

The Center for Children's Health

led by Cook Children's

Act on the Data

ASTHMA

A guide to:

Promising and evidence-based practices (PEP) for **community-based** approaches to improve children's health

Prepared by Community Health Outreach



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What is a promising or evidence-based practice (PEP)?

There is no uniform definition for PEP, but the term is used by many organizations to refer to programs or practices that have demonstrated some kind of effectiveness through outcomes.

Organizations that make recommendations from intervention research findings generally use a review panel of experts (internal, external, or both). These panels review research using specific criteria to evaluate for effectiveness. Organizations use different terms for programs or practices supported by data. It is important to note the key organizations in specific areas of prevention and what terms they use to refer to PEP, such as:

- Promising practice
- Evidence-informed practice
- Evidence-based practice
- Best practice
- Research-based practice
- Science-based practice
- Potentially effective practice

For all Promising and Evidence-based Practices (PEP) Documents

Purpose of this Guide

Cook Children's Promise:

Knowing that every child's life is sacred, it is the promise of Cook Children's to improve the health of every child in our region through the prevention and treatment of illness, disease and injury.

Overview

To help fulfill this promise, Cook Children's Health Care System began implementing assessment strategies in 2008 to determine the status of children's health within our service region, identify health priorities for action, and support additional community collaborations to implement solutions. The first step in this process was conducting the **Community-wide Children's Health Assessment and Planning Survey (CCHAPS)**, covering a six-county service region which includes Denton, Hood, Johnson, Parker, Tarrant and Wise counties. CCHAPS helped to fill many gaps in child health data for children ages 0-14 in North Texas, and CCHAPS was re-administered in 2012 and in 2015.

Cook Children's confirmed that a common denominator among communities successful in creating sustainable improvements in children's health was community-based, collaborative approaches based on evidence-based practices. Cook Children's Community Health Outreach department (CHO) was already working collaboratively to provide health and safety information and practices to help prevent oral health disease and to help prevent injury to children in our community. Those efforts expanded to include fostering new community-based coalitions throughout the service region.

In 2010-2011, Cook Children's worked to engage communities by hosting county specific child health summits to unveil children's health data. CHO formed community groups to review the data, choose priorities for action, and facilitate new coalitions in five counties by providing coalition coordinators and serving as the lead organization.



Evaluate community solutions in light of your resources

A helpful way to review suggested promising and evidence-based practices (PEP) is to assess community resources and assets. This can provide a road map for potentially effective interventions for the community, as the community resources and assets are an existing infrastructure around which an intervention can be implemented. For example, access to a local, national advocacy group, university research program, and local health organizations can provide a pre-set group of stakeholders that can guide and lead the implementation of best practice in the community.

Benefits of this Guide

This PEP guide was created to support coalitions and communities in choosing promising/evidence informed or evidence-based strategies as they developed specific strategic action plans for their priority issues. This resource is available for asthma, child maltreatment prevention, childhood obesity, oral health, mental health and preventable injuries.

It will become clear in the next section that varying definitions of “best,” “promising,” and “evidence-based” practices exist. For the purposes of this resource, we refer to them collectively as “promising and evidence-based practices” or PEP. However, when other sources are quoted we use the term(s) exactly as they are used by those sources.

Most publications on community asthma interventions use the words “effective” and “model program.” However, systematic review groups that have evaluated intervention outcomes also use terms such as “potentially effective,” “recommended program,” and “innovative program.” Any of these terms may be used to refer to a promising or evidence-based practice.

Additional Information

Most organizations conduct research according to their own standards of practice and design (in addition to any preset standards by a licensing or credentialing body). Some experts suggest that locating a uniform definition for PEP with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or any other national entity is a problem because one uniform definition or model does not or should not exist. Many organizations adhere to methodology structured by a higher authority, e.g. Prevention Research Coordinating Committee at National Institutes of Health (NIH). Research findings are disseminated through publication or by the organization, and some organizations draft policy and guideline statements based on their own research findings or those of others.

An example of an organization that has defined PEP for their interest area is The Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD). They developed a method for reviewing suggested programs and practices to help disseminate effective practices to dental health professionals. The organization has devoted considerable effort to “Best Practices Projects” and has become a leader in educating other organizations. A link to their “Introduction to Best Practices” presentation may be found at: [ASTDD Introduction to Best Practices](#)

The ASTDD Best Practice Concepts, *which can apply to any interest area*, are:

- A best practice is a methodology that, through experience and research, has proven to reliably lead to a desired result.
- Using best practices is a commitment to using all the knowledge and technology at one’s disposal to ensure success.
- Best practices do not have one template or form for everyone to follow.
- “Best practice” does not commit people or organizations to one inflexible, unchanging practice.

- Best practice is a philosophical approach based around continuous learning and continual improvement.
- Learning and transfer of best practices is an interactive, ongoing and dynamic process that cannot rest on a static body of knowledge.

(Source: ASTDD website, originally accessed June 9, 2011 from www.astdd.org.)

Where are PEP found?

It can be overwhelming to search through the large pool of potential programs and practices for a specific area of prevention. Fortunately, several key organizations work toward locating and evaluating PEP for many areas of community health. Narrowing the search by topic and knowing where to search can help reduce the amount of information to sort through.

Internet research should start with the major database websites for PEP by health topic. The databases below contain analyses of community health intervention methods (either one study or many studies grouped by intervention method) and provide recommendations on their effectiveness.

We have linked to relevant asthma areas in the databases below to get you started; however, there is much more you can explore.

Database Websites with Community-Based Asthma Intervention Links	Link(s)
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Innovations Exchange	AHRQ Innovation Profiles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asthma • Asthma, childhood
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP) – Best Practices Review Panel	AMCHP Best Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs and Topics
Centers for Disease Control: Listing of Potentially Effective Community-Based Interventions for Asthma	Community-Based Interventions
Child Trends: What Works for Child and Youth Development: Tools for Improving Services to Children and Youth	Child Trends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of programs (all topics)
Cochrane Collaboration Reviews	Cochrane Collaboration Reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational interventions for asthma in children • Home-based educational interventions for families of children with asthma

Database Websites with Community-Based Asthma Intervention Links	Link(s)
Cochrane Collaboration Reviews (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions for educating children who are at risk of asthma-related emergency department attendance • Individualized management plans for asthma in children and adults
Evidence for Policy and Practice Information (EPPI) and Coordinating Center	EPPI Center
Healthy North Texas Promising Practices	Healthy North Texas
Promising Practices Network on Children, Families, and Communities (Archived as of June 2014)	Promising Practices Network
The Canadian Best Practices Portal for Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention	Canadian Best Practices Portal for Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
The Community Guide	The Community Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asthma: Home-Based Multi-Trigger, Multicomponent Environmental Interventions
Using What Works for Health	County Health Rankings and Roadmaps

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website (www.cdc.gov) can also be searched by Disease/Condition for additional resources and publications. The CDC site serves as a good overview of the other federal agencies/offices that are studying or researching the health topic and links are provided through the Disease/Condition pages.

An academic literature search can build the “big picture” of what programs and practices have been published as well as provide citation information for future reference. This search will include most of the studies and recommendations that are found on the big database websites, and may include new studies that will compliment previous research findings.

Another method for researching PEP is to search by the topic name in an internet search engine, i.e. “community asthma interventions” in Google or in Google Scholar. This usually serves to reinforce what has already been located elsewhere; however, sometimes there are coalitions, groups and foundations that will be discovered using this method that haven’t been recognized or studied as widely that can provide useful tools for community partners.

After becoming acquainted with the wide offering of research and recommendations, you should consider contacting field experts for confirmation and guidance on the findings and other suggestions. These may include authors on research studies, academic and governmental institutions centered on the research topic, and professionals in the community.

How do you review/investigate PEP?

You should begin by looking for common themes and phrases. It will save time in organizing findings and composing a later summary if themes or common phrases are recorded from the beginning of the research process. Another helpful approach is to print pages or copy the website addresses from the internet sites and academic studies. Sort print pages by intervention theme or method such as common phrases – this forms the basis of a research outline and summary. This can serve as a roadmap for others without this knowledge to be able to understand and replicate these findings in their community.

Lessons learned

The Community Health Outreach Department at Cook Children’s has researched and used some promising and evidence-based programs. We have learned that:

- Some evidence-based programs cannot be replicated “in the whole” because of factors such as differences in available resources to implement a program, community differences, differences in target population, etc.
- Programs can be developed by following the research as much as possible, by making adjustments to meet the needs and resources of the local community.
- Benefits of maintaining a continual study of PEP include development of more robust and effective strategies and interventions and the continual professional development of staff and community volunteers who use these resources and approaches.
- Because it can take years to gain evidence behind a program, some evidence-based programs may contain graphics and a presentation style that does not necessarily fit with modern communication styles. The programs may be more instructive as opposed to interactive, and may not address a social media campaign.



Asthma Resources

Sample community approaches using PEP

Background

A wide variety of both public and private organizations have implemented intervention efforts to decrease the impact of asthma in the community. Sometimes these efforts duplicated or overlapped existing efforts, prompting a national conference in 2000 co-sponsored by the American Lung Association and Kaiser Permanente, "Asthma Prevention, Management, and Treatment: Community-Based Approaches for the New Millennium."

This conference brought multiple asthma-related groups together for dialogue and the development of collaborative intervention strategies. This conference initiated development of community-based materials by multiple groups who collaborated on design, evaluation and implementation.

Many promising and evidence-based community asthma intervention methods recommended by organizations today were created and studied by numerous groups in both public and private sectors. For example, the CDC publication [Strategies for Addressing Asthma within a Coordinated School Health Program](#) serves as the foundation for many school-based asthma interventions developed by a variety of organizations, including the American Lung Association.

While intervention efforts vary in leadership, audience and implementation, common features can be found in intervention programs that demonstrate effectiveness. Interventions that focus on community and cross-agency collaboration, clinical provider engagement, audience - tailored content and delivery, as well as consideration and inclusion of family and other prevalent ecosystem influences are more likely to report positive outcomes (Clark, Mitchell & Rand, 2009; Clark, Lachance, Milanovich, Stoll & Awad, 2009). Support for models utilizing these common features can be found in recommendations from The Community Guide, The Cochrane Collaboration, and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) as well as numerous published academic articles.



Sample PEP Community Approaches

Asthma Friendly Schools Initiative – American Lung Association

The Asthma Friendly Schools Initiative is a comprehensive toolkit for use by community groups in creating school-wide systemic change for asthma care improvement. It has been widely evaluated with positive results in school systems across the country and was developed in response to the conference on “Asthma Prevention, Management, and Treatment: Community-Based Approaches for the New Millennium” in 2000.

Link: [Asthma Friendly Schools Initiative Toolkit](#)

Children’s Hospital Boston Community Asthma Initiative (CAI)

The Community Asthma Initiative was created by Children’s Hospital of Boston as a case management program to address asthma outcomes in targeted neighborhoods. The initiative includes case management, home visitation, community education and public policy advocacy. Participants are identified through Emergency Department and inpatient admissions for asthma to Children’s Hospital Boston. Link: [Community Asthma Initiative](#)

Healthy Learners Asthma Initiative (HLAI) – Minneapolis Public Schools

The Health Learners Asthma Initiative is a comprehensive school-community initiative to improve asthma management and support students in learning. Program elements address each grade level, before and after school programs, clinics and health care sites, involving parents and the community, and environmental factors. A unique element is the integration of an Asthma Resource nurse who helps make system improvements and provides education and case management. Link: [Healthy Learners Asthma Initiative](#)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation - Allies Against Asthma

Allies Against Asthma is a group of community coalitions in seven regions focusing on policy and system change to improve health and quality of life. Coalition membership includes diverse community representation to combine both public health and clinical approaches to improve asthma outcomes. The Center for Managing Chronic Disease at the University of Michigan provides administrative support to the coalition sites.

Link: [Allies Against Asthma](#)

The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia Community Asthma Prevention Program (CAPP)

The Community Asthma Prevention Program (CAPP) is a comprehensive, community-based program based at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia that works toward improving asthma management in Philadelphia. The program has grown to include community classes, home visitation and education, primary care provider education, school engagement and case management. CAPP currently receives funding from the Merck Childhood Asthma Initiative. Link: [Community Asthma Prevention Program](#)

Key organizations – Provide prominent, fundamental research and information on asthma

American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology

The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) is a professional organization with more than 6,800 members in the United States, Canada and 72 other countries. The membership includes allergist / immunologists, other medical specialists, allied health and related healthcare professionals—all with a special interest in the research and treatment of allergic and immunologic diseases. Link: [American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology](#)

American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is an advocacy and research organization whose goal is the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. Link: [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

American Lung Association

The American Lung Association (ALA) is an advocacy and research organization whose goal is to create awareness of lung disease and adaptation of practices that support lung health. It is a leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. Link: [American Lung Association](#)

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) provides practical information, community based services and support to people through a network of regional chapters, support groups and other local partners around the U.S. AAFA develops health education, organizes state and national advocacy efforts and funds research to find better treatments and cures. Link: [Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America](#)

Asthma Community Network

The Asthma Community Network is a networking database that provides a searchable listing of community-based approaches to asthma interventions as well as continuing education and mentorship opportunities. The Network provides the Communities in Action Exemplary Award to successful programs as supported and voted on by Network members. In addition, the Network provides a model for impacting asthma entitled the “Asthma Change Package.” Link: [Asthma Community Network](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a component of the US Department of Health and Human Services, works to provide the expertise, information, and tools that people and communities need to protect their health through health promotion, prevention of disease, injury, and disability, and preparedness for new health threats. Link: [Centers for Disease Control](#)

Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a governmental agency whose mission is to protect human health and the environment. Within the EPA they coordinate a community health outreach program to ensure environmental management is integrated into comprehensive asthma interventions. Staff members partner with the local community to help identify and implement effective community-based interventions. Link: [Environmental Protection Agency Community Outreach & Education-Asthma](#)

Healthy People 2020

Healthy People 2020 provides science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving the health of all Americans. For 3 decades, Healthy People has established benchmarks and monitored progress over time in order to encourage collaborations across communities and sectors, empower individuals toward making informed health decisions, and measure the impact of prevention activities. Link: [Healthy People](#)

National Asthma Control Initiative (NACI)

The National Asthma Control Initiative (NACI) is a multi-component initiative led by the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (part of the National Institutes of Health) whose purpose is to engage stakeholders to improve asthma outcomes. The NACI uses two reports, “Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma” and “Putting the Guidelines Implementation Panel Report in Motion” as guidance to bring asthma efforts in line with evidence-based recommendations. Link: [National Asthma Control Initiative](#)

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) supports targeted research to understand the causes of and develop preventions and treatments for asthma and has done so since 1971. NIAID research focuses on understanding how the environment, allergens, and genetics interact with the body's immune system to cause the disease and aggravate the symptoms. Link: [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases](#)

US Department of Health and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services. HHS works closely with state and local governments, and many HHS-funded services are provided at the local level by state or county agencies, or through private sector grantees. Link: [Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Additional Resources: Local, State, National Organizations and Relevant Reports

A sample of additional resources that highlight community-based, evidence-informed practices:

Local

1. [AIR – Asthma Indoor Environmental Responsibility Coalition sponsored by Keller ISD](#)

The AIR coalition works to assist in establishing a framework for addressing asthma within Keller ISD. It provides resources for the district's staff, students and parents related to asthma management. The coalition also provides resources to improve indoor air quality related to asthma triggers in the school and home environment and assists the district in community involvement activities related to asthma education. Link: [AIR – Asthma Indoor Environmental Responsibility Coalition](#)



2. [North Texas Asthma Consortium](#)

It is the mission of the North Texas Asthma Consortium (NTAC) to develop and implement charitable, educational and scientific projects focused on the vision that North Texans with asthma will realize optimal health and quality of life. This is done by increasing awareness and promoting research to improve the delivery of asthma care in North Texas. The NTAC also communicates with local asthma coalitions, health care providers and provider organizations, patients and families, community-based organizations and governmental partners; as well as collaborates with groups to improve indoor and outdoor air quality. Link: [North Texas Asthma Consortium](#)

State

3. [Department of State Health Services – Texas Asthma Control Program](#)

The Texas Asthma Control Program (TACP) is located within the Chronic Disease Branch, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section at the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). In collaboration with other state organizations and community partners, the TACP strives to improve the quality of life for Texans living with asthma. Link: [Texas Asthma Control Program](#)

National

4. [Asthma Management and Education Online](#)

This is a free web-based education module from the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. It was established to build knowledge of asthma assessment and monitoring, control of environmental factors, pharmacologic management, and patient education. Course content conforms to the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program 2007 Expert Panel Report 3: Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma. Link: [Asthma Management and Education Online](#)

5. [Asthma and Allergy Network Mothers of Asthmatics](#)

The Allergy and Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics (AANMA) is a leading nonprofit family health organization whose mission is to eliminate unnecessary suffering and death due to asthma, allergies and related conditions through education, advocacy and outreach. Link: [Asthma and Allergy Network of Mothers of Asthmatics](#)

6. [Asthma and Physical Activity in the School](#)

This is an easy-to-read booklet from the National Heart, Blood Institute, which was revised in 2012. It is written for teachers, coaches, and families who want to help students with asthma take part in sports and physical activities. It discusses how to help students control their asthma and follow an asthma action plan. Link: [Asthma and Physical Activity in the School](#)

7. [Association of Asthma Educators](#)

The Association of Asthma Educators (AAE) was founded in 1998 and is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality education to a multidisciplinary group of asthma educators. AAE's membership includes nurses, nurse practitioners, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, doctors, physician assistants, community health workers, case managers and social workers. The AAE strives to raise the competency of diverse individuals who educate patients and families living with asthma. Link: [Association of Asthma Educators](#)

8. [Communities in Action: National Asthma Forum](#)

The report of this recent forum entitled "A Systems-Based Approach for Creating and Sustaining Effective Community-Based Asthma Programs" provides a snapshot of high-performing asthma management programs. The programs described demonstrate that the *System for Delivering High Quality Asthma Care* provides the foundation for programs to achieve enduring health improvements for people with asthma. Link: [A Systems-Based Approach for Creating and Sustaining Effective Community-Based Asthma Programs](#)

9. [Cook Children's Center for Children's Health, Childhood Asthma: A Guide to Action](#)

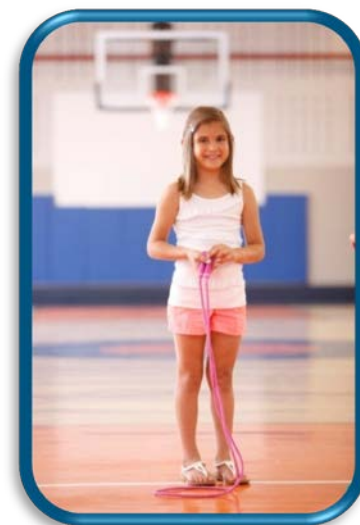
Cook Children's hosted a think tank in December 2010 to convene community experts to discuss childhood asthma. This group used a novel ecosystem model for children's health to provide strategic focus in understanding the complex interactions that characterize the universe of a child with asthma. This guide is the report of their work. Link: [Cook Children's--Childhood asthma: A guide to action](#)

10. [Environmental Protection Agency: Asthma Home Environment Checklist](#)

This checklist is designed for home care visitors. It provides a list of questions and action steps to assist in the identification and mitigation of environmental asthma triggers commonly found in and around the home. Link: [Asthma Home Environment Checklist](#)

11. [Initiating Change: Creating an Asthma-Friendly School](#)

A tool developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for use in engaging schools and communities in creating asthma-friendly schools. Through this website, the CDC also provides slide presentations available for download on the basics of asthma for use in educating staff or community members. This is considered a science-based strategy by the CDC. Link: [Initiating Change: Creating an Asthma-Friendly School](#)



12. [Managing Asthma: A Guide for Schools](#)

The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (part of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, a sector of the National Institutes of Health) and the U.S. Department of Education published a book entitled [Managing Asthma: A Guide for Schools](#). This resource is a basic guide for school systems seeking action steps toward improvement in the care of students with asthma. It addresses multiple audiences within the school from administrator to maintenance staff. This resource contains evidence-based elements. Link: [Managing Asthma: A Guide for Schools](#)

13. [Managing Asthma in Schools: What Have We Learned? – Journal of School Health](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention along with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute joined forces with the Journal of School Health to publish a special section of their journal entitled [Managing Asthma in Schools: What Have We Learned?](#) This publication includes articles pertaining to intervention programs studied within various school settings. Link: [Managing Asthma in Schools: What Have We Learned?](#)

14. [National Asthma Educator Certification Board](#)

The National Asthma Educator Certification Board (NAECB) strives to promote optimal asthma management and quality of life among individuals with asthma, their families and communities by advancing excellence in asthma education through the Certified Asthma Educator process. An asthma educator is an expert in counseling individuals with asthma and their families how to manage their asthma and to minimize its impact on their quality of life. Link: [National Asthma Educator Certification Board](#)

15. [Strategies for Addressing Asthma within a Coordinated School Health Program](#)

This resource is based on elements of school-based education and intervention developed at the national conference in 2000, “Asthma Prevention, Management, and Treatment: Community-Based Approaches for the New Millennium,” as well as the eight components of the Coordinated School Health Program model used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.. These strategies can be used to develop a school plan and compliment [Managing Asthma: A Guide for Schools](#), published by the National Asthma Education Prevention Program and the U.S. Department of Education. Link: [Strategies for Addressing Asthma within a Coordinated School Health Program](#)

16. The Community Toolbox

The mission of the Community Toolbox is to promote community health and development by connecting people, ideas and resources. This is a global resource for free information on essential skills for building healthy communities. It offers more than 7,000 pages of practical guidance in creating change and improvement.

Link: [The Community Toolbox](#)

17. What works for Asthma Education Programs: Lessons from Experimental Evaluations of Social Programs and Interventions for Children

This Child Trends Fact Sheet from January 2012 reviews seventeen random assignment intent-to-treat asthma education programs that are geared toward educating children and youth on ways to effectively manage their chronic condition. Overall, 13 of the 17 programs had a positive impact on at least one child/adolescent outcome area, three programs had mixed results, and one program was not found to work. Link: [What works for asthma education programs](#)



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