National Asthma Week 1-7 September:
The theme for National Asthma Week 2016 is Become a Better Breather. National Asthma Week coincides with the beginning of spring and as pollens are a known trigger for asthma, this is an excellent time to ensure your child’s asthma is well controlled. Sections of the Asthma Australia website that can help with asthma management include:

- Take the [Asthma Control Test](#) to see if you could make improvements to help your child become a better breather.
- Manage [allergies](#) often linked with asthma, including allergic rhinitis (hayfever).
- Did you know? 90% of people with asthma use their medications incorrectly.
- Check your child’s [technique](#) to see if they are getting full benefit from their medication.
- Regular review of your child’s asthma with your GP and pharmacist will help them to become a better breather.

Need help with your child’s asthma? Contact our Asthma Assist line on 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) and talk to one of our friendly Asthma Health Professionals.

Asthma Management in Winter and Spring:
Asthma is one of the most common chronic childhood conditions, affecting 1 in every 10 children in Australia. Emergency admissions and hospitalisations peak during the winter for children with asthma and flare-ups are often more prevalent during the winter and spring. Good management however can help children with asthma and their carers get through this tricky time of year with more confidence.

Here are a few tips for parents and carers:

- make an annual appointment for an asthma review by your child’s doctor
- update your child’s Asthma Plan at the start of each year and provide a copy to the school
- talk to the teacher and other key staff about your child’s asthma – their usual triggers, symptoms and medication
- provide an in-date blue reliever puffer and spacer for use at school (clearly labelled with child’s name and date of birth)
- help your child understand the importance of taking their preventer medication every day, as prescribed
- ask their doctor about having a flu vaccination
- encourage hand washing and covering one’s mouth when coughing to help prevent the spread of germs
School sports and asthma:
Physical activity acts as a major trigger in up to 90% of people with asthma. Exercise Induced Bronchoconstriction (EIB), commonly known as exercise induced asthma, is the temporary narrowing of the lower airways, occurring after vigorous exercise. People with poorly controlled asthma are at a higher risk of EIB due to the sensitive nature of their airways. This may result in episodes of coughing, wheezing, a feeling of chest tightness/discomfort or shortness of breath, often worsening 5-10 minutes after exercise.

To ensure your child can safely participate in sports and exercise at school, the first step is to make sure their asthma is well controlled. If your child is requiring their reliever medication more than twice a week, it is a good idea to see their GP for a review as this may indicate poorly controlled asthma. Also provide the school with an Asthma Plan from the doctor, particularly before a sport carnival or excursion. The plan will include any instructions for EIB (e.g. use of their asthma reliever prior to physical activity). You can help them check that they are using their asthma devices correctly by watching our videos on the Asthma Australia website.

For support with your child’s asthma please contact your local Asthma Foundation on 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) to speak with one of our Helpline staff.

Asthma app:
The new Asthma Australia asthma app brings together a raft of resources in one convenient place to help you ensure your child’s asthma is managed as well as possible. Sections include information on medications, device technique videos and Asthma First Aid in an emergency. The app is free at the iTunes store (Android coming soon).

For secondary aged students:
Young people with asthma
Asthma Australia has established a Facebook page, Young People with Asthma – Australia, to provide the latest information and research for these young people and their supporters. We recently commenced posting profiles to share young people’s stories and experiences. Refer to the page for details if you have a child who might want to share their asthma story. We are also setting up a Q&A function where an Asthma Educator will respond to young people’s questions through the page.

For primary aged students:
Asthma Kids
Looking for a way to help your child understand more about their asthma or about a friend with asthma? Asthma Kids is an online, interactive tool to help primary school aged children understand what it’s like to have asthma and what they can do to help. Check it out at www.asthmakids.org.au
Asthma Kids

Asthma Kids website is designed for Kids & Parents!
Guided by Chester, kids travel an interactive trail to learn about asthma.
Asthma Kids is for everyone, not only kids with asthma but also to increase awareness in people who don’t have asthma.

asthmakids.org.au