



# School Peak Performance Actions

Any asthma management program should include policies and procedures for administration of medications, specific actions for staff members to perform, and an Asthma Action Plan for asthma episodes.

Guidelines for each student with asthma should contain medical information, any recommendations from the child's parents and physician, and specific information for asthma management, such as:

- Specific orders from the child's physician including recommendation for managing asthma on a daily basis to prevent episodes and for handling symptoms and other episodes.
- A list of all medications the student receives (listing which ones are taken during, before and after school hours).
- A plan of action, based on peak flow and symptoms, for school personnel to help the student manage an episode.
- 47 states presently have laws that protect a student's right to carry and self-administer their lifesaving asthma medications as prescribed by their physician. If your school does not have their policy in place, work with the administration, school board, school nurse and local physicians to establish policies that comply with state law. If your state does not have a law or you have any questions, visit [http://www.breatherville.org/cityhall/ch\\_childrights.htm](http://www.breatherville.org/cityhall/ch_childrights.htm).
- Emergency procedures and phone numbers.

Have the Asthma Action Plan signed by a parent and the physician. Make sure the plan is specific to the student's needs because each individual's asthma is different. Keep the Plan on file at school.

Specific actions should be taken by school staff members in the school. The following pages include Peak Performance Actions that should be taken by the Administrator, School Nurse, Teacher/Homeroom Supervisor, Physical Education Instruction/Coach, Guidance Counselor, Parents, and Primary Care Provider. Copies of these Peak Performance Actions should be provided to the appropriate individuals.

The school nurse should preferably be the person responsible for managing the student's Asthma Action Plan at school. The school nurse's health care training has prepared him or her for administering such a program, monitoring the student's health, and handling medical emergencies.

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# Administrator Peak Performance Actions

- Involve staff in the asthma management program and designate one person, preferably the school nurse, to maintain Asthma Action Plans for each student to help the student manage and asthma episode.
- The student must have immediate access to the medication he or she needs. 47 states presently have laws that protect a student's right to carry and self-administer their lifesaving asthma medications as prescribed by their physician. If your school does not have their policy in place, work with the administration, school board, school nurse and local physicians to establish policies that comply with state law. If your state does not have a law or you have any questions, visit [http://www.breatherville.org/cityhall/ch\\_childrights.htm](http://www.breatherville.org/cityhall/ch_childrights.htm). You may also wish to review Guidelines for the Administration of Medication in Schools by the Committee on School Health of the American Academy of Pediatrics—[PEDIATRICS Vol. 112 No. 3 September 2003, pp. 697-699](http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;112/3/697) <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;112/3/697> (NOTE: scheduled for update in 2009).
- Establish an asthma staff education program consisting of resource files and in-service courses.
- Encourage communication between parents and staff.
- Establish a system for health alerts to notify students and staff with information to protect students from very hot or cold temperatures, high pollen counts and other allergens, and air pollutants that may affect a child's asthma.
- Ensure that school staff are aware of the school's responsibilities under State and local legal requirements and the [Individuals With Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](http://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm) (<http://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm>), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), and, where applicable, Title III of the ADA, which applies to nonreligious private schools.
- Establish a school environmental management plan based on [EPA IAQ Tools for Schools](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/) (<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/>).
- Avoid exposing students to fumes, dust and other irritants by scheduling building repairs, cleaning or painting during vacations or the summer.
- Take steps to reduce school bus idling time and air pollution from diesel exhaust, which can post a significant health risk to children with asthma. Recommended actions include establishing idling guidelines, working closely with bus companies and bus drivers to implement the guidelines, and working closely with bus companies to retrofit buses with pollution controls and to purchase the cleanest new buses.

