Together For Kids and Families

# CHILD CARE PREPARED… for ASTHMA

## INFORMATION FOR THE LICENSED CHILD CARE PROVIDER

**Provide a supportive and attentive environment** for the young child with asthma. Asthma symptoms may be triggered by sudden changes in the environment, exposure to environmental allergens, or exercise. Adults caring for the young child with asthma must recognize and quickly respond to signs of breathing emergency.

**Identify and train all staff members who have responsibility for the child with asthma.** Include drivers and helpers as appropriate in your child care setting. Having a written asthma action plan for the child, complete with information from parent and medical provider, will help guide what staff must know and do to help the young child with asthma.

**All personnel caring for the young child with asthma must be prepared** to recognize and respond to breathing emergencies; know the appropriate actions to take if the child has trouble breathing; and know how to safely and correctly give medications including inhalers, nebulizers, and epinephrine autoinjectors (EpiPen®, Twinject®, etc.).

**Encourage parents to keep you updated with current emergency contact information** in case their child has an emergency while in child care. Remind parents of this on a regular basis.

**Keep all medication products locked** when not in use, and safely out of the reach of children.

**Make sure emergency contact information and medication go on outings with the child** and a cell phone or other means of calling for help. If a child is too young to have language skills to clearly state he or she has asthma, recommend to the parent to have the child wear a medical identification bracelet when away from home and parent.

**Talk with parents regularly about any changes in the child's asthma condition or treatment plan.** Signs asthma is poorly controlled can include: poor sleep, cough, tires easily, refuses to engage in active play, shortness of breath, wheezing.

**Children with chronic health conditions can learn to participate in, and master, their own self care.** This process can begin early with teaching the child to state clearly when they feel short of breath or cannot breathe, and to seek an adult for assistance. Children can begin to handle their inhalers and learn to identify triggers at an early age, with supervision and help. The degree of independence will emerge over time, and varies by child.

**Many things may start or worsen an asthma attack** including: contact with allergy triggers (dust mites, cockroaches, animal dander); colds and flu; cigarette and cigar smoke; outside pollution (chemical or dirt in the air); exercise; poor air quality; cold air.

**Be prepared to call 911** if the child fails to get relief from medication, becomes unresponsive, stops breathing, or symptoms are rapidly getting worse.

**Respect the privacy of children** and their families and do not discuss or share information about individual children's needs inappropriately.

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# ASTHMA RESOURCES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED AND FREE:**

**American Lung Association**:
Asthma and children:
http://www.lungusa.org/lung-disease/asthma/living-with-athma/parents-with-children.html.

**Allergy and Asthma Network/ Mothers of Asthmatics, Inc.**
www.aanma.org

**National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute**
Checklist for daycares:
http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/asthma/chc_chk.htm

**Resources for Parents and Childcare Staff from the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program**
http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/index.htm

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Resources on Asthma**
http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/

**Indoor Air Quality resources from the Environmental Protection Agency:**
http://www.epa.gov/iaq/ia-intor.html

**California Childcare Health Program:**
Asthma Information handbook for early care and education providers:
http://www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org/pdfs/asthma/Handbook.pdf.
Asthma in Childcare settings:
http://www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org/pdfs/healthandsafety/asthmaen060604_adr.pdf

**NE Early Childhood Training Center**
http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/ectc.html

Asthma Basics for Children: Early Childhood Educator's Handbook from the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, 2007.

**National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education:**
http://nrckids.org/

**Caring for Our Children, 3rd Ed.**
http://nrckids.org/CFOC3/index.html. See:
Standard 3.1.3.2 Playing Outdoors
Standard 5.7.0.3 Removal of Allergen Triggering Materials from Outdoor Areas

**Resources from the American Academy of Pediatrics:**
http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/asthma.cfm

Sample care plan for child aged 0-5 years:
http://www.healthychildcare.org/pdf/MedAdmin/AR_AsthmaAction0-5.pdf

Managing asthma in child care:
http://www.healthychildcare.org/ENewsAug07.html

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***http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/lifespanhealth_together-kids-families.aspx*** *and*
***http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/lifespanhealth_childcarehealthconsultation.aspx***