

# Working with Your Child's School

In order to keep your child's asthma under control at school, parents need to prepare themselves, their child and school staff. Here's what you **MUST** do before school starts:

- 1. Make a written Asthma Action Plan with your doctor or asthma counselor, and give a copy to your child's school. If the plan changes during the school year, be sure to give the school staff a new one, and review changes with them.**
- 2. Make sure the school has two emergency numbers to reach you.**
- 3. Schedule a conference with your child's teacher/other school staff to talk about your child's asthma.**

By working with school staff, you can help make sure your child has a healthy school year. Here is a checklist to make sure you don't forget things that can be important...

- Visit your child's doctor or health care professional, and fill out a new Asthma Action Plan. Give a copy to each of the child's teachers, school nurse, school secretary and after school activity staff. At the doctor's visit, be sure to talk about your child's technique with peak flow meter, inhaler and spacer; asthma triggers, especially those that the child might have at school, like exercise, animals, food allergies or cold weather; medication; and peak flow meter use at school.
- Get all medication/health forms from the school—don't forget the ones for sports or other activities. Fill them out completely and turn them in to the school.
- Make sure all medicines, including inhalers and nebulizers, are full and/or in working order. Label all medications and asthma tools with child's name and classroom.

- Arrange a meeting with your child's teacher and other school staff, including child's after-school day-care teachers, if needed. Include the child in the meeting if possible. At the meeting with the school/daycare staff, discuss:
  - Basics of asthma
  - Your child's Asthma Management/Action Plan. Make sure staff knows what to do and how to do it
  - Warning signs for your child's asthma
  - Your child's triggers, such as animals in the classroom, playing hard at gym class
  - Medications and access to medications. There is a law in Michigan that allows students to carry their inhalers with them at all times.
  - Asthma tools, such as peak flow meters, spacers, and nebulizers
  - Missing school and making up school work

If it is hard for you to talk about asthma with your child's teachers and other school staff, ask the school nurse or your doctor or asthma counselor for help.

#### **If possible:**

- Visit the school during the summer, and check for your child's asthma triggers. For example, check to see if the school is free of tobacco smoke at all times, including during school-sponsored events. If you find possible triggers in the school, talk to the school staff about getting the problems fixed before school starts. Federal and State laws are in place to help children with asthma.
- Check with the teacher and other staff often during the school year to make sure they are not having problems following the Asthma Action Plan, and that there are enough medication supplies.

Some parts adapted from "How Asthma-Friendly is Your School?" National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Asthma Education and Prevention Program School Asthma Education Subcommittee

