Childhood Asthma in North Carolina: How Can We Do Better?

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North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services

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“Asthma accounts for 14 million lost days of school missed annually.”¹

“Asthma is the third-ranking cause of hospitalization among those younger than 15 years of age.”¹

“The estimated cost of treating asthma in those younger than 18 years of age is $3.2 billion per year.”¹

“One of the problems that we can and must overcome is uncontrolled asthma among children and adolescents.”²


## Lifetime Prevalence & Current Prevalence: Children vs. Adults, by Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lifetime Prevalence</th>
<th></th>
<th>Current Prevalence</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children Adults</td>
<td>Children Adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td>18.7% 9.5%</td>
<td>11.7% 4.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td>15.5 12.3</td>
<td>10.0 8.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>All</strong></td>
<td>17.1 10.9</td>
<td>10.8 6.8</td>
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* Children: 0-17 years of age; adults: 18+ years of age
# Lifetime Prevalence & Current Prevalence among Children, by Race/Ethnic Group*

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Lifetime Prevalence</th>
<th>Current Prevalence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>African American</strong></td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White</strong></td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Minorities</strong></td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All</strong></td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Children: 0-17 years of age
Emergency Department/Urgent Care Center Visits: Children vs. Adults, by Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Visits in Past 12 Months</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>28.1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Children: 0-17 years of age; adults: 18+ years of age
# Hospitalizations Due to Asthma: Children vs. Adults*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hospitalizations Due to Asthma (per 100,000 population)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>156.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>117.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>127.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Children: 0-17 years of age; adults: 18+ years of age
Enhancing Local Asthma Efforts (ELAE) Project Leads

- Albemarle Regional Health Services
- Caldwell County Health Department
- Cleveland County Health Department
- Davidson County Health Department
- Harnett County Health Department
- New Hanover County Health Department
Purpose of the ELAE Project

• Continue to build community capacity around addressing asthma

• Replicate and/or establish successful asthma related interventions

• Ultimately – reduce the burden of asthma in North Carolina!
Selected Projects – A Snapshot

- **Air Quality Flag Program** – Highlights the Air Quality Index and local air quality forecasts. Educational programs and resources go along with the raising of a colored flag to match each day’s air quality forecast.

- **Coaches’ Clipboard Program** – Originally developed in Utah and Minnesota; a tool for educating coaches, physical education teachers, and other recreation personnel who work with children with asthma. Includes an interactive educational tool and a clipboard outlining procedures for working with children with asthma.

- **Smoke Free Dining** – Promotional activities for the NC Smoke Free Dining Campaign; includes resources for restaurants aiming to go 100% smoke free.

- **Love My Lungs** – Promotional project outlining the effects of secondhand smoke on asthma.
Selected Projects – A Snapshot (cont.)

- “Kids with Asthma Can... Play, Learn, Sleep” – Asthma awareness community campaign originally developed by WGBH in Boston; features Arthur characters from successful children’s books authored by Marc Brown.

- Cultural Competency – Workshop and training program on issues relating to cultural competency and asthma outreach; targeted for local asthma coalition or work group representatives and health care professionals.

- Asthma Action Planning for Childcare Centers – Focuses action plans for children in the Birth-4 years age group; promote and disseminate among child care centers
How Can We Do Better?

Increase Awareness

► Recognize the signs of uncontrolled asthma

Promote Asthma Management

► Talk with a healthcare professional and follow an asthma-control action plan
Partnerships

The Asthma Program seeks to work with its stakeholders to inform and educate North Carolina residents about asthma, including:

- School systems and school-based organizations
- Health departments
- Asthma coalitions
- Healthcare providers
- Community-based health organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Respiratory disease organizations
- Other non-profit and private sector organizations
Acknowledgments

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► Emily Iversen, Division of Public Health, N.C. DHHS

The authors dedicate this presentation in memory of Janet Reaves.

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