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# School Nurse

## Peak Performance Actions

- Use the warning signs of asthma presented in this guide to help identify students with uncontrolled asthma. Provide a list of these signs to teachers, homeroom supervisors, physical education instructors, coaches and parents. If a warning sign is observed, ask them to refer the child for peak flow measurement.
- Once students with asthma are identified, obtain an Asthma Action Plan for each student from their health care provider.
- Encourage the student's independence and self participation in the management of their asthma. Ensure that the student has the knowledge and skills to participate in their self management.
- Get permission from the student's parents to provide a copy of the student's Asthma Action Plan to the student's teacher or homeroom supervisor and physical education instructor or coach. Include all information regarding medication and dosages, triggers and emergency procedures.
- Institute a backup plan for times when you are absent or not immediately available if a student presents with an asthma episode. This should include identification of back up staff with knowledge of the asthma program and access to the student asthma action plans. Backup staff should be trained in proper Metered Dose Inhaler (MDI), Dry Powder Inhaler (DPI), and peak flow techniques; use of a nebulizer; and recognition of the signs and symptoms of acute asthma.
- Review the symptoms and treatment of asthma and be aware of the side effects of the medications used for asthma.
- Review the instructions and practice the use of the peak flow meter and metered dose inhaler.
- Review the list of triggers presented in this program to determine if any identified triggers for individual students are present in their classrooms or elsewhere in the school. When possible, minimize or eliminate the student's exposure to these triggers, especially known allergens and irritants.
- 47 states presently have laws that protect a student's right to carry and self-administer their lifesaving asthma medications as prescribed by their physician. If your school does not have their policy in place, work with the administration, school board, school nurse and local physicians to establish policies that comply with state law. If your state does not have a law or you have any questions, visit [http://www.breatherville.org/cityhall/ch\\_childrights.htm](http://www.breatherville.org/cityhall/ch_childrights.htm). Administer only those medications prescribed by the child's physician, and monitor response to treatment using a peak flow meter.
- Help students understand asthma by helping them learn and practice the skills necessary to manage their illness.
- Inform parents about any asthma episodes at school, and discuss the student's general progress in controlling his or her asthma.
- Develop and conduct in-service programs on asthma for staff.
- Offer student and family asthma education programs.
- Encourage parents and students to consult their physician if they have questions or if the student's peak flow drops below the Green Zone.
- Keep student files secure and confidential.
- Obtain parental permission to send information about asthma episodes (including peak expiratory flow (PEF) readings to their health care provider.

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# **Teacher/ Home Room Supervisor Peak Performance Actions**

- Know the early warning signs of an asthma episode, and have a copy of each student's Asthma Action Plan. Review the plan, based on peak flow, with the school nurse or designated school health coordinator, student, and parents. Know what to do in case an asthma episode occurs.
- Develop a procedure with both the student and parent for school work missed due to an asthma episode.
- If a student is not feeling right – for example is feeling drowsy or tired, or his or her behavior is different – notify the school nurse. The school nurse will consult the student's Asthma Action Plan, assess the student, and take appropriate actions.
- Know the potential side effects of asthma medications and how side effects may affect the student's classroom performance. Refer any problem to the school nurse and parent(s). Some side effects of medicine that warrant referral are nervousness, nausea, jitteriness, hyperactivity and drowsiness.
- Reduce identified asthma triggers in the classroom – chalk dust, flowering plants, laboratory animals, and strong odors (colored markers, crafts/ paint, perfumes, chemicals or cleaning solvents) – to help students who have allergies.
- Encourage students with asthma to participate fully in physical activities. Allow them to adjust their activities if they are recovering from an episode.
- Help students with asthma feel more comfortable with their illness.
- Educate classmates about asthma so they will be more understanding and supportive of students with asthma.
- Avoid creating a stigma of asthma by treating the student the same as you would any other student.
- Keep student files secure and confidential.

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# PE Instructor/Coach

## Peak Performance Actions

- Have the child's Asthma Action Plan available and know what to do if an episode occurs during exercise.
- Support the student's peak flow monitoring program with exercise, if it has been recommended by the student's physician.
- When their asthma is under control and their peak flow is in the Green Zone (80% to 100% of personal best) with no asthma symptoms, students with asthma are able to play all sports. If their peak flow is in the Yellow Zone (60% to 80% of personal best), the child should limit activity. If the child's peak flow is in the Red Zone (below 60% of personal best), the child should be taken to the school nurse or designated health coordinator. Recognize and respect that recent episodes may limit full participation in strenuous activities.
- Asthma symptoms may exist even if a student's peak flow is in the Green Zone (80% to 100% of personal best).
- A student's medicine enables most students with exercise-induced asthma to participate in any sport that they choose. Ensure that this medication is available for exercise activities and sporting events during school hours and those that take place away from school or after school hours.
- Be alert for the warning signs listed in this Program that may alert you to an asthma episode. Early warning signs include a student's inability to participate in physical activities or simply feeling tired for no apparent reason. Report these warning signs to the school nurse and parents.
- Recognize and appreciate that exercise can trigger asthma episodes, particularly exercising in cold, dry air and extended running. However, medication can be taken before exertion that enables most students with exercise-induced asthma to participate in any sport they choose. Warm-up and cool-down activities appropriate for any exercise will also help the student with asthma.
- Consider keeping a peak flow meter in the locker room or physical activity area for monitoring a student's asthma.
- If you have questions about a student's ability to participate in physical education, consult the school nurse and parents.
- Keep student files secure and confidential.

