



## **Asthma and School**

Since children spend most of their waking hours at school, it is very important that asthma symptoms can be managed there. It is a good idea to let the school know that your child has asthma and have medications for use if your child develops any persistent cough or shortness of breath.

- 1. Communication with the school is vital to proper asthma management for your child.**
  - a. Think about meeting with your child's teachers, the school nurse, and coaches at the beginning of the school year to let them know about your child's asthma, how serious it is, and what medications your child takes as well as what to do in the event of an emergency.
  - b. Ask your child's doctor to fill out an asthma action plan for the school as well as a permission form that includes whether your child can be allowed to carry and use his own inhaler and spacer.
  - c. Sign a release at school and your child's doctor's office to allow exchange of medical information between you, the school, and your child's doctor.
  - d. Ask the school nurse about policies on how your child will have access to his medicines and how they deal with emergencies during field trips and after-school activities.
  - e. Ask for updates as necessary. The school should also let you know about changes or problems with your child's symptoms while he is at school.
- 2. Help your child manage his asthma at school.**
  - a. Talk with your child about how well his asthma is being handled at school. Talk with your child's teachers, school nurse, coaches, or other school personnel about how well your child is coping with asthma at school.
- 3. Students with asthma face additional hurdles at school.**
  - a. Missing school because of asthma symptoms or doctor visits

- b. Avoiding school or school activities that may require exercise as that can be a trigger. Exercise is one trigger we do NOT want your child to avoid long term, but sometimes better medication management is needed to allow your child to consistently exercise without triggering asthma symptoms.
- c. Your child might be struggling because he is not taking his medicine before exercise as instructed. He might not want to go to the nurse to use his inhaler before exercise, but then he might feel bad and avoid exercise if he does not use it. If your child is old enough and responsible to use his inhaler properly independently, most schools will authorize him to carry the inhaler with him to avoid this problem.