

## Prevention First: School Health

# Managing Student Asthma and Food Allergies at School

**Challenge:** Schools are responsible for providing a healthy learning environment that supports the academic success of all students. Having asthma or a food allergy can make it more difficult for students to reach their academic goals. In California, asthma affects over 1.2 million children and is one of the biggest contributors to student absenteeism causing over 1.2 million missed school days each year.<sup>1</sup> Like asthma, a food allergy reaction can be life-threatening and is a growing health concern in the school environment. Additionally, fear of an allergic reaction may limit a student's social and daily activities at school. When a child's chronic condition is well-controlled, he or she stays in class, performs better academically, and the community benefits as a whole.

**Objective:** Increase the quality of school-based care for students with chronic conditions.

### Our Commitment to School Health:

- Provide support to local education agencies to identify gaps in policies and procedures around asthma and food allergy management for students at school.
- Provide training and technical assistance to school nurses and staff on four areas:
  - assessment of students' chronic conditions;
  - providing counseling/referrals to students and families;
  - referrals to various health insurance programs, and;
  - sharing best practices for asthma and/or food allergy management.

### Contact Information and Emphasis:

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<sup>1</sup>California Breathing Asthma Program. California Department of Public Health. *Asthma's Impact on California*. Richmond: CDPH, 2014. Web. 14 Oct. 2014.

