



Engaging Senior High Students in a Coordinated School-Based Asthma Program

Background - Need/Problem

Asthma-friendly schools are those that support a learning environment for students with asthma by adhering to policies and procedures that allow students to successfully manage their asthma. There are several strategies supported by the CDC employed to support Asthma Friendly schools that include providing quality, coordinated school and mental health services, health education, healthy learning environments and support systems for students and their families. Asthma education is vital for students so that their chances for academic success may be realized. Engaging senior high students may often pose a challenge when presenting health education information. Engaging students on Saturdays potentially compounds the problem. We therefore sought to engage senior high students and their parents by providing education with incentives.

Project Goals/Objectives

How many students would complete the course? How many students would demonstrate improved asthma outcomes? Would the digital divide impede student participation?

Project Design

Fifteen senior high asthmatic students were engaged and enrolled into the Asthma Program and provided instruction using an approved asthma curriculum by the American Lung Association – Kickin’ Asthma. After obtaining parental consent, students were enrolled into four, 45-minute virtual Saturday classes. Instruction was provided on an Introduction to asthma basics, warning signs and triggers for asthma exacerbations, use of medications and devices, and self-advocacy with problem solving. After completion of the course, each student was provided with an asthma action plan. Students are being monitored for days missed from school, emergency department visits, number of school clinic visits due to asthma, and number of modules completed.

Project Outcomes

| # students enrolled / # students completed course | # missed days from school before course | # missed days from school after course | # students with ED visits prior to course/ total # ED visits | # students with ED visits after course | # students given Asthma Action Plan | # students with PCP |
|---|---|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 12/12 | 87 | 0 | 7/25 | 0 | 12 | 4 |

Student/Parent Testimonials –

I was told not to play sports because of my asthma. I know now that I can.
 I didn’t know about using my inhaler before playing sports. I know how this helps now.
 I didn’t know that allergies/foods could trigger my asthma. Now I understand & know what to do.
 My school nurse has been very helpful in teaching me and looks out for me.

Challenges and/or Lessons Learned

Conclusion: (1) The digital divide did not impede student participation. Barriers to connectivity were able to be addressed. (2) Saturday classes did not impact student participation. The classes also did not interfere with school classes. (3) Incentives such as inhaler cases, spacers, and gift bags may enhance participation in asthma classes. (4) Monitoring for improved asthma outcomes has been demonstrated thus far in the academic year. (5) Larger sample size needed to prove statistical significance. (6) Lack of a PCP (primary care provider) is most likely an indicator of poor asthma outcomes. The school nurse therefore is crucial to offsetting this adverse social determinant of health.

Poster Authors

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