

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RECOGNIZES SCHOOLS FOR ASTHMA MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Health is honoring 17 schools from across the state for their efforts during the 2013-2014 school year to meet the Florida Asthma Coalition’s criteria for excellence in asthma management. Schools were encouraged to work together with community and health system partners to better manage the disease.

Asthma is a chronic lung disease that cannot be cured, but can be controlled. The efforts of these schools will enable students with asthma to gain and keep control of their disease, allowing them to lead healthier and more active lives. Studies show that students with their asthma under control are more present, ready to learn and experience higher productivity levels and test scores.

“Gaining control over asthma is critical for students, their parents, and the school systems,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “We’ve seen an increase in the number of schools recognized from last year and it is important we continue to promote healthy practices and asthma management in all of our school systems.”

The Florida Asthma-Friendly School Recognition Program offered recognition at four levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. Through funding provided by the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation, each school was awarded \$500 to \$1,500 dollars based on their recognition level.

“Leading by example is the best way we can teach our students that healthy lifestyles both inside and outside of the classroom must be prioritized,” said Interim Executive Director of the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation Fred Knapp. “These Asthma-Friendly School Awards encourage the community to come together to better meet the needs of our children.”

Staff at each school completed professional development courses in asthma management, formed a team dedicated to this important issue, established clear processes to identify and support students with asthma, increased awareness among all school personnel and students, and took other actions to create a safe and healthy environment.

The Department recognizes the importance of controlling the disease and was one of 20 states awarded funding for *Comprehensive Asthma Control Through Evidence-based Strategies and Public Health Care Collaboration*. The funding increased from \$300,000 annually to \$750,000 annually for the next five years.

The Florida Asthma Coalition is a group of volunteers from across the state committed to reducing the overall burden of asthma on Floridians. Coalition members promote asthma awareness at the community level and work to expand and improve the quality of asthma education, management, and services through health system and policy changes.

Florida Department of Health

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For more information on how to enroll a school in the program, visit <http://floridaasthmacoalition.com/schools/>

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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