

Asthma Foundation of Tasmania's
**Asthma Friendly
Schools Newsletter**

Term 2, 2009

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW... UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE.

"You don't know what you don't know" is a truism. And when it applies to an emergency asthma situation, the right level of knowledge could mean the difference between life and death.

Campbell Street Primary School Principal Monique Carter talked to us about her experience of an asthma training session for the Asthma Friendly Schools program.

"Until we had the staff training session I just didn't realise everything that asthma management entails," said Principal Monique Carter.

"I would say a lot of teachers believe that an asthma training session is simply a tutorial on administering salbutamol. So they're thinking: How difficult can that be? Well, the truth is, our asthma training was not difficult, but there was a lot more to it than how to use a puffer," says Monique.

Along with instructions on how to medicate students with asthma, school staff are taught the protocol concerning if and when to call an ambulance.

Unfortunately, there are many cases of schools not calling an ambulance – when emergency protocol explicitly prescribes this course of action.

Cathy Beswick, CEO of the Asthma Foundation is concerned that these situations have the potential to turn very serious.

"We regularly receive calls from parents describing these situations. Asthma first aid protocols are designed by Australia's experts in emergency and respiratory medicine.

"It would be terrible if a child had a serious episode and staff did not respond in the best practice manner. Apart from the legal ramifications surrounding the concept

of "foreseeable risk" it would be a very difficult thing to live with," says Cathy.

Monique Carter agrees. And she encourages other schools to take the staff training session that helps qualify them as Asthma Friendly.

"When we took on the session it was just after one of our students had an attack at the Student Interschool Athletics Carnival. Frankly, I thought we'd just receive a dry

"Apart from the legal ramifications surrounding the concept of 'foreseeable risk' it would be a very difficult thing to live with."

presentation on emergency procedures. But it wasn't like that.

"It made us consider many different things that we hadn't even considered. It fills in lots of gaps.

"It made us think about how many children had asthma in our school. Where is their personal medication? Where is the back-up medication? We also realised that we didn't have personalised Written Asthma Action Plans for each student with asthma. Our storage of medication and our emergency kits needed updating.

"We also gained some useful hints and tips such as how to warm up the children so they are less prone to an attack during exercise," says Monique.

Her teaching staff found the session so useful that another one was held soon after for support staff.



"I asked the non-teaching staff to do the session as well, given that the people who work in the office are usually the people that children will go to during a playground emergency.

Now we have a collective understanding of the issues throughout the whole school," says Monique.

Book your session by calling the Asthma Foundation of Tasmania on 1800 645 130. Also ask about the Anaphylaxis Awareness course.



PARENTS RESPOND TO ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOL ADS

The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing has funded a national radio, TV and print media campaign that has recently appeared in Tasmania.

The campaign asks parents if their school would be able to look after their child if they had an asthma attack.

Since going to air the Asthma Foundation has received a number of calls from concerned parents and is talking with the non-Asthma Friendly Schools the parents have named.

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR IN WINTER

Cold weather and colds/flu can be a major trigger for people with asthma. If you recognise signs of worsening asthma, it is vital to take action quickly. This can prevent the asthma deteriorating further and minimise the risk of an asthma attack.

SIGNS OF WORSENING ASTHMA

These include:

- increased frequency of symptoms (wheezing, breathlessness, coughing, disturbed sleep)
- reliever medication does not last as long as usual.

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR PUFFER USE

Another sign of worsening asthma is the use of a puffer more than three times a week (not counting use before exercise). Because you are not with the child 24 hours a day and neither is the parent, it is important that you mention any increased frequency of use to the parents so their tally of usage is accurate.

AS ALWAYS, BE VIGILANT

Always ensure the student:

- carries their blue/grey reliever with them (or, if very young, ensure it is readily accessible). The only time a student should not have their medication with them is if they are playing a contact sport. In this case, it should be with the responsible adult.
- uses a spacer with their puffer to maximise the amount of medication they are getting into their lungs.
- has an up-to-date Written Asthma Action Plan*. If not, ask the parents to get one from their family GP.

SPECIAL WINTER TIPS

- TIP 1.** If cold air is a trigger for some of your students, breathing through their nose while outdoors will warm the air before it gets to their lungs.
- TIP 2.** Another tip that works for some people is to place a scarf over their mouth and breathe through a scarf while outdoors.
- TIP 3.** If it's particularly cold, consider exercising indoors.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ULVERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL!!

WINNER!

Ulverstone High is now the proud owner of a DVD Recorder/ Video Recorder valued at \$350 after

going in a draw of schools that held a staff training session in early Term 1.

WELCOME! ANOTHER 45 SCHOOLS GAIN ASTHMA FRIENDLY STATUS

From the beginning of Term 1, to the date of publication of this newsletter, 45 Tasmanian schools (35 newbies and 10 renewals) became Asthma Friendly.

NORTH

Bridport Primary
Deloraine High
Early Childhood Intervention, Launceston
Launceston College
Launceston Church Grammar - Junior
Launceston Church Grammar - Senior
Nixon Street Primary, Devonport
Ravenswood Heights Primary
Riverside High
Port Dalrymple School
St Patrick's College, Launceston
Wesley Vale Primary
West Launceston Primary

NORTH WEST

Boat Harbour Primary
Brooklyn Primary
Devonport Christian School
Penguin High
Ridgley Primary
Scottsdale Primary
Seabrook Christian School, Somerset

Somerset Primary
Strahan Primary
Stanley
West Somerset Primary

SOUTH

Albuera St Primary, Hobart
Bellerive Primary
Campania District High School
Campbell Street Primary, Hobart
Cosgrove High
Dunalley Primary
East Derwent Primary
Emmanuel Christian School, Rokeby
Fahan School, Hobart
Goodwood Primary
Goulburn Street Primary, Hobart
Huonville Primary
The Kinder Cottage, Hobart
Margate Primary
Moonah Primary
Mount Nelson, Primary
Princes St Primary, Hobart
St Aloysius Catholic College, Huntingfield
St John's Catholic Primary, Richmond
St Virgil's College, Hobart
The Friend's School, Hobart



WHERE IS THAT ELUSIVE NEWSLETTER ON THE INTERNET?

