

Asthma Adventures

Asthma Camp Activities Manual

was developed for
The Consortium on Children's Asthma Camps

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Coping Activities



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Goals



To experience a variety of coping techniques which help the process of relaxation and asthma management.



To increase communication skills.



To individually develop action plans for better asthma management.



To receive peer support and validation.

Magic Wands

Ages 5-8

Activity Objective:

This activity allows each group member the chance to share in regards to their asthma while realizing which wishes are attainable.



Instructions:

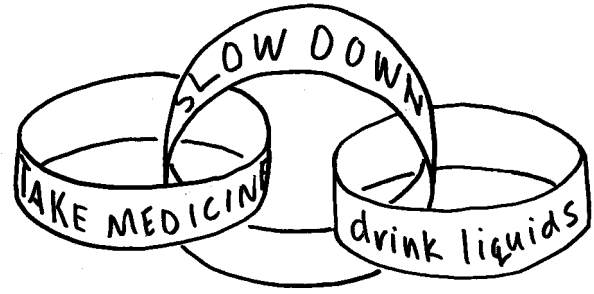
- Group leader provides construction paper and various mixed media: streamers, glitter, stars, tissue paper, glue and tape.
 - Each participant creates an asthma magic wand with the above materials (younger children may use pre-made wands).
 - The wands are then used to make asthma wishes.
- Have each participant create a list of their asthma wishes. Possible wishes might include:
 - Not having to take medication anymore
 - Being able to play sports
 - Being able to have a pet
 - Not wheezing anymore
 - Kids wouldn't make fun of me
 - My parents would stop smoking
 - Nobody would remind me to take my medicine
 - Discuss their wishes in terms of which ones are attainable and methods for achieving them.

Materials Needed:

- Construction paper
- Glue
- Tape
- Streamers
- Tissue paper
- Glitter
- Scissors
- Paper
- Pen
- Paper towel rolls

Coping Chain

Ages 7-12



Activity Objective:

This activity symbolizes the feeling of strength and connectedness when one can utilize a variety of coping mechanisms. Contributions from each group member interlock to form one large coping chain.

Instructions:

- Participants are given 4 (or more) strips of construction paper (1" x 6").
- Each participant writes the 4 best things they do to take care of their asthma on the strips of paper.
- Working as a group, the strips are joined together in a chain-like manner. Tape both ends together of a strip in a circular shape, place second strip through the center of the first circle and tape ends, creating interlocking circles.
- The group members identify and share with the group their coping contribution.
- The chain can be displayed.

Materials Needed:

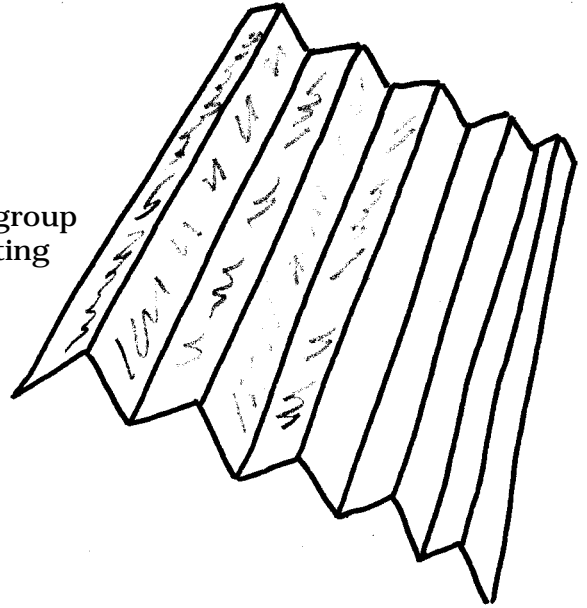
- Construction paper strips (1" x 6")
- Glue and/or tape
- Pencils
- Pens
- Markers

Problem Solving Powwow

Ages 8-14

Activity Objective:

This activity highlights the problem-solving abilities of group members. Peers can offer a variety of solutions illustrating the power of asking for help and receiving help.



Instructions:

- Each group member writes at the top of notebook paper a problem they have relating to their asthma.
- The papers are passed to the left and the receiver writes a solution and folds over their answer.
- The paper continues to be passed and added to until all members have contributed. The paper then arrives to the original owner and he or she reads the responses aloud.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pencils

Helping Hands

Ages 6-12

Activity Objective:

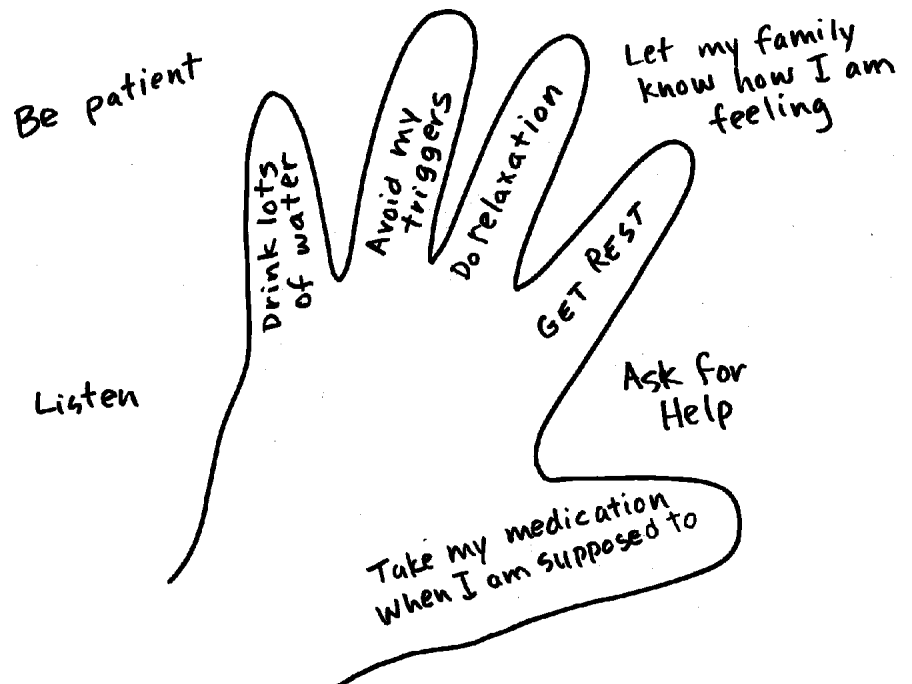
This exercise illustrates the abilities one has to help oneself as well as others. By putting his or her actions into words and images the actions are identified and reinforced.

Instructions:

- Group members trace their hand outline on paper with markers.
- Inside the hand outline the participant writes the positive things they do to help themselves with their asthma.
- Outside the hand they write or draw the helpful things they do for others who have asthma.
- Drawings are shared and discussed by the group.
- *Variation:* After each member makes their hand outline and signs the drawing, the papers are passed to the person on the left. That person then writes one way he or she has noticed the owner taking care of his or her asthma (on the inside of the hand). The drawings continue to be passed until each member makes a contribution and the drawing arrives back to its original owner.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pens
- Pencils
- Markers



Coping Weave

Ages 8-12

Activity Objective:

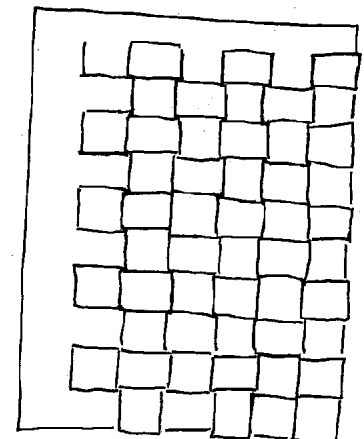
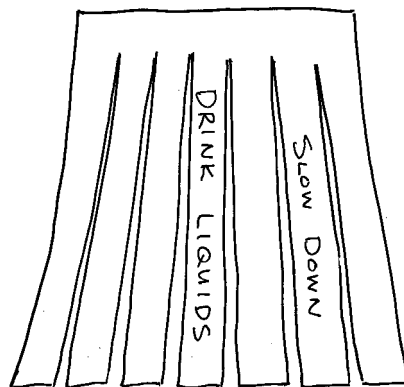
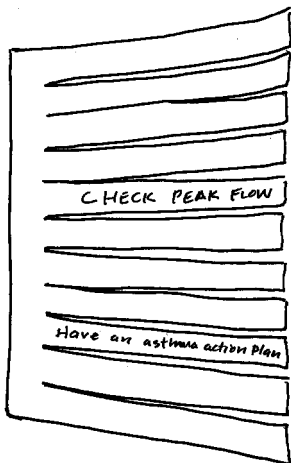
This activity illustrates the importance of using many coping strategies to successfully manage one's asthma. The act of weaving the strategies together symbolizes the strength created when a variety of coping techniques are utilized.

Instructions:

- Group members are asked to cut 2 pieces of construction paper in 1" strips, leaving them attached 1" from the edge. One paper is cut horizontally while the other one is cut vertically.
- Group members then write or draw various coping techniques they use on the paper strips.
- Coping strategies examples:
 - Check peak flows
 - Have an asthma-action plan
 - Warm up before exercise
 - Drink liquids
 - Take medication according to schedule
 - Stay away from triggers
 - Remember asthma medication when traveling
 - Use pillow case encasing, etc.
- The strips are woven together (see illustration below).
- The loose edges are taped to secure.
- Each group member has the opportunity to discuss his or her weaving creation.

Materials Needed:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Pens



Rings of Prevention

Ages 8-12

Activity Objective:

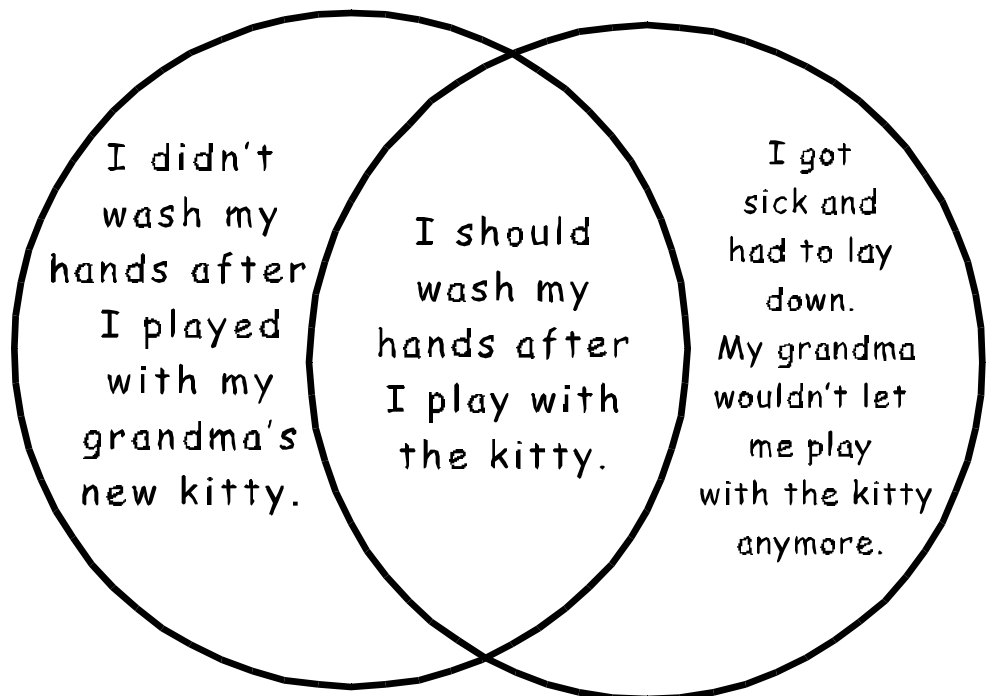
The interlocking circles demonstrate the connection of the “before” and “after” and how certain asthma management techniques can be helpful.

Instructions:

- Group members will draw 2 large interlocking circles on paper (see illustration).
- Group members draw what usually happens just before their asthma worsens in the first circle, and what happens after this episode in the second circle.
- The area where the circles overlap depicts what could have been done differently in terms of better management of their asthma.
- The drawings are discussed and feedback is offered on the various management techniques that are described.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pencils
- Markers

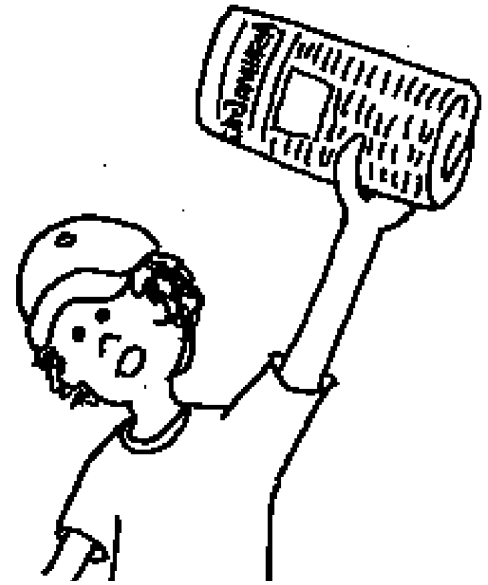


Asthma Gazette

Ages 8-14

Activity Objective:

The newspaper format allows group members to educate others about having asthma. By being assertive and directive, children can feel a sense of control over his or her disease.



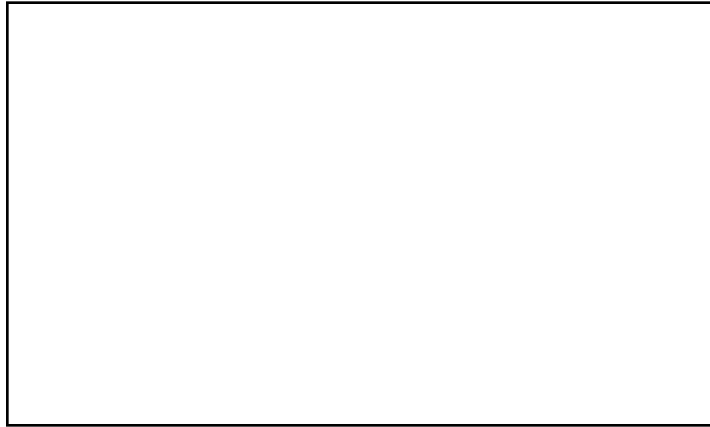
Instructions:

- The group members will write brief paragraphs or articles on what they want others to know about asthma. This may also include cartoons, drawing, or magazine pictures with captions. Interviews may also be done with various camp staff and doctors.
- The above items are arranged in a newspaper format (see template on page 112) and copied.
- Copies are distributed throughout camp.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Copy machine
- Computer (optional)

The Asthma Gazette

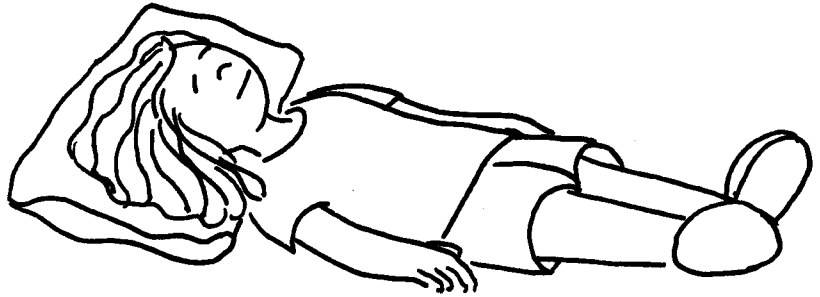


Magical Journey

Ages 6-14

Activity Objective:

Relaxation through use of guided imagery helps participants use creative visual scenes and experiences to relax and breathe ca



Instructions:

- Group leader introduces concept of guided imagery and explains how it is helpful for relaxation.
- Participants get in comfortable position in a quiet and dimly lit area. They should begin by closing their eyes before the relaxation tape is played.
- Play a guided imagery cassette tape or read from a self-written script.
- Older members could create their own guided imagery cassette tape. Each child could create and narrate a scene that they find relaxing, pleasurable and peaceful. The narration should be 3-5 minutes in length. They would choose a background music for their imagery.
- Have a discussion about how guided imagery assisted in relaxation.

Material Needed:

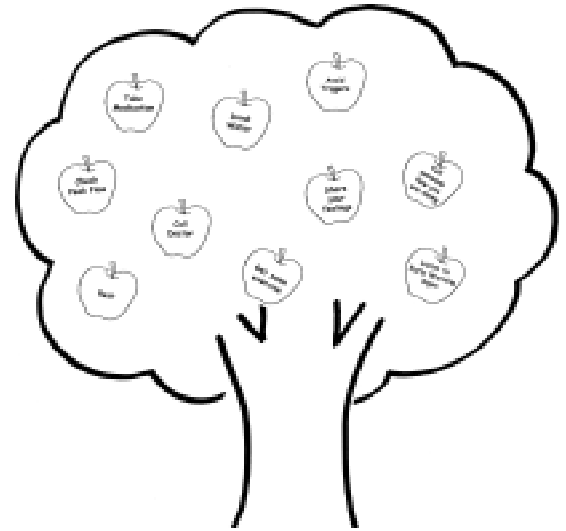
- Guided imagery cassette tape/CD
- Tape recorder/CD player
- Blank tapes (optional)
- A comfortable and dimly lit room

Apple Action Pick

Ages 6-12

Activity Objective:

The act of picking or harvesting can relate to being in control and having a variety of asthma management skills available. By choosing an individualized plan, participants tend to be more adherent, as they have identified what works best for their asthma self-management.

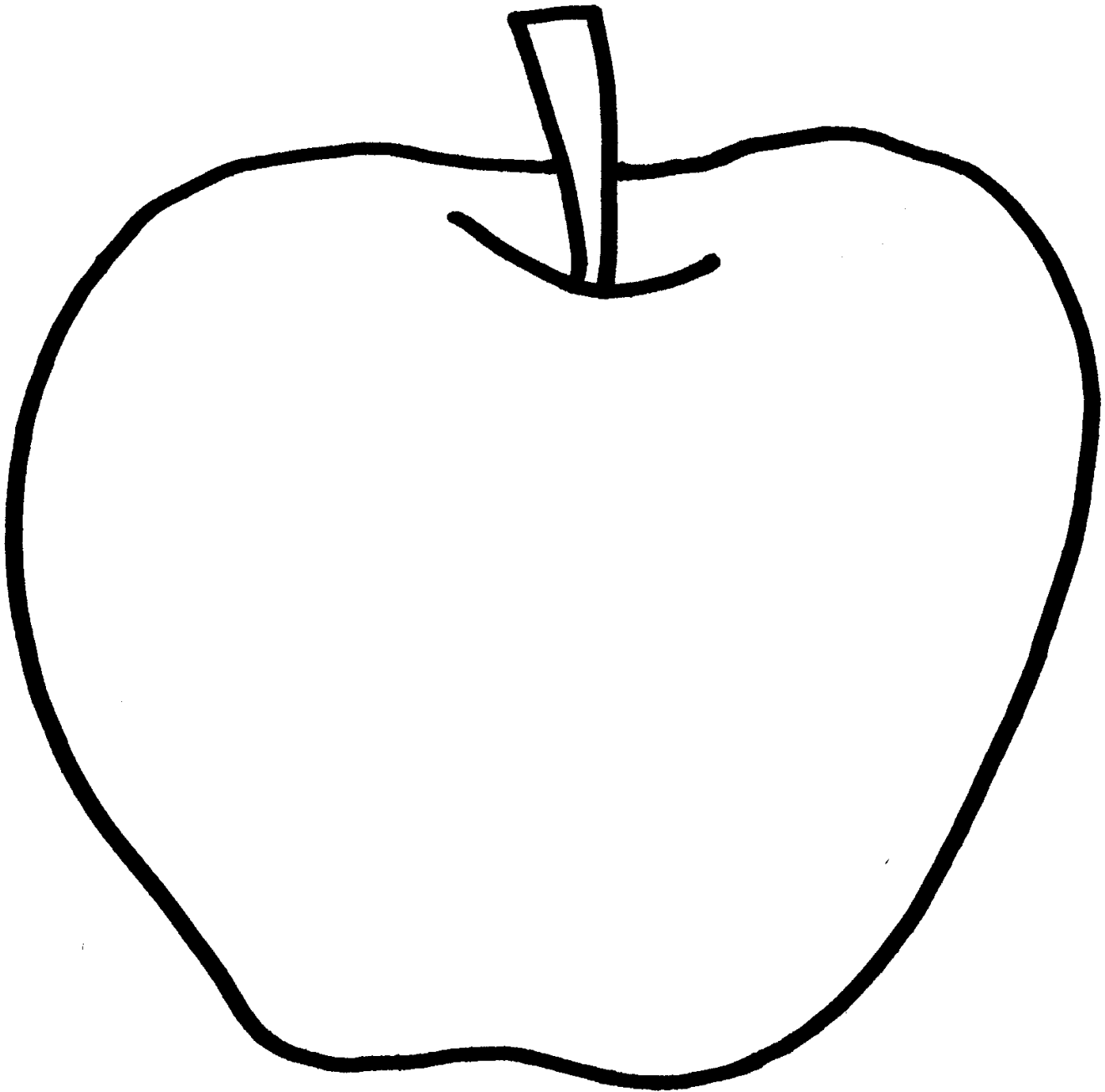


Instructions:

- Group leader draws a large tree on the blackboard or mural paper. Various coping methods and plans of action for managing one's asthma are written on apple-shaped, red construction paper cut outs. (see Apple Template on page 116).
 - Older participants can create the apple shapes and write possible coping methods.
 - Group leader prepares duplicate apples to replace on the tree.
 - Participants are given paper lunch sacks, which they can decorate.
 - Each participant takes a turn to pick from the tree the apple plans that work best for them. (Once an apple is taken, replace it.)
 - Participants discuss the choices they made and how they work successfully and how they will begin to implement the plans.
- Sample action plan items include:*
- Take medication
 - Check peak flow
 - Rest
 - Call doctor
 - Drink water
 - Listen to early warning signs
 - Avoid trigger
 - Tell someone how you are doing
 - Share your feelings
 - Get some exercise, etc.

Materials Needed:

- Mural paper
- Construction paper
- Apple shapes with coping strategies written on them
- Paper lunch sacks
- Crayons and/or markers



Dear Family

Ages 8-12

Activity Objective:

Participants are encouraged to ask for what they need from their family in an effort to help them better manage their asthma.



Instructions:

- Group members will write a letter to their family and ask for what they need in terms of helping them to better manage their asthma. For example:
 - Be calm when my asthma worsens.
 - Let me try normal activities.
 - Don't remind me to take my medicines.
 - Don't bug me about staying away from pets.
- Encourage participants to write about their feelings, specific examples and how they want things to be different.
- Group members decide whether or not they want to read them to the group and if they are going to share them with their family.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pencil and/or pen

Breathing Battle

All Ages

Activity Objective:

This program is a day/evening event dedicated to team building, asthma education, and exercise. This Olympic type challenge is an excellent program for the culminating of camp. It incorporates all of the positive educational messages that have been communicated throughout the summer.



Instructions:

- Children are divided into groups of 12-15.
- Each group needs to have a range of ages to balance the competition.
- Older kids can be group leaders.
- Opening ceremony marks the beginning of the “Breathing Battle”.
 - Program is explained.
 - Each group is assigned a team color. (Wear clothes with team color, headbands, face/body paint.)
 - Team names are passed out.

Suggested Names:

Bronchial Bombers
Lightening Lungs
Atomic Alveoli

Mucus Monsters
Asthma Attackers
Breathing Blasters

Oxygen Obliterators
Pulmonary Pulverizers
Diaphragm Dynamos

- Schedules are passed out.
- Rules are discussed.
- Supplies are distributed.
- Explain point structure:
 - Team spirit – Importance of team spirit, working cooperatively together
 - Creating team song, cheer and banner – All communicating positive messages that reflect the importance of taking charge of their asthma and being in control. Incorporate team name and color.
 - Event performance
- Teams meet individually to strategize their day. Write cheer and create banner.
- Begin events. (See Event Options on page 120.)
- All teams gather and sing team song.
- Judges announce scoring.
- Having an award ceremony to close the “Breathing Battle”.

(continued)

Event Options

- Create a human pyramid using all team members. Once successfully in position each player needs to say one of their asthma medications that they use.
- Relay Races:
 - Alveoli Toss (use egg)
 - Trash liner bag race, 3 legged race (tie ankles together with a scarf)
 - Wheelbarrow race
 - Crab walk
 - Spoon in mouth, hands behind back and place M&M's on spoon
 - Spin around a bat with nose on top of bat's end. Spin 10 times and run
 - Move ball with nose a predetermined distance
 - 2 people run with a pillowcase encasing that has, on top of it, 3 metered dose inhalers without letting them fall
 - Run with water balloon between knees to other side
 - Whole team is attached by putting hands on the ankles of the person in front
 - Have a can/bucket at each end, one filled with water and a sponge and one empty. Run back and forth trying to fill empty bucket with sponge
 - Wet t-shirt run/relay. Put on wet t-shirt and run a distance and give to next person

At the completion of each relay the team suggests an asthma management technique

- Bubble Gum Blowing Contest (list one environmental control suggestion)
- Smooth Muscle Band of War (tug-of-war)
- Mucus Slide Race – with a large tarp/trash-liner type material create the base and use water hoses to keep it wet. Locate it down a slope/hill (not too steep).
- Eating crackers and whistling and then explain what asthma is
- Team song contest
- Team banner judging
- 5 Baskets in a row (with each basket they need to list an asthma trigger)
- Tennis ball volley 10 times
- Team volleyball
- Archery team target totals. Place early warning signs on different parts of target. Assign points for each early warning sign
- Set up a tent and take it down
- Swamp a canoe
- Canoe race
- Team peak flow. Add team's peak flow numbers
- Hula hoop contest

(Additional asthma education questions can be taken from the "Asthma Education Game Question" list on pages 65-66).

Asthma Camp Carnival

All Ages

Activity Objective:

To have a special daytime or evening program dedicated to having fun while reinforcing important asthma messages.

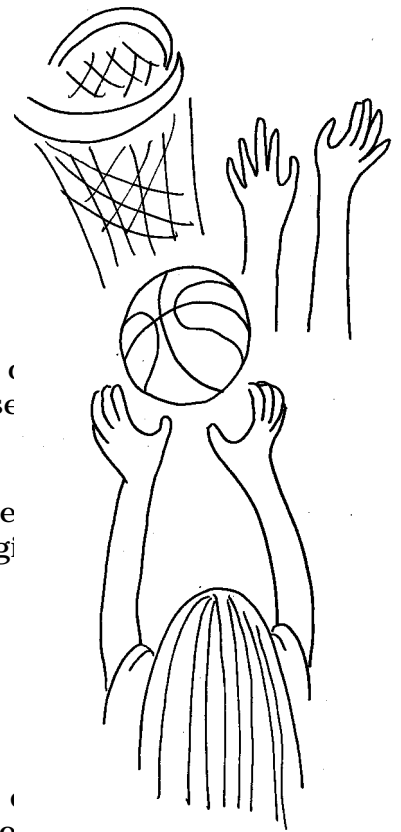
Instructions:

- Group leaders and/or older campers create a designated outdoor or indoor area to set up Carnival booths (tables and signs can be used).
- Each cabin/group is in charge of designing and running booth.

Each booth needs small prizes or tickets that they will give out to the winners of their booth activity. If tickets are given, then a separate gift award area needs to be developed.

- The list of booth options are:

- 1) Musical Mucus Walk – Musical Chairs
- 2) Lung Toss – Throw bean bag through lung target
- 3) Table-Top Spacer Slapshot – Place spacer on end of metered dose inhaler. Use a ping pong ball to shoot with spacer/inhaler into target. There are 2 possible goal targets: long-term controller and quick-relief.
- 4) Pulmonary Putt-Putt – Golf hole (lung-shaped hole), paper towel roll is a tunnel representing a bronchial tube. Players can shoot golf ball directly into target hole or through tube, which is directed into the hole.
- 5) Mucus Monster Toss – Set up a cardboard structure with a cut-out for a group leader's face. Throw sponge at group leader within target. The sponge represents diluting a thick mucus plug.
- 6) Bronchial Burn-out/Bronchial Ball out – Shoot squirt gun at candles to extinguish, representing getting rid of inflammation. A variation includes placing ping pong balls on top of plastic bottles and squirting them off the bottles.
- 7) Peak Flow Pops – Lollipop trees: Color the bottom of sticks red, yellow, green - + representing peak flow zones. Place them into an upright styrofoam cone or paper towel tube, thus hiding colors on stick bottoms. Players choose pops from the "tree". Red – Put lollipop back; yellow – Keep lollipop; Green – Keep lollipop and take another turn. Display peak flow zone poster at booth.
- 8) "Early Warning Sign" Shoot – Set 4 marks where a camper can throw the basketball from. The closest mark is a mild early warning sign – cough; second mark (less mild) – wheeze; third (more significant) – shortness of breath; etc.



(continued)

- 9) **Trigger Duck Pond** – Set up floating ducks (or other floating type item) in a water filled area. Ducks have on the bottom either a trigger, the word “avoid” or “o.k.” Campers choose 2 ducks and one needs to be a trigger and the other needs to be the appropriate response based on their personal asthma triggers.
- 10) **Trigger Ten Pin** – Place large plastic soda bottles with pictures of different triggers into a bowling set-up. Campers are instructed to knock them all down with a medium size rubber/soft ball.
- 11) **Smooth Muscle Band Toss** - Rings represent smooth muscle bands and wooden dowels (16 oz. plastic bottles) represent bronchial tubes. Each camper is given 3-4 rings and they need to throw them on top of the wooden dowel.
- 12) **“Early Warning Sign” Search** – A back drop is covered with early warning signs (wheeze, cough, shortness of breath, low peak flow, runny nose, etc.) Each camper is blindfolded and given an inhaler cut-out with tape on the back or velcro and they have to find the early warning sign and cover it with inhaler.
- 13) **Medication Match** – Set up different buckets labeled: bronchodilator, leukotriene modifier, inhaled corticosteroid, long-acting beta2-agonist, short-acting beta2-agonist, oral corticosteroid, nasal inhaler, etc. Have different bean bags/balls labeled with the medication name. Camper needs to throw medication ball into correct bucket.
- 14) **Tic-Tac-Toe Action Plan in a Row** – Create an oversized Tic-Tac-Toe board with masking tape on the ground. Place 9 different positive asthma actions in the squares (ie, avoid triggers, check peak flow, recognize early warning signs, take asthma medication, drink liquids, warm up before exercise, use a pillowcase encasing etc).