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# **Guidance Counselor Peak Performance Actions**

- Help all school personnel understand that asthma is not a psychological disease. Be alert for the warning signs listed in this Program which may alert you to an asthma episode. Early warning signs include a student's inability to participate in physical activities or simply feeling tired for no apparent reason. The physical exertion of hard ~~E~~ laughing or crying can also trigger asthma symptoms if the student's asthma is not well controlled. Report any warning signs to the school nurse and parents.
- Provide the same information to the student body so that other children will gain an understanding that a child with asthma is ill, not different, and should not be subjected to ridicule.
- Recognize that learning to cope with asthma, as with any chronic illness, can be difficult. Teachers may notice low self-esteem, withdrawal from activities, discouragement over the stops needed to control asthma, or difficulty making up school work. Special counseling with the student and/or parents may help the student handle problems more effectively.
- Help the student by encouraging independence and self participation in the management of their asthma. Ensure that the student has the knowledge and skills to participate in their self management.

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# Facilities and Maintenance Peak Performance Actions

- Develop an Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Management Plan to identify, solve, and prevent IAQ problems, such as mold growth, improperly maintained ventilation systems, and chemical pollutants from science and art classes. If allergens from classroom animals and cockroaches or other pests are known to cause problems for students with asthma, include allergen control in your IAQ plan.
- Avoid exposing students to fumes, dust and other irritants by scheduling building repairs, cleaning or painting during vacations or the summer when the building is unoccupied.
- Notify Administrator, School Nurse, Teachers, and other staff of any scheduled cleaning or building repairs so that students with asthma can be notified.
- Inspect the building regularly for signs of roaches, mold, moisture, leaks, or spills.
- Establish and follow a regular cleaning and maintenance schedule to help minimize allergen and irritant levels in your school.
- Enforce smoking bans on school property and provide smoking cessation programs for faculty and students.
- Avoid lawn maintenance, such as mowing, during school hours. If not possible ensure that windows and air intake vents are closed.
- Obtain a copy of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) [Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Action Kit](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/toolkit.html) (<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/toolkit.html>) to help staff identify and learn ways to reduce or eliminate pollutant sources in the school environment that may bring about asthma episodes. Other relevant EPA publications include: [Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting Integrated Pest Management](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/brochure/) (<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/brochure/>); and [Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings](http://www.epa.gov/mold/mold_remediation.html) ([http://www.epa.gov/mold/mold\\_remediation.html](http://www.epa.gov/mold/mold_remediation.html)).

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# Parents Peak Performance Actions

- Parents have a vested interest in helping to enhance the “asthma awareness” of those professionals to whom they entrust the education of their children.
- Take a copy of the child’s Asthma Action Plan, from the child’s physician, to the school nurse or designated health coordinator. If no Action Plan is available, provide a copy of the Asthma Action Plan, provided in this program, to the physician for completion. A copy of the plan should be provided to the school whenever it is changed by the child’s physician
- Parents should obtain the appropriate paperwork to the child to self carry and administer medication. If your school does not have the appropriate paperwork, you may use Peak Performance USA’s Administration of Medication Authorization Form. New paperwork must be completed at the beginning of each school year, for each medication, and each time there is a change in dosage or time of administration of a medication.
- Prescription medication must be in a container labeled by the pharmacist or prescriber. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container with the label intact.
- Parent must ensure that child’s medications are refilled when needed.

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# Primary Care Provider Peak Performance Actions

- Physician should provide an Asthma Action Plan for the student to provide to the school. The form available in this program can be used if needed.
- Physician should obtain the appropriate form for self carry and medication in the school such as the Peak Performance USA's Administration of Medication Authorization Form for the student to provide to the school.

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