A few schools have rung the Asthma Foundation to ask where the newsletter resides on the Asthma Friendly Schools website.

We must admit it is rather well hidden. You can find it by going directly to:

http://asthmafriendlyschools.org.au/home/latest_news/ and then click the "Tasmania" link.

WE HELP PARENTS – PASS IT ON!

The Asthma Foundation runs FREE parent asthma information sessions at your school. Please pass this information on to parents and ask them to ring Asthma Foundation of Tasmania on 1800 645 130 for more details.

LITE AIRE DISPOSABLE SPACERS - FOLDAWAY CONVENIENCE

They've been on the market for a while, but very few people are aware of them.

The Lite Aire Disposable Spacer is perfect when space is at a premium. It's a spacer made of tough cardboard that folds down flat to measure only 2mL thick x 103mL x 146mL. Excellent as a back-up to be kept in a hand bag or glove box, it is also handy for taking on bushwalks and excursions.

- Single person use – up to 7 uses
- Valved for tidal breathing
- No need to prime
- Fits all metered dose inhalers
- Folds flat for storage
- Super lightweight

LiteAire spacers are available from the Asthma Foundation. Call 1800 645 130.

\$7.50 EACH



ENQUIRE ABOUT DISCOUNTS FOR BULK PURCHASES



SPECIAL EXCLUSIVE OFFER

FREE OF CHARGE!!!

TO ALL NON-ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOLS...

Book your AFS training session before the end of Term 2 to make your school Asthma Friendly and, **AT NO EXTRA COST**, we'll give your staff **CONFIDENCE** and **PEACE OF MIND**.

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REDUCED ABSENTEEISM



As a special **BONUS OFFER** you'll also receive reduced asthma related absenteeism. And given that asthma is one of the main reasons for school absenteeism that's

SUPER VALUE.

BUT WAIT THERE'S MORE!!!!

BETTER CONCENTRATION AND PARTICIPATION

Not only will you receive **CONFIDENCE, PEACE OF MIND** and **LOWER ABSENTEEISM**

but for **NO ADDITIONAL COST** students with asthma will better manage their symptoms leading to greater concentration in the classroom and increased participation in physical activities, sport and exercise.

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HOW'S THAT FOR VALUE?

BUT SERIOUSLY... In all seriousness, the benefits of the Asthma Friendly Schools program are considerable. Yes, we can do the hard sell, but what it comes down to is that it will increase the quality of life of children with asthma in your care.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

We sincerely urge you, if you have already registered your interest in the program, to take the next step and do the staff training. On the other hand, if you haven't registered your interest, please talk to the Asthma Foundation as soon as possible.

JUST CALL 1800 645 130.

YOUR STUDENTS WITH ASTHMA NEED YOU ON BOARD.



ASTHMA FIRST AID POSTERS AVAILABLE

Posters, wallet cards and fridge magnets are available from the Asthma Foundation of Tasmania.

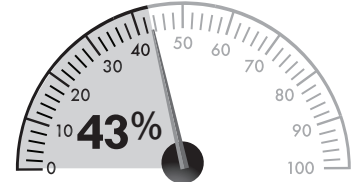
Call for asthma first aid posters and other print material on 1800 645 130.

TYPE	SIZE	FORMAT	COST
POSTER	1,189 x 1,682 mm (A2)	Landscape	FREE
POSTER	210 x 297 mm (A4)	Portrait	FREE
FRIDGE MAGNET	140 x 90 mm	Portrait	FREE PICK UP, POSTAGE AT COST (They are very heavy)
WALLET CARD	90 x 70 mm	Folds out to portrait	FREE

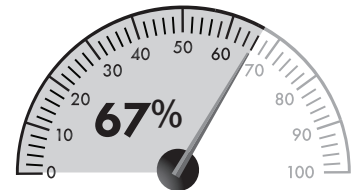
TASSIE'S A NATIONAL LEADER

It's appropriate that the state that has the highest rate of asthma in Australia should have one of the highest rates of Asthma Friendly Schools. Congratulations to the huge number of schools who are behind this initiative!

PERCENTAGE OF ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOLS WITHIN ALL OF AUSTRALIA



PERCENTAGE OF ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOLS IN TASMANIA



ASTHMA ATTACK DURING EXERCISE?

2 strikes and you're out!

The "two strikes you're out" rule is a very important concept. It must be adhered to as two strikes is indicative of unstable asthma

STRIKE ONE

An asthma attack occurs during activity

- Stop activity
- Follow Written Asthma Action Plan or, if not available, follow Asthma First Aid Plan
- Resume activity only if student is free of symptoms and can breathe easily.

STRIKE TWO

Symptoms recur (or do not go away)

- Stop activity (and do not allow student return to any physical activity for the rest of the day)
- Follow Asthma First Aid Plan.

BOOK OR ENQUIRE NOW ON THE ASTHMA FOUNDATION'S ASTHMA AND ALLERGY HELP AND ADVICE LINE: **1800 645 130**

Asthma Friendly Schools program • Anaphylaxis Awareness courses • Asthma first aid courses

ASTHMA FOUNDATIONS
AUSTRALIA

Funded by the
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asthma
FOUNDATION OF TASMANIA



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