



### Asthma Environmental Checklist for Schools

Asthma triggers can be anywhere; especially in the indoor environment. Everyone does not have the same asthma triggers. However, common asthma triggers can include: dust, pests, mold spores, chemical and other fumes, and tobacco smoke to name a few. See the list below to check and see how asthma-friendly your school is.

Issues Present	Y	N	Recommendations
<b>General</b>			
Moisture/water leaks			Keep it dry; locate and fix sources of moisture/water leaks. Repair plumbing and other sources of water leaks promptly; remove materials that have been wet to minimize mold growth.
Mold/mildew			Clean mold promptly with BPS recommended cleaners.
Pest infestation/droppings			Implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) * Techniques.
Clutter			Clutter creates dust and stagnation. DECLUTTER - use closet space efficiently, limit reading materials, paper, art supplies, furniture, etc. to maximize space and create an environment conducive to learning.
Dust			Clean all surfaces often with a damp cloth, or microfiber cloth; use HEPA air cleaner to exchange air regularly.
Carpeting (worn, old, torn)			Remove large carpeting is most effective, if not possible, use vacuum with a HEPA ** filter regularly.
Plants			Limit plants, heat and moisture can encourage mold growth in the soil and be released in the air.
Animal dander			Animal dander can stick to clothing and can trigger asthma. Use HEPA air cleaner to remove dander from the air; use a lint brush to remove visible dander from clothing.
Tobacco smoke			Establish smoke-free environment. Encourage and provide smoking