

# Provide professional learning to build all staff understanding of asthma

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Develop inclusive systems' from the Guide:  
[Asthma and learning](#)

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## **Includes:**

- Identify staff PLD needs
- Partner with outside agencies
- Utilise partnerships
- Asthma-friendly schools
- Recognise signs of distress
- Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Asthma and learning](#)

Strategy: [Develop inclusive systems](#)

Suggestion: [Provide professional learning to build all staff understanding of asthma](#)

Date

07 July 2026

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/asthma-and-learning/provide-professional-learning-to-build-all-staff-understanding-of-asthma](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/asthma-and-learning/provide-professional-learning-to-build-all-staff-understanding-of-asthma)

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## Identify staff PLD needs

Identify the professional development all staff need

Do all staff know how to:

- ✓ recognise asthma symptoms
- ✓ recognise worsening symptoms of an asthma attack
- ✓ respond appropriately in the event of an asthma emergency
- ✓ administer correct doses of asthma medication
- ✓ follow school or service systems and processes, such as emergency procedures, accessing medication, and asthma action plans
- ✓ recognise asthma triggers and know how to avoid them
- ✓ plan for and respond to exercise-induced asthma?

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## Partner with outside agencies

### Support professional learning

- ✓ [Teachers' asthma toolkit](#) – A free online tool with information about asthma, how asthma affects education, how asthma is treated, common triggers and what to do in an asthma emergency. It includes video clips, animations, classroom resources and lesson plans.
- ✓ [Asthma + Respiratory Foundation NZ](#) – Information pamphlets to assist parents and caregivers, educators, and schools.
- ✓ [Asthma New Zealand](#) – Resource and information pamphlets to assist parents and caregivers, educators, and school staff. Asthma Educators are available for asthma education sessions.
- ✓ [DHB Public Health Nurses \(PHNs\)](#) – Schools are allocated a PHN to support and advise on children's health and liaise with family doctors, specialists, and other health providers.
- ✓ [Breathe Hawke's Bay \(Facebook\)](#) – Asthma education for schools and early childhood services.
- ✓ [Can Breathe Canterbury](#) – Asthma education for schools and early childhood settings that covers understanding asthma and recognising an asthma attack, as well as asthma first aid.
- ✓ [Tū Kotahi Māori Asthma Trust](#) – Meeting the needs of Māori. Available to whānau who live in the Hutt Valley, Wainuiomata, or Upper Hutt Regions.
- ✓ [Regional support](#) – Regional partners that provide specialised support, information, and resources to assist people with respiratory disease to manage their health. Services are either free or charge a small fee.

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## Utilise partnerships

Facilitate opportunities for family, whānau, children, and young people to share and contribute to the exchange of asthma information.

### This may include:

- participation in national asthma foundation awareness day (Breathe Better September, World Asthma Day)
- opportunities for family and whānau to share their expertise in managing asthma
- opportunities for family and whānau to contribute to policies and procedures related to asthma management
- explicitly seeking out parents and whānau of children and young people with asthma and asking, “What would help?”
- making time for frequent and regular conversations with parents and whānau to learn more about effective safety strategies that all staff can use.

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# Asthma-friendly schools

Schools meeting the criteria receive an **Asthma Emergency Kit**, including a reliever inhaler and a certificate.

## An asthma-friendly school:

- identifies children with asthma when they enrol
- has staff educated in asthma safety
- has an asthma policy
- maintains a smoke-free environment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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## Recognise signs of distress

Signs to watch for in a child or young person with asthma:

- ✓ frequently expressing a desire to sit out or saying they are unable to participate in a physical activity
- ✓ sleepiness or inability to focus on activities (This may mean their asthma is not controlled at night.)
- ✓ frequently using a reliever during the day
- ✓ coughing, shortness of breath with minimal activity
- ✓ increased absenteeism.

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## Useful resources



### How does asthma work?

This resource includes a short animation that describes the main symptoms and treatments of asthma. After watching the video there is the opportunity to answer questions and be part of a discussion thread.

Publisher: TED Conferences

[Visit website](#)



### Living with asthma

Read time: 3 min

Information explaining what asthma is, what causes asthma, and symptoms to look for.

Publisher: Asthma + Respiratory Foundation, NZ

[Visit website](#)

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