Coordinator’s Welcome

Welcome back to the start of another busy school term! I hope you had a relaxing holiday break and are looking forward to the school term ahead.

Term 2 marks the second issue of Asthma Foundation Queensland’s e-newsletter for schools! I hope you have found the newsletters to be a valuable source of up-to-date information about asthma and student management strategies for your school.

Sports carnivals are a highlight for many schools during Term 2, however, they often result in asthma exacerbations for some students. In this issue we provide you with some strategies to consider when preparing for your next sports carnival.

World Asthma Day (1st May) is also an important event to record in your school’s calendar! The theme for 2012 is ‘You Can Control Your Asthma’. See page 2 for some ideas about how you can raise awareness about asthma in your school community.

It is important to ensure that majority of your staff have received asthma first aid certification. Term 2 is an ideal time to schedule an asthma first aid training workshop for your school. See page 2 for further details.

For other asthma-related resources, news and events in Queensland, I encourage you to visit the Asthma Foundation Queensland website:

asthmfoundation.org.au

Regards,

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Preparing for Sports Carnivals

Sports carnivals are a fun and enjoyable event in every school, however, they are also a time when students with asthma may be at a higher risk of an asthma attack. Exercise is a major trigger for asthma symptoms, and exacerbations are to be expected on sports days when students are engaging in different forms of physical activity.

There are several steps that schools can take to prevent serious asthma attacks occurring, or to manage students experiencing exacerbations on sports days.

— Ensure staff have received asthma first aid certification. Schedule a training session for your staff with Asthma Foundation Queensland.

— Ensure staff know where Asthma Emergency Kits (AEK’s) will be located during the event. Also ensure that you have a sufficient number of them for the size of the event and location.

— Check the contents of your AEK’s well before sports day. Ensure that in-date reliever medication, spacers, an asthma first aid instruction card and medication record sheet are stored in your AEK’s.

— Publish a notice to parents and carers in the school newsletter to ensure their child is prepared for sports day. You may like to use the newsletter insert provided be AFQ.
Asthma First Aid Training for Queensland School Staff

Would you know what to do if a student at your school had an asthma attack?

Asthma Foundation Queensland is offering all Queensland schools a one-hour asthma first aid training workshop. This training is funded by the Commonwealth Government and provided to schools through the Asthma Child and Adolescent Program.

All staff who receive training are issued an Asthma First Aid certificate valid for three years. This certificate authorises trained school staff to:

- **Purchase** blue reliever medication (such as Ventolin) for storage in a school’s first aid kit, and
- **Access** blue reliever medication stored in a school’s first aid kit and **administer** to a student presenting with signs of worsening asthma

Completion of this training workshop satisfies the specific learning objectives of an asthma management course under S256B(1) of the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996.

**Bookings Essential**

Asthma first aid training opportunities for schools are limited. To schedule a training workshop for your school, please complete a **Training Request Form** and email to a.walton@asthmaqld.org.au

World Asthma Day

Help raise more awareness about asthma in your school community by holding a fundraising event for Asthma Foundation Queensland to celebrate World Asthma Day 2012 (1st May). This year’s theme is ‘You Can Control Your Asthma’. Below are some fun, easy and quick ideas to get you started!

**Fundraising**

- Hold a casual dress day on World Asthma Day (with gold coin donation)
- Morning or afternoon tea cake stall
- Wear a blue accessory on World Asthma Day and provide gold coin donation
- Trivia night for staff, parents and students
- School canteen donates profits on World Asthma Day

**Other Ideas**

- ‘Asthma’ themed school assembly—students to conduct a presentation about asthma
- Hold a Live Well with Asthma community workshop for parents and carers at your school
- Structure lesson plans/assessment items about asthma

For more information about World Asthma Day, or to obtain promotional/educational materials, please visit the Global Initiative for Asthma website:

http://www.ginasthma.org/wad-home.html

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To find out more contact your local Asthma Foundation:

1800 645 130

asthmafoundation.org.au

Supported by the Australian Government
ASTHMA AUSTRALIA and LIVEWIRE

Livewire is a program of the Starlight Children’s Foundation.

Livewire.org.au is an online community to help young people aged 10 to 20 years, and their families, cope with the impact of a serious illness, chronic health condition or disability.

Asthma Australia and Livewire have been working together to provide opportunities for young people with severe asthma in particular. These young people often have their school or preschool life interrupted by hospitalization and absenteeism due to their asthma. This also impacts on their social life and friendships. As a moderated online community with strict registration requirements, Livewire offers a safe and fun alternative for young people living under such circumstances.

The site was recently revamped and now offers members over 13 years of age the chance to connect and share experiences with other young people with similar conditions living in Canada and the United States as well as in Australia. Celebrity chat guests often visit the site for events too. Other features include articles, videos, games, blogs, competitions and the ever popular Livewire Music Player.

Another new development is the Asthma Australia Group now established inside Livewire.org.au—created and managed by Asthma Australia. This provides opportunity for young people to meet others living with severe asthma and to ask questions and have a say, as well as being connected to Asthma Australia and their resources.

The partnership between Asthma Australia and Livewire is supported by the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ).

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

Asthma Australia commissioned a survey of parents and carers of children with Asthma to gather information relating to key messages that they felt were important to share to help others to work effectively in partnership with school and preschool staff to achieve the best outcomes for students in their care.

The goal was to find out:

- What are the important messages
- How these messages could be conveyed

A concurrent survey for education leaders also informed the key messages emerging from this process.

As a result of the findings a brochure is being developed that provides information for parents and carers about working with the staff in schools and preschools to improve health and learning outcomes for their children.

Key messages from the surveys included,

- Talk with the class/home group teacher about your child’s condition and what is normal for them
- Provide the school or preschool with an Asthma Plan
- Update staff at key times, e.g. start of each year; whenever there is a change in their asthma and/or treatment; if they are attending a camp

The brochure will be available later in term 2.