May is Asthma Awareness Month
It’s time to start planning your activities!

May 5 is World Asthma Day and this year’s event will continue to be organized around the theme “You Can Control Your Asthma.” There will be a special focus this year on young children and communicating the message to parents that “Your Child’s Asthma Can Be Controlled.”

Asthma awareness month provides an opportunity to join forces with the US EPA, NIH/NAEPP, the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA), and other national and international organizations to raise awareness about asthma and improve asthma care throughout Minnesota and the world!

The US EPA has created an Event Planning Kit for World Asthma Month which includes ideas on:
- Holding an asthma awareness event at a school, local hospital, clinic, or library;
- Distributing asthma materials (flyers, newsletters, etc.) and educating parents about environmental asthma triggers;
- Partnering with local organizations to pool resources and increase publicity for your event;
- Collaborating with local leaders/celebrities to boost awareness for your campaigns;
- Garnering media attention for your event; and
- Much more!

Once you have planned your activities, you can share them using the online Activity Submittal Form to promote your event at no cost and gain exposure for your important work on US EPA’s national Web site.

US EPA’s Event Planning Kit and Activity Submittal Form can be accessed at http://www.epa.gov/asthma/awm/index.html

The Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) also has a wide range of resources and suggestions for World Asthma Day at http://www.ginasthma.org/WADIndex.asp
Asthma in Minnesota 2008 Epidemiology Report—Executive Summary

The Minnesota Department of Health Asthma Program has established an asthma surveillance system to better understand and describe the burden of asthma in Minnesota. Tracking different aspects of asthma—the number of people with the disease, visits to the hospital and the emergency room, quality of life, and mortality—are important guides to planning education and intervention programs and to developing policies that are necessary for preventing and controlling asthma in the future.

Since the 2005 "Asthma in Minnesota" report, a number of new data sources have become available to add to the picture of asthma in Minnesota, including statewide data on asthma prevalence in children from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS); data on asthma prevalence among middle and high school students from the Minnesota School Survey; data on tobacco use, secondhand smoke and asthma from the Minnesota Youth Tobacco and Asthma Survey; and comprehensive data on asthma in adults and children from the Minnesota Asthma Callback Survey.

Overall, many of the measures of the burden of asthma have improved since the 2005 report. Asthma hospitalization rates have declined in the Twin Cities metro area, particularly among children. Asthma mortality rates have decreased dramatically. However, there is still much work to be done, both in terms of improving the quality of life for people with asthma and improving the data that is used to track the impact of that work.

**Key Findings**

**Adults with Asthma**
- An estimated 10.9% of Minnesota adults age 18 and older report having ever been told by a doctor they had asthma, while 7.7% currently have asthma. That translates to an estimated 429,000 Minnesota adults who have a history of asthma and an estimated 303,000 who currently have asthma.
- The percentage of Minnesota adults who currently have asthma has increased since 2000; this may be due to a true increase in new asthma cases and/or increased awareness and diagnosis of asthma.
- Women are more likely than men to report having asthma.
- Adults living in the Twin Cities metropolitan area are more likely to report having asthma than adults in Greater Minnesota.

**Children with Asthma**
- An estimated 9.5% of Minnesota children under the age of 18 have ever been told by a doctor they had asthma, while approximately 7.0% currently have asthma. That translates to an estimated 116,000 Minnesota children with a history of asthma and an estimated 85,000 who currently have asthma.

**Asthma Control**
- 33.0% of adults with asthma and 66.4% of children with asthma report that they had been free of symptoms of asthma in the past two weeks.

**Co-morbid Conditions That Affect Asthma**
- 32.7% of adults with asthma also report a diagnosis of depression.
- 29.5% of adults with asthma also report a diagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

**Risk Factors Associated with Asthma**
- Adults with asthma are just as likely as adults without asthma to be smokers (19.3% vs. 18.4%).
- High school students with asthma are more likely to smoke than their peers who do not have asthma (23.4% vs. 15.5%).
- Middle and high school students with asthma are more likely than students without asthma to be exposed to secondhand smoke.
- Adults with asthma are more likely to be obese than adults without asthma (30.7% vs. 23.6%).

