

## BEST PRACTICES FOR ADDRESSING ASTHMA IN SCHOOL

Uncontrolled asthma can have significant impacts on a child at home and in the classroom. However, with the right medications and management plan, children with asthma can stay on track in the classroom and lead an active life. Many schools in New York City have asthma programs and all students in the city can receive medication in school, with the right paperwork. Using these best practices will help make sure a child's asthma is managed during the school day.

### PARENT ENGAGEMENT

- **Engaging families is particularly** is particularly important when it comes to asthma management in schools.
  - If you notice a child may have uncontrolled asthma, contact his/her parent. You should **encourage the parent to visit the child's pediatrician** for an asthma evaluation or connect the parent with pediatricians in the community.
  - All children with asthma should have a completed and **signed Medication Authorization Form (MAF)** on file. This allows the school nurse to manage asthma during the school day and administer medication as prescribed. You can connect parents with the school nurse and encourage them to review all the paperwork and ask any questions.
  - **Provide families with health education information**, like fact sheets and asthma guides. You can also communicate the importance of an Asthma Action Plan. This helps families manage asthma when a child is not in school.
  - Call parents from time to time to **discuss the child's progress**. If you see improvements in their symptoms or class performance, make sure you communicate these to the parent! Positive communication goes a long way!
- **Schedule an asthma parent workshop for families in your school**. Invite parents to learn more about asthma and the different ways it can be managed during the school day. Ask the school nurse to facilitate the presentation or be available to answer questions.

## STAFF ENGAGEMENT

- **Limit exposure to triggers in the classroom.** There are specific items in a classroom that may cause asthma symptoms to surface. Triggers could include strong perfumes or colognes, dust, pet dander, stress, and food allergies. Sometimes exercise is also a trigger, but with proper control, a child can exercise normally!
- Encourage school administrators to **hold a professional development on asthma.** Improving understanding of asthma sign and symptoms and the impact it can have in the classroom can help all school personnel identify students who may have uncontrolled asthma. It will also identify strategies they can use during class, lunch, and recess.