



# Protecting the Health of Connecticut's Young People: Brief Reports

## Asthma

One tenth of American children aged 5-17 have asthma.<sup>1</sup> By providing basic primary care and prevention services – such as help with medication management – asthma-related absenteeism and the resulting educational disadvantage of children with asthma can be greatly reduced.<sup>2</sup>

A recent study found strong economic benefits of School-Based Health Care (SBHC) programs for managing childhood asthma. The authors found that nearly half the cost of administering SBHC programs is recaptured through reduced emergency room, hospital, and outpatient expenses.

Without school-based primary care, parents of children with asthma are required to leave work to attend to their children's special health care needs. This indirect cost of childhood asthma, in terms of lost work, costs the nation \$23 billion dollars each year.<sup>3</sup> In terms of primary care for asthma, each dollar spent on supporting a SBHC program results in a net savings of between \$4 and \$5.

SBHCs offer high-quality medical care, provided by clinicians with expertise in child and adolescent health. SBHC clinicians provide asthma education to children and their parents, disease management, appropriate medications, and treatment for acute asthma episodes to maintain optimal health and reduce costly emergency department services.

SBHCs reduce barriers experienced in other healthcare settings including difficulty accessing care, parental loss of work time, and financial stress for families that lack insurance or are experiencing unemployment. SBHCs provide students immediate access to care for many serious health issues that impact school performance and academic success.

### CT School-Based Health Centers

#### Students Receiving Care for Asthma

|  | '07-'08 | '08-'09 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of Students with Asthma             | 1,346   | 1,366   |
| Total Number of Visits                     | 2,343   | 2,996   |
| Of these, Treatment of Acute Episodes      | 675     | 684     |
| Demonstration / Evaluation of Nebulizer    | 218     | 238     |
| Nebulizer Treatments                       | 1,741   | 1,608   |
| Of acute episodes, those returned to class | 89.5%   | 96.4%   |



1 - CDC, 2011 2 - Guo, et al. 2004, *Journal of Adolescent Health*  
3 - Tai and Barne, 2011, *Journal of Community Health*

