthma lead full and active lives."

Their programmatic goals address health care access, environmental issues, caregiver education and asthma-related school absences. Astrid Wilkie-McKellar, BSRCAI's Program Coordinator, underscored the importance of the partnership



Members of the Central Brooklyn Childhood Asthma Partnership at their kick-off town meeting in June, 2001.

to the success of the program. "The Partnership provides direction, stability and a sense of purpose for the overall Initiative in the community. We have to realize that it is the responsibility of the community, in its entirety, not just individual families, to protect our children from the ill effects of asthma."

Like other local initiatives funded by the New York City Childhood Asthma Initiative, BSRCAI offers asthma case management services to families, conducts home assessments and promotes trigger reduction strategies such as integrated pest management. The goal of working in the home environment is not only to educate families, but also to give them the tools they need to be successful – such as buckets and mops, mattress covers, peak flow meters, and spacers.

Through the local asthma partnership, BSRCAI has also provided community

agencies with poster-size school asthma medication forms and Asthma Action Plans, sponsored an environmental workshop and participated in several community health fairs.

An educational campaign, the "Got Meds" campaign, is scheduled to begin February 2002. This campaign aims to alert the community about the necessity of school asthma forms for effectively managing childhood asthma in the school setting. The Brooklyn Public Library has also planned a home for the Childhood Asthma Resource Center through its Parents Resource Center. Materials should be available there in the coming months.

If you are interested in learning more about the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Childhood Asthma Initiative, please contact Astrid Wilkie-McKellar, BSRCAI Coordinator, at: (718)-636-6905, or awilkie@restorationplaza.org.

"We have to realize that it is the responsibility of the community, in its entirety, not just individual families, to protect our children from the ill effects of asthma."

Astrid Wilkie-McKellar, BSRCAI Program Coordinator

New York City Asthma Partnership Update: Making Policy Progress

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who were instrumental in advocating for passage of a New York State bill (the ED/SPARCS bill) that adds emergency department data to the Statewide Planning and Research Cooperative System.

The bill (A.1644/S.3341) became law on September 4, 2001 and will add emergency department data to the state's existing hospitalization database. With the passage of the ED/SPARCS bill, researchers, public health planners, and communities will be able to access statewide information on asthma-related emergency department visits and admissions, which are indicative of severe asthma episodes.

Also prominent on the meeting's agenda was discussion of position statements developed by the coalition's committees. The Medical Standards of Care, Environment, and Schools and Early Childhood committees presented position statements for review by the full

coalition. After the review and discussion, members were given the opportunity to sign-on in support of each of the positions. The signed position statements will become official NYCAP positions and will be used for future advocacy efforts.

If you are interested in joining or in learning more about the New York City Asthma Partnership, please contact Anna Caffarelli, NYCAP Coordinator, at (212) 788-4703, or e-mail acaffare@health.nyc.gov.



NYCAP members networking at the Semi-Annual Meeting held in December, 2001.

The New York City Childhood Asthma Initiative

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