

School-Based Interprofessional Asthma Self-Management Education Program for Middle School Students: A Feasibility Trial

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What Is the Problem?

- Asthma is the number one chronic illness of school children in Alabama.
- There are health disparities in asthma burden among minority and middle adolescent populations.
- Asthma is a major cause of morbidity, loss of school days, and increased hospitalizations resulting in increased health care expenditures.
- Asthma self-management is essential to proper healthcare of this chronic condition.
- Middle school students are at a pivotal age for taking on more responsibility for self-care.

What Are the Findings?

- A school-based asthma self-management program is feasible and builds on adolescent transitions.
- Nonclinical community-based partnerships are effective in improving health and reducing health disparities by addressing social, behavioral, environmental, and medical determinants of health.
- Teen participants improved with a decrease in asthma symptoms, and an increase in asthma control, medication knowledge/skills, self-efficacy, and asthma responsibility.
- Teens were empowered to take on responsibility for self-management.

Who Should Care Most?

- Children, parents, youth, and adults with asthma.
- School nurses, healthcare providers, teachers, and school administrators.
- State and local health policy advocates concerned about health and health care costs.
- Academics and clinicians interested in promoting health and working collaboratively to improve asthma care.

Recommendations for Action

- Continue to engage with communities including schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods, to provide access to asthma self-management education.
- Continue to involve interprofessional teams in care to support best practices in a health care area that involves multiple disciplines (nursing, respiratory therapy, medicine, and others).