



# Support Safe Access to Asthma Medication in Schools

Asthma attacks can strike at any time, often without warning. Children may have their first asthma attack at school. These episodes may require a 9-1-1 call, potential hospitalization, and can even be fatal. Quick-relief medication (albuterol) is proven safe and effective treatment for asthma. Best practices recommend that schools be allowed to stock this life-saving medication and have trained adults ready to administer it in an emergency<sup>1</sup>.

Children may encounter many asthma triggers throughout the school day. They should always have access to quick-relief medication that can quickly reverse the blockages in their lungs. Albuterol is **easy to administer**, **inexpensive**, and **very safe**.



A [new Wisconsin law](#) allows schools to stock bronchodilators for emergency use regardless of an existing student prescription. School boards just need to adopt a policy to allow for this practice.

Ensuring access to rescue medication is part of guidelines-based response to asthma emergencies<sup>2</sup>. Without accessible quick-relief medication, schools must generally call 9-1-1 when an asthma event occurs. These calls mean expensive ambulance rides and possibly trips to the emergency department, resulting in learning disruptions and parents missing work. In contrast, schools that stock quick-relief asthma medications are able to intervene quickly and may avoid 9-1-1 calls entirely.



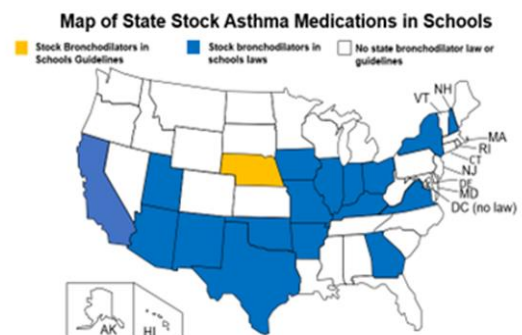
**In one study, 84% of students returned to the classroom after an asthma event when provided a stock inhaler<sup>4</sup>.**

## Benefits of allowing schools to stock quick-relief asthma medication:

- Improved student safety
- Fewer unnecessary ambulance calls
- Reduced work absence for parents
- Reduced cost and educational disruption
- Students return to the classroom

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<sup>1</sup> National Asthma Public Policy Agenda, 2022 Update. American Lung Association. <https://www.lung.org/getmedia/4c554601-a822-46f9-98aa-1bf6edc6782a/natasthmapubpolagenda2022update>.

<sup>2</sup> Managing Asthma: A Guide for Schools. US Dept of Health & Human Services. [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/resources/lung/NACI\\_ManagingAsthma-508%20FINAL.pdf](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/resources/lung/NACI_ManagingAsthma-508%20FINAL.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Managing respiratory emergencies at school: A county-wide stock inhaler program. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33581200/>