

Children's Health



Parents Can Prevent Asthma Attacks

(NAPSA)—Seven million children in the United States have asthma and more than half of them will experience an asthma attack this year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—but a few simple steps can make a difference. Asthma, the CDC says, causes children to miss 11 million school days a year, and African American and Hispanic children are disproportionately affected. But there's good news. There are ways to manage your child's asthma and help prevent attacks before they happen.

Managing your child's indoor environment is an important step in reducing exposure to the things that can trigger asthma attacks. Since asthma varies from person to person, you and your doctor should determine a plan to reduce the triggers that most affect your child. Some of the most common asthma triggers are:

- **Tobacco Smoke**—Do not allow smoking in your home or around your children. Asthma can be triggered by the smoke from the burning end of a cigarette, pipe or cigar or the smoke exhaled by the smoker.

- **Pests and Dust Mites**—Pests are attracted by food and crumbs, so vacuum often and keep food in sealed containers. Dust mites are too small to be seen but are found in every home. They live in mattresses, pillows, carpets, fabric-covered furniture, bedcovers, clothes and stuffed toys. Be sure to wash sheets and blankets once a week in hot water. Choose washable stuffed toys. Wash the toys often in hot water and dry thoroughly. Cover mattresses and pillows in dust-proof zipped covers.

- **Mold**—Molds grow on damp materials. The key to mold control is water and moisture control. If mold control is a problem in your



Parents learn about asthma and what can trigger an attack.

home, clean up the mold and get rid of excess water or moisture. Wash off hard surfaces and dry completely.

Help At Hand

Fortunately, for many children with asthma, a charming group of puppets is lending a hand to an effort to educate parents about asthma triggers. Supported by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Ad Council, "The Breathe Easies"—the world's first asthma-centric rock band—is comprised of puppet characters that deliver messages about asthma triggers in songs written and recorded by popular singer-songwriter Parry Gripp.

"Too many Americans suffer from asthma, spending their time at doctor visits and hospitals instead of at school, work and play," said Janet McCabe, acting assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. "Educating children and parents about ways to avoid asthma triggers is an important step in helping control this disease."

Adds Peggy Conlon, president and CEO of the Ad Council: "This campaign is a wonderful and entertaining continuation of our efforts with EPA to help reduce asthma attacks in children."

Learn More

For more information about preventing childhood asthma attacks, go to www.noattacks.org, facebook.com/BreatheEasies, Twitter @EPA and www.noattacks.org/breathe-easies.