



Breathe Easier This Summer: Tips To Control Your Child's Asthma

(NAPSA)—As the school year draws to a close and the temperature rises, children and families everywhere start to look forward to the simple pleasures of summer—jump rope, sunshine, playing ball, and cookouts.

However, for the one in every 11 children in the United States who has asthma—including one in every six African-American children—summer can also bring wheezing, coughing and trouble breathing.

The joys of summer can be challenging if your child has asthma, a common but serious chronic disease. Summer's long afternoons spent playing outside can expose children with asthma to triggers that can bring on attacks, such as increased pollen and allergens from blossoming plants and trees, and increased air pollution on some especially hot summer days.

"While controlling asthma requires daily attention, your child doesn't have to be sidelined," said James P. Kiley, Ph.D., director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's (NHLBI) Division of Lung Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health. "With proper treatment, most children who have asthma can avoid attacks, experience fewer symptoms, be physically active and enjoy summertime."

To make sure your child doesn't miss a thing this season, the NHLBI recommends that you work with your child's doctor and ask him or her to take the following key actions that can help your child—and you—breathe easier.

- Tell you what medication your child needs to control asthma symptoms. Inhaled corticosteroids, taken daily, are the most effective medication for reducing the inflammation that causes asthma symptoms in people who have persistent asthma.

- Give you a written asthma



Children and their parents may both breathe easier when asthma is under control.

action plan that spells out what to do every day to control your child's asthma, and how to handle symptoms or asthma attacks.

- Check your child's asthma control at regular visits, and adjust medication as needed to keep your child's asthma in control.

- Schedule regular follow-up visits (at least every six months).

- Work with you to identify your child's asthma triggers, such as allergens like pet dander and pollens and irritants like tobacco smoke, sprays and pollution, and talk about ways your child can avoid them.

- Ask before you leave the doctor's office or pharmacy for someone to show you and your child how to use each prescribed medication and device correctly.

You can visit the NHLBI's website at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/asthma for more information, and to order publications from the NHLBI's National Asthma Education and Prevention Program: *So You Have Asthma, How Asthma-Friendly Is Your School?*, *Asthma & Physical Activity in the School* and a sample Asthma Action Plan.