



Breathing Easier

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Arizona Asthma Coalition

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

AUGUST 1, 2009

- **AAC meetings:**
Tuesday, August 25, 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at ADHS, 150 N. 18th Ave., Phoenix, AZ
- **Tuesday, October 27, 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at ADHS, 150 N. 18th Ave., Phoenix, AZ**
- **Go to www.azasthma.org for more information on how you can become involved in the AAC.**

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A Message from the Chair Lilia Parra-Roide, MD

Back to School is Back to Asthma

Parents of children with asthma should make this “Back to School” year the best ever “Back to Asthma” year. A majority of children with asthma get a nice break in asthma symptoms during the summer months. Your child may not even be taking any controller medication or using it consistently. You may even be hoping that the asthma will never come back.

It is very common, however, for children with asthma to experience a return of their symptoms when they go back to school. They are at great risk of having a serious attack. There is a peak of asthma attacks that results in emergency room visits and hospitalizations in the fall months. The attack rate stays high through the fall and winter months, when many children are experiencing viral infections. Asthma is a chronic inflammatory condition and symptoms are triggered by various factors such as allergies, infections or irritants. It is always there, but the signs are not always obvious when the triggers are minimal. It should be treated year round.

Now is the time to take action to prevent these attacks. Now is the time to improve the consistency of taking or

restarting the controller medications. Do not hesitate to make an appointment with your doctor to discuss asthma management for the new school year. Ask your child’s doctor how to best prepare for back to asthma.

Here are a few pointers to plan on:

- *Make an appointment with your doctor
- *Get your child back on controller medication on a regular basis
- *Get an asthma management plan or “action plan” that you can keep at home to refer to and also take a copy to school
- *Talk with your school and find out what resources are available if your child has asthma problems

You’ll be happy to know that the Asthma Coalition recently developed several tools for school nurses to help them be prepared to take care of children with asthma. Your school needs a written management plan to best take care of your child and the rescue medications should be on hand. Some children are mature enough to carry their own medication and this question should be brought up with the child’s doctor.

Taking care of asthma requires many partnerships. Partner with your doctor and also partner with your school personnel.

A Message from the Executive Director Camille Tumolo, MA

Although the pace slows down over the summer months, several important things have occurred that deserve mentioning.

The Board has approved a change to the AAC’s fiscal year from January 1 through December 31 to July 1 through June 30. As a result, we changed the membership year to match the fiscal year. We know this is an inconvenience, but it made sense to do this at this time. Individual membership dues were also increased from \$40 to \$0 per year. For those of you who wish to renew your membership now, you will, in actuality, be giving the Coalition an additional \$25 for an individual membership for this year only. If you do not choose to do that, you may pay for half a year in January, 2010 and then need renew your membership in full in July, 2010. I hope this makes it clear, but if you have any questions, please feel free to

contact me. Now more than ever, we need our members to support the Coalition. See page 5 for application.

The website has a new home at Lifestyles Media Group LLC. Enhancements. Enhancements will be added to the site that many of you have requested. Payment of membership dues, donations and registration for the Arizona Asthma Conference will be available online. It will take some time to accomplish all of this, but it will happen.

We hope to hear about the CDC Asthma Grant, which was submitted by ADHS, by the end of the summer. The grant was very well written and clearly makes a case for expanded asthma surveillance and new program interventions. ADHS is also planning to review and revise the Asthma State Plan, which was written several years ago. We hope to partner with ADHS on revising the Plan.

Legislative Update

Barbara Burkholder



The AZ Asthma Coalition keeps a close eye on the actions of the State Legislature in order to promote our policy priorities:

- Support access to health care for people with asthma
- Promote air quality to minimize exposure to air pollution

The Legislature officially adjourned on July 1st after a long, controversial session. Here are some of the major issues during the Spring 2009 term:

The fiscal year 2009-10 budget, starting July 1st: the state revenue shortfall this Spring

was \$4 billion out of a \$10 billion general fund expenditure. The constitution requires a balanced budget. Governor Brewer called for a temporary 1-cent sales tax increase that the GOP majority rejected. On July 1st the majority passed and sent Governor Brewer a package of budget bills with massive cuts to most agencies. She signed only two of them in order to provide minimal authority for the government to keep operating in July. Her line-item vetoes applied to "excessive lump-sum budget cuts" for the follow-

ing agencies: Health, Environmental Quality and Economic Security. The K-12 Education and Health/Welfare budget bills were also vetoed. Governor Brewer called the legislature back into Special Session to renegotiate the rest of the FY 09-10 budget. On July 6th, a bipartisan effort passed 4 budget bills, restoring K-12 Education funding and maximizing the Federal Stimulus revenue. The remaining shortfall is \$2 billion, so watch for more agency budget cuts, new fees and taxes as negotiations continue during July.

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As a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization, your donations are now tax deductible.

www.azasthma.org

Watch for information about the Fifth Annual Arizona Asthma Conference to be held in May, 2010.



Local Coalitions

Maricopa County Asthma Coalition— Cecile Fowler

For this issue's report, I'd like to focus on the results of asthma screening conducted by MCAC in collaboration with Head Start and Preschool Programs for school year 08-09.

The screening seeks to answer these questions about each child, in addition to providing an assessment of the scope and nature of asthma in young children:

Has the child been diagnosed with asthma?
 If not diagnosed, does the child demonstrate symptoms that look like asthma?
 If diagnosed, does the child's asthma appear to be well controlled?

The answers to these questions were determined through the administration of a screening questionnaire in which the parent or guardian provided answers to 12 questions, most of which pertain to the frequency of various respiratory symptoms or the child's history of treatment for

respiratory ailments. It also asks if the child and/or the child's mother has been diagnosed with asthma.

The parent or guardian of every child screened in the program received a follow-up letter providing the results of the **screening** and some educational information about asthma.

The scored questionnaire designated the child as negative, possible, or positive (already diagnosed) for asthma, based on the scoring of the questionnaire responses. "Possible" letters encouraged parents to pursue medical assessment for asthma. "Positive" letters told parents how to recognize if asthma is not well controlled and how to get help in improving management. "Negative" letters told parents what signs to watch for that might suggest the development of asthma.

To encourage program participation by the Head Starts, the screening program is designed to be self-contained with respect to the services provided, not necessarily requiring any additional services by the school beyond the distribution and collection or administration of the questionnaire and the distribution of the follow-up parent letters.

The letters tell parents what action, if any, should be taken based on their responses to the questionnaire. However, each classroom is provided with summary recommendations. For instance, each child with diagnosed asthma should have an Asthma Action Plan or Individual Health Plan on file, and case workers are asked to assist with referrals to providers if the families need help. MCAC offers assistance in finding resources for medical referrals. This year asthma screening questionnaires were completed for 2,246 children.

The following Head Start and preschool programs participated in the screening activity:

<u>Program</u>	<u>Number of Children</u>
Deer Valley Head Start	126
Chicanos Por La Causa	223
Washington Head Start	626
Pinal-Gila Head Start	861
Eastside Head Start	193
Tempe District Preschools	167
East Valley Jewish Community Center	22
Kyrene District Preschools	22
Guadalupe Head Start	6

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Maricopa County Seeks Student Participants for Essay Contest

The Maricopa County Air Quality Department is seeking junior high and high school students to participate in its Clean Air Make More Essay Contest. The winner of this contest will receive a new laptop computer and a chance to read their essay at the first Inaugural Air Quality Conference on October 20, 2009.

The theme of the essay is "What air pollution means to me and why I think air quality is important." The essay must be 2000 words or less and should be personal and honest. Students can write about their personal experiences, impacts to family and friends or an impact they have had in their school or community. The essay will be graded on the following criteria:

- * Following the theme
- * Quality of writing
- * Organization and content
- * Originality, creativity and depth of thought
- * Impression and effectiveness

Deadline: September 15, 2009. Winners will be notified by October 5, 2009. **Participants must reside and attend school in Maricopa County to participate.**

Essays should be submitted to cleanairawards@mail.maricopa.gov or to the following mailing address: Maricopa County Air Quality Department
Attn: School Outreach Coordinator

1001 N. Central Avenue, Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Make More Essay Contests are available on the following website: <http://www.cleanairmakemore.com/essay-contest.html>.

About Maricopa County Air Quality Department

The Maricopa County Air Quality Department is a regulatory agency whose goal is to ensure federal clean air standards are achieved and maintained for the residents and visitors of Maricopa County. The department is governed by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and follows air quality standards set forth by the federal government.

Your AAC membership dues and donations are now tax deductible. Support the AAC and become a member. Go to our website at www.azasthma.org and join today.

Resources

Bridges to Access

GlaxoSmithKline's patient assistance program for non-oncology medicines, provides GSK prescription medicines to eligible low-income patients without prescription drug benefits.

GlaxoSmithKline patient assistance programs provided medicines valued at over \$438 million (Wholesale Acquisition Cost) to almost 415,000 patients during 2008.

<http://www.bridgestoaccess.com/>

The link to all the Patient Assistance Programs is www.pharma.org.

Trends in Child Health 1997-2006: Assessing Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Asthma

Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
Leigh, Wilhelmina A.; Anna L. Wheatley

Compares the lifetime prevalence of asthma diagnoses and of severe outcomes among African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and white children. Considers possible socioeconomic and demographic factors behind the rise in asthma among low-income children of color.

Published: April 2009
Funder(s): W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Subject(s): Children and Youth; Health; Minorities

AZ Smoking Rates Improve - Will Humble Interim Director, ADHS

Some data's just too good to wait to release. Our upcoming Behavioral Risk Factor Survey that will be completely finished and posted in mid July will show that Arizona's smoking rate among adults improved from 19.7% in 2007 to 15.7% in 2008. There is variation every year in the survey results, but this is a significant drop. Richard Porter checked into the survey results and statistics to make

sure the decrease was statistically solid and they are.

Some of the reasons might be that: 1) 2008 was the first complete year of the Smoke free Arizona Act (which may have motivated some "social" smokers to quit); 2) we have well established quit lines to help people stop smoking www.ashline.org; 3) nicotine replacement therapies (Chantix Nicotine Gum Nicotine Inhaler Nicotine Patch Zyban) that help

people quit are becoming more available and are more frequently covered by health plans; and 4) taxes on cigarettes have continued to increase, making smoking more and more expensive.

Congratulations tobacco prevention team!
<http://www.tobaccofreearizona.com/>





Mission, Vision and Goals

Arizona Asthma Coalition

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The **mission** of the Arizona Asthma Coalition is to advocate for better services and improved quality of life for Arizonans living with asthma through education, partnerships and coalition building.

The **vision** of the Coalition is to eliminate deaths from asthma.

The **goals** of the Coalition are:

- To improve clinical management and care through the use of data, education and advocacy
- To improve public policy for asthma prevention and care in Arizona
- To improve awareness of the Coalition and that asthma is a manageable chronic disease

www.azasthma.org

Local Coalitions - continued

The screening found **13%** (range 9-17% among participating programs) of children had a diagnosis of asthma. **Six percent** (range 3-14%) of children who were not diagnosed with asthma scored high enough on the questionnaire to trigger a recommendation for medical evaluation. Of the children diagnosed with asthma, **55%** (range 42-75%) did not appear to have their asthma under control. Reported ranges include only groups with a sample size greater than 100 children, but summary figures include all children screened.

Mariposa Community Health Center, Inc. — Ann Celia Hernandez Martinez

Asthma Day Camp Kazoon Kite 2009 — (MCHC) sponsored Asthma Camp Kazoon Kite from June 2nd-4th 2009 at Mountain View Elementary in Rio Rico

The camp was held with the collaboration of agencies such as Carondelet Holy Cross Hospital and Southeast Arizona Area Health Education Center, (SEAHEC). A total of 14 campers participated this year. Activities included the Open Airways curriculum, cat and mice, run with the parachute, Simon says, asthma charades, drawing, making puppets, asthma puppet show, making mucus, rock wall climbing among many other activities delivered by Teen Health Facilitators from Mariposa Community Health Center and SEAHEC, a Carondelet respiratory therapist, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality staff and Nogales and Rio Rico High School students.

Approximately 20 camper family members had an opportunity to receive Asthma Education by LuAnn Ahumada, Respiratory Specialist from Carondelet Holy Cross Hospital, including asthma facts and asthma medication information, and participated in graduation.

Thank You to everyone who made this camp possible!

For more information on Asthma related programs or information, please contact Ana Celia Hernández Martínez at MCHC (520) 375-6029.



Legislative Update - continued

KidsCare: early in the session, the Legislature planned to reduce eligibility to 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, which would have reduced access for about 25,000 children. An agreement with the Governor restored eligibility to 200% of FPL. However, the KidsCare Parents program was eliminated, affecting 9,000 adults. AAC sent letters to the Governor and all legislators requesting that both programs be preserved.

Eligibility for AHCCCS: in order to collect Federal Stimulus Funds, the eligibility redetermination period for people on AHCCCS was extended from its current 6 months to 12 months. SB1102 was signed by the Governor on 4/24.

Please help us achieve our goal of 100% dues paying members by filling out the form below. **Your donations are tax deductible. Membership dues cover the period from July 1, 2009 to June 30 2010. Checks should be made to the Arizona Asthma Coalition and mail it with the form to:**

Camille Tumolo, Executive Director
Arizona Asthma Coalition
P.O. Box 25098
Scottsdale, Arizona 85255

Arizona Asthma Coalition 2009/2010 Membership Form

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please check the category of membership:

- Individual - \$50
- Family - \$75
- Student/Retiree - \$25
- Local Asthma Coalitions - \$120 - three voting members
- Additional Donation - I want to support the Coalition by giving more!

Sustaining Members: Includes three free memberships, acknowledged on the AAC website and reduced registration fee for the Asthma Conference.

- Platinum: \$10,001 or greater
- Gold: \$5,001 to \$10,000
- Silver: \$1,001 to \$5,000
- Bronze: \$1,000

We want to invite you to become more involved with the Coalition's activities by joining one of the committees listed below. Please place a check by the committee that most interests you.

- Asthma Conference Committee – Plans the annual asthma conference
- Clinical Management Committee – Designs and develops various tools and programs to improve asthma care and management
- Marketing/Development Committee – Creates a brand and a plan for raising funds for the Coalition.
- Policy and Advocacy Committee – Creates policy Coalition resolutions, updates members on current legislation and recommends amendments to the by-laws.
- School Health Committee – Develops tools for school nurses and school health staff.