**Costs of Care**
- Asthma cost Minnesota an estimated $363.9 million in 2003, including $208.6 million in direct costs of office visits, ED visits, hospitalizations and medication, and $155.3 in indirect costs of missed school and work days.
- Approximately 4% of adults and 9% of children with asthma do not have health insurance.

(cont. on page 3)
COPD Speakers Kit Available

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S. and affects 70,600 Minnesotans (1 out of 25) over the age of 45. Emergency department visits in Minnesota have increased 250% between 1996 and 2005. In 2004, the average total hospitalization charge per patient was $17,066.

The Minnesota COPD Coalition’s Public Relations and Education Work Group has created a Speaker’s Kit that is available to those interested in presenting the information. The Speaker’s Kit can be used to educate patients or health care providers about COPD, its symptoms and its treatment. If you are interested in doing some presentations, or if you have a group that would like to hear the presentations, please contact Heather Steffens at 651-268-7587 or Heather.Steffens@alamn.org.

Patient Question Scripts Now Available on MDH Asthma Website

In order to promote successful self-management of asthma, the MDH Asthma Program, in collaboration with health care providers across the state, has created scripts to encourage and support communication between families and patients with asthma and their health care providers. These scripts consist of a set of questions for patients and families to ask their health care provider to help them understand their asthma better. The first script, “Questions to ask about your child’s asthma” is for parents who have children with asthma. The second script, “Adults – Questions to ask about asthma” was created for adults with asthma. Additionally, “Questions your health care provider may ask you” and a short list of items to bring with you when seeing your provider is also included on the website. All of these documents can be found at the MDH website at www.health.state.mn.us/asthma under the “Educate Yourself” section. MDH would like to thank everyone who provided input and feedback during the development of these scripts. If you have questions regarding the scripts, please contact Susan Ross at Susan.Ross@state.mn.us.

Key Findings (cont. from page 2)

Work-Related Asthma
- 53.3% of adults with asthma report that their asthma was caused or is aggravated by a current or previous job.

Asthma-related Emergency Department Visits and Hospitalizations
- There were more than 15,800 emergency department visits for asthma in 2006.
- Rates of asthma hospitalizations have been declining since 1999 toward the CDC target of 7.9 visits per 10,000 population.

Asthma Mortality
- Asthma mortality rates have decreased dramatically since 1999 with the greatest declines among those 65 and older.
- In 2006, there were 47 deaths due to asthma among Minnesota residents, down from 104 in 1999.

Asthma Self-Management Education
- 34.2% of adults and 51.4% of children with asthma report ever having been given an asthma action plan, a key tool in asthma self-management.

Asthma Management
- 52.7% of adults and 73.8% of children with asthma report having had a routine checkup for asthma in the past year.
- 49.5% of adults and 51.4% of children with asthma report having had a flu shot in the past year.

Environmental Factors That Affect Asthma
- 42.9% of adults and 25.7% of children with asthma have been advised by a healthcare professional to change things in their home, school or work to improve their asthma.
In October 2005 the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) appointed a Guidelines Implementation Panel (GIP). Members of the GIP were selected to represent a balanced yet diverse perspective of asthma stakeholders. An important charge to the GIP was to develop an Implementation Plan consisting of recommendations and strategies designed to identify and overcome barriers to implementing the Guidelines for Diagnosis and Management of Asthma (EPR-3) clinical practice recommendations.

The GIP was tasked with preparing a companion report to the EPR-3, aimed at identifying the top 5 to 10 priority clinical practice recommendations of the EPR-3, shaping key messages around these priorities, and presenting clear and achievable strategies for overcoming known barriers to implementing these clinical practices. Another aim of the report is to motivate healthcare providers and their patients to implement asthma management practices that best align with quality asthma care and quality of life for people who have asthma.

The report describes ways to apply valuable lessons learned from past guidelines implementation efforts. As such, the GIP Report furnishes an opportunity and invites participation within the greater network of asthma stakeholders to:

1) direct or redirect resources toward a coordinated approach that focuses efforts on activities most likely to succeed;
2) seek ways to pool resources and collaborate with partners to extend outreach and impact;
3) assume leadership and a more prominent role within the asthma community for improving guidelines implementation.

GIP Priority Messages

**Inhaled Corticosteroids**
Inhaled corticosteroids are the most effective medications for long-term management of persistent asthma, and should be utilized by patients and clinicians as is recommended in the guidelines for control of asthma.

**Asthma Action Plan**
All people who have asthma should receive a written asthma action plan to guide their self-management efforts.

**Asthma Severity**
All patients should have an initial severity assessment based on measures of current impairment and future risk in order to determine type and level of initial therapy needed.

**Asthma Control**
At planned follow up visits, asthma patients should review level of asthma control with their health care provider based on multiple measures of current impairment and future risk in order to guide clinician decisions to either maintain or adjust therapy.

**Follow up Visits**
Patients who have asthma should be scheduled for planned follow up visits at periodic intervals in order to assess their asthma control and modify treatment if needed.

**Allergen and Irritant Exposure Control**
Clinicians should review each patient’s exposure to allergens and irritants and provide a multi-pronged strategy to reduce exposure to those allergens and irritants to which a patient is sensitive and exposed, i.e., that make the patient’s asthma worse.
For many Minnesotans, burning wood to heat their home is a time-honored tradition and a way to save on heating bills. For others, the aroma of wood smoke often conjures up a romantic or nostalgic ambience.

Unfortunately, wood smoke contains toxics and harmful microscopic particles. The appliance you use, how it’s installed and maintained, and the type of wood you burn all make a difference to both the heating efficiency and the amount of harmful pollution emitted. Other factors that influence wood smoke pollution levels (and human exposures) include the duration and frequency of burning, and weather conditions. Susceptible populations that may be at risk from these exposures include young children and people of all ages with respiratory or cardiovascular diseases.

The following information provides steps that wood-burning appliance owners, their neighbors and communities can take to protect their health and improve Minnesota’s air quality.

### Health Effects of Wood Smoke

Burning wood adds harmful fine particles and toxics to the air. The fine particles or particulate matter (PM) in wood smoke can trigger asthma attacks in a manner similar to diesel exhaust or secondhand cigarette smoke.

According to the US EPA, wood smoke contains a mixture of harmful chemical substances including carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, dioxins, and inhalable PM. These chemicals may be irritating, toxic, and/or cancer causing.

While all of these pollutants are harmful to human health, there is an increasing body of research showing that exposures to fine particles (2.5 microns and smaller) are an important public health concern. Fine particles penetrate deep into the lungs and may even pass through the lungs into the bloodstream. They may trigger respiratory problems, such as asthma attacks and even heart attacks. Fine particles are especially harmful to young children with developing lungs, and people of all ages who have asthma, bronchitis, or other respiratory or cardiovascular conditions.

Breathing air containing wood smoke may:

- Irritate eyes, lungs, throat and sinuses
- Trigger headaches and allergies
- Reduce lung function, especially in young children
- Increase severity of existing lung diseases such as asthma, emphysema, pneumonia and bronchitis
- Increase risks of heart attacks

Long-term exposures to wood smoke may lead to:

- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Increased risks of cancer
- Cardiovascular disease

Smoke from backyard recreational fires can trigger the same health problems and may penetrate indoors to neighboring homes through intake vents or windows. High levels of pollutants leaking from stoves and fireplaces have been measured in some homes with wood-burning appliances. Indoors, think twice before using your older non-certified fireplace or wood stove.

The US EPA says the average wood-burning fireplace creates 3,370 times more fine particles than a natural gas furnace.

(continues on page 6)
Wood Smoke (cont. from pg 5)

Though US EPA-certified wood stoves are much cleaner than uncertified stoves or fireplaces, they still create 165 times more harmful fine particles than a gas furnace. All wood stoves should be inspected and cleaned annually to prevent the buildup of creosote in the chimney and to check for any leaks.

Complaints about Wood Smoke
State agencies have limited ability to respond to individual wood smoke complaints. MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) encourages you to follow these steps if are having health or nuisance problems caused by a neighbor’s smoky appliance:

1. Give your neighbor a chance to be a ‘good’ neighbor. Don’t get angry, most people are responsible and willing to help if asked in a polite non-threatening manner. Calmly tell your neighbor the problem. You may find that your neighbor is not aware that he is affecting your property or your health.

2. Contact your local officials if talking to your neighbors does not yield a satisfactory result. You may want to consider asking other neighbors for support if they are also concerned about emissions from wood stoves. Some cities have nuisance ordinances that allow them to respond to wood smoke complaints. If this issue is perceived by local officials to be a broad or ongoing problem, they may be interested in adopting an ordinance that specifically addresses wood-burning appliances.

Several cities in Minnesota have adopted such ordinances. The city could consider a wide range of options such as restricting the locations of chimneys, banning certain kinds of appliances, and making requirements for chimney (stack) heights or set back distances from property boundaries. For an example of a model ordinance for local governments, see the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Have your local officials contact the MPCA for more information on these ordinances.

MPCA staff can provide further information about wood stove emissions, and other technical assistance if needed. Chuck Strobel with MDH contributed to this article.

Additional Information
Minnesota Department of Health
Particles and Your Health http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/air/pm.htm

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Wood Smoke http://www.pca.state.mn.us/air/woodsmoke/index.html

Always be considerate of family members and neighbors who may have asthma, other respiratory or cardiovascular conditions.

New online directory of Minnesota’s smoke-free apartment buildings launched for 2009

Minnesota renters looking for smoke-free apartment buildings can easily find them by using a new online directory launched this month by the Association for Non-smokers-Minnesota (ANSR). Compiled by ANSR's Live Smoke Free program, the online directory, http://www.mnsmokefreehousing.org/, lists more than 250 Minnesota apartment buildings that are 100% smoke free. The new user-friendly directory provides renters with a free, easy way to search for apartment buildings in their community that do not allow smoking inside the building, including the individual apartment units.

For information on finding or listing a smoke-free apartment building, please contact Live Smoke Free at (651) 646-3005 or info@mnsmokefreehousing.org.

Wood Smoke from Residential Heating. Picture from http://www.pca.state.mn.us/air/woodsmoke/index.html
Beliefs About the Health Effects of “Thirdhand” Smoke and Home Smoking Bans

The objective of this study was to assess health beliefs of adults regarding thirdhand smoke exposure of children and whether smokers and nonsmokers differ in those beliefs. Thirdhand smoke is residual tobacco smoke contamination that remains after the cigarette is extinguished. Data were collected by a national random-digit-dial telephone survey from Sept. to Nov. 2005. The study assessed the level of agreement with statements that breathing air in a room today where people smoked yesterday can harm the health of children. This study demonstrates that beliefs about the health effects of thirdhand smoke are independently associated with home smoking bans. The results of this study suggests that emphasizing the harmful effects of thirdhand smoke on children may be a way to encourage home smoking bans. The complete article can be accessed at: http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/123/1/e74


Camp SuperKids 2009
Registration is Open!

Camp SuperKids, a residential camp for children with persistent asthma, will be held in Loretto, MN, just 22 miles west of Minneapolis, from July 12-17. Children with persistent asthma between 8 – 13 years are eligible to attend. Junior Leaders will be accepted based on an interview process, and should be between 14 – 16 years of age and have asthma. The camper registration form along with information about insurance coverage and available scholarships can be found at: http://www.lungmn.org/asthma/camps.cfm.

If you are interested in volunteering at camp, please e-mail Heather Steffens at: heather.steffens@alamn.org.

2009 Twin Cities Lung Walk
June 7, 2009
Como Park

St. Paul, Minnesota
Registration NOW OPEN!
LungWalk.org
651-223-9561

Research Finds New Cause of Ozone Wheezing and Potential Treatments

Researchers at the NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and Duke University have discovered a cause of airway irritation and wheezing after exposure to ozone, a common urban air pollutant. Using an animal model, the researchers were also able to identify several ways to stop the airways from narrowing. These findings help identify potential new targets for drugs that may eventually help in better treating emergency room patients suffering from wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath. The complete news release can be found at: http://www.nih.gov/news/health/feb2009/niehs-03.htm

The Metro MAC hosted its quarterly meeting December 8, 2008. Twelve coalition members attended the presentation “Nebulizer Nuts & Bolts” given by new coalition member, Christopher Difflay from Neb Doctors.

In January, an asthma medication update regarding HFA inhalers was provided to Saint Francis school nurses and South Washington County school health staff.

On January 26, 2009, Dory Baker, RN CPNP AE-C, a coalition member, spoke on the KMOJ’s live radio show entitled “Health Dialogue.” Dory discussed asthma for half an hour for this primarily African American audience of over 3,000 people per 15 minutes. Dory has been asked to come back in April!

Partners for Asthma Action/Metro MAC’s Community Education & Outreach workgroup has been building capacity to provide a host of asthma education classes utilizing the ALAMN’s programs “Managing Your Child’s Asthma” in English, Spanish, Hmong and Somali and “Asthma 101: What You Need to Know” for parents, childcare providers, school staff and coaches. The following people have been trained as facilitators: Debby Lee, Lao Moua, Paulie Salazar, Jessie Mallinger, Deb Portesan and Kerrie Samaya. Thank you!

In February, group asthma education classes were held at the Jeremiah Program in Minneapolis, Ramsey County Head Start in Saint Paul and the Minneapolis Urban League. Thank you, Diane Sylvester, RCP, AE-C for your excellent presentation!

On March 2, 2009, the Metro MAC hosted a special meeting program entitled “Relationship-Centered Care: Practical Solutions for Effective Communication with Patients [A Focus on Coping Mechanisms & Adherence]” by Melissa Korenblat-Hanin, ACSW, LCSW. On March 3, she also spoke to metro area school nurses with a program entitled “Strengthening School Success with Asthma.” Thank you to Amy Double and Merck & Company, Inc. for sponsoring these events!

**Upcoming Events:**

March 19, 2009: “Managing Your Child’s Asthma”; Jeremiah Program Life Skills Group in Saint Paul; 6:30 p.m.

April 6, 2009: “Asthma 101”; Dakota County licensed childcare providers; Northern Service Center in West St. Paul; 6:30 p.m.

April 8, 2009: “Asthma 101” for childcare providers at Children’s Center; Saint Paul; 6 p.m. and “Managing Your Child’s Asthma” for childcare providers in Hmong; Minneapolis; 6:30 p.m.

April 14, 2009: “Asthma 101” for Dakota County licensed childcare providers; Western Service Center; Apple Valley; 6:30 p.m.

April 20, 2009: “Asthma 101” for childcare providers in Somali; Minneapolis; 6 p.m.

April 25, 2009: “Managing Your Child’s Asthma” for childcare providers in Spanish; Minneapolis; 10 a.m.

April 30, 2009: “Asthma 101” for Hennepin County licensed childcare providers; Brookdale Library; Brooklyn Center; 6:30 p.m.

The Metro MAC is joining forces with Smoke-Free Dakota County to provide a World No Tobacco Day event in conjunction with May Asthma Awareness Month.

If you would like to learn more about the Metro MAC, please e-mail Stephanie at stephanie.kimmes@alamn.org
Erin Simmons is coordinating efforts in the Southwest region until a permanent coordinator is hired. For information about any future SWRAC events, please contact Erin at 507-381-8257 or erin.simmons@lungmn.org

If you are interested in this position please contact Jill Heins Nesvold at 651-223-9578 or jill.heins@lungmn.org

The Southwest Regional Coalition held a coalition meeting on March 10, 2009 in Willmar.

**Upcoming Events:**

April 28, 2009: “Asthma 101,” for Child Care Providers; Willmar; 6:30 p.m.

On December 10, 2008, the West Central Region Asthma Coalition held its quarterly meeting at the Lake Region Hospital in Fergus Falls.

On January 17, 2009, the coalition had a booth at the ‘Because We Care’ Health Fair in Perham.

On February 26, 2009, Connie Graff from the West Central Coalition provided information about asthma at a “Men’s Night Out” event in Fergus Falls.

**Upcoming Events:**

March 25, 2009: West Central Region Asthma Coalition Meeting; Lake Region Hospital in Fergus Falls. Please contact Keely if you would like to attend in person or call into the meeting.

If you are interested in future events in the West Central Region or are interested in joining the coalition, please contact Keely Hyland at 218-299-7180 or keely.hyland@co.clay.mn.us.

The winter months certainly did not bring hibernation for the Northeast Regional Asthma Coalition (NERAC)!

Throughout the past few months “Asthma 101” for child care providers was presented to the staff of 6 preschools. Thank you to Hibbing Parent’s Nursery School, Benedictine Preschool in Duluth and Steps of Faith Daycare in Silver Bay for hosting these training programs. Another “Asthma 101” including information on sleep apnea was presented by NERAC member, Greg Boudion (RRT, AE-C) in Aitkin, MN. Two health fairs/tabling events were held in the region reaching over 300 people. We were excited to partner with Merck to bring Dr. Toussman to Duluth to present to over 50 regional health professionals, “Activating Patients – Turning Challenges into Opportunities to Improve Patient Outcomes” Appreciation is offered to NERAC member Andy Kadlec from Merck and Company. NERAC is continuing its promotion of the Coach’s Clipboard. New links to this asthma education for coaches can now be found on both FitCity and Arrowhead Youth Soccer Association’s websites.

In other news, NERAC voted unanimously at the last coalition meeting to offer a resolution of support for the legislation currently in the Minnesota legislature which prohibits smoking in cars when children age 17 and under are present. An educational article on this topic from NERAC was printed in one of our local papers.

Duluth’s Chester Bowl held their Winter Carnival, sponsored in part by the MDH Tobacco-Free Communities grant, the MAC and ALA of Minnesota.
They celebrated the 5th anniversary as a tobacco free ski hill and park. Several of the day's games taught kids the importance of having healthy lungs. In a game on the frozen pond kids did activities while breathing through straws to learn about how it feels to have asthma. An informational board nearby showed kids some of the common asthma triggers including pollen, dust mites, and tobacco smoke. Over 350 kids and adults enjoyed the 2009 Winter Carnival.

Upcoming Events:

Duluth's Chester Bowl Winter Carnival.

Game to teach kids the importance of Healthy Lungs at Duluth's Chester Bowl Winter Carnival.

Central MAC continues to have a presence at health fairs and community events, including the 10th annual Potpourri for Parents and Providers Conference held February 21, 2009. We continue to provide educational programming around asthma and would welcome your requests for a variety of asthma curriculums we have available. If interested in these opportunities please contact Alicia Bauman at 320-309-7359.

For more information on any of these or other asthma events in Northeastern Minnesota, please call Jan Salo Korby (218) 726-4721 or email: jan.salo.korby@alamn.org

Upcoming Events:

March 17, 2009: Child Care Provider in-service; Zimmerman

March 18, 2009: Central MAC Coalition Meeting; CentraCare Health Plaza – Hughes Matthews Room; 3:00-4:30 p.m.

April 21, 2009: “Asthma 101”; Albertville /St. Michael Schools

April 21, 2009: Coalition Meeting; St Mary’s Medical Center – Regional Heart Center Conference Room or by phone; Duluth; 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Central MAC is partnering with Smoke Free Communities and CentraCare Clinic’s QUITPLAN Center to host the game. This is the only game of the season that the stadium is entirely smoke-free. Please contact Alicia Bauman 320-309-7359 if you’re interested in tickets.

**150 free tickets available for those with asthma and their families (limit 4 per family).

For more information or if you are interested in joining the MAC, contact Alicia Bauman at 320-309-7359 or CentralMNAsthmaCoalition@gmail.com
Andrea Monk is the new MAC Coordinator for Southeast Minnesota. Andrea has a Masters of Public Health in Health Education from the University of South Florida and is a certified health education specialist. After graduation she took a job with the American Cancer Society (ACS) in Rochester, MN where she worked as a Cancer Control/Patient Services Specialist for almost 7 years. Following her years with ACS she began working with Winona County as their Safety Coordinator, and in 2007 transferred to the position of Health Educator with Winona County Community Health Services. Her current position involves work with youth tobacco prevention, public safety, emergency preparedness, and human sexuality education. Andrea looks forward to working with the SERAC and hopes to help revitalize asthma education and activities in Southeast Minnesota.

SERAC has continued to collaborate with Steps to a Healthier Rochester to support children and adults with asthma and their families. Their Asthma Action Plan Project was featured on Good Morning America March 2, 2009. Go to http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/OnCall/story?id=6985825&page=1 to see the article and view the interview entitled “New Ways to Treat Asthma.”

On March 7 & 8, 2009, the Southeast Region Asthma Coalition had a booth at the Winona Radio Home Show.

During the upcoming months the coalition is planning to be involved with several area events including local community events and health fairs, as well as planning events and media for World Asthma Awareness Month.

Upcoming Events:

April 3, 2009: Quarterly Southeast Region Asthma Coalition Meeting at Olmsted County Public Health; Rochester

For more information about how to participate in the next coalition meeting or any of the events, please contact Andrea Monk at 507-457-6400 or amonk@co.winona.mn.us

In January, 2009, “Asthma 101” courses were held in Glencoe and in Mankato, educating a total of 28 child care and foster care providers.

On March 6, 2009, a coalition meeting was held via conference call.

Upcoming Events:

March 31, 2009: “Asthma 101” for child care providers; Mankato; 6:30 p.m.

April 1, 2009: “Asthma 101” for school staff; Hutchinson

April 6, 2009: South Central MAC Coalition meeting; Glencoe Regional Health Services; Glencoe; 4:30 p.m.

May 3, 2009: Super Asthma Sunday at the Panther Field House; Glencoe

June 7, 2009: South Central MAC will have a team at the ALAMN Lung Walk

For more information on the South Central Asthma Coalition or upcoming events please contact Erin at 507-381-8257 or erin.simmons@lungmn.org

Asthma-Friendly Products: Do They Help Reduce Symptoms?

Asthma-friendly products are becoming more popular. If you’re like most people with asthma, your asthma symptoms can be triggered by things in your home. Purchasing "asthma-friendly" products — products that claim to reduce asthma triggers — may seem like a good step, but you may be wondering if they’re worth it. While there’s no sure way to tell how much a particular product will reduce your asthma triggers, go to http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/asthma-friendly/AS00033 for some tips to keep in mind when evaluating asthma-friendly products.
Breathing Space, a quarterly respiratory disease newsletter, is produced by the Minnesota Department of Health Asthma Program. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide health professionals, school nurses, and community members with current research, information, and resources on respiratory disease.

This newsletter is supported by Grant/Cooperative Agreement #U59/CCU522470 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

Questions about lung health?
Call 1-800-548-8252
American Lung Association Call Center

MDH Asthma Staff Contact Information:
Asthma Program Telephone Number: 651-201-5909
Toll Free Number: 1-877-925-4189
Asthma Web Site: http://www.health.state.mn.us/asthma/

Andrea Baeder, 651-201-5896, email: Andrea.Baeder@state.mn.us
Wendy Brunner, 651-201-5895, email: Wendy.Brunner@state.mn.us
Erica Fishman, 651-201-5899, email: Erica.Fishman@state.mn.us
Janet Keysser, 651-201-5691, email: Janet.Keysser@state.mn.us
Laura Oatman, 651-201-5914, email: Laura.Oatman@state.mn.us
Susan Ross, 651-201-5629, email: Susan.Ross@state.mn.us
Janis Smith, 651-201-5909, email: Janis.Smith@state.mn.us

PLEASE NOTE: All MDH staff e-mail addresses have changed and no longer contain the word “health”.

BREATHING SPACE
For more information, or to request this material in another format call the Minnesota Asthma Program at:
651-201-5909
MN Relay Service TDD
1-800-627-3528

To receive this newsletter electronically, go to:
http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/asthma/Newsletter.html
and click on -Subscribe to Breathing Space.

Editor
Andrea Baeder, MPH

Production
Janis Smith, OAS, Sr.

Commissioner of Health
Sanne Magnan, MD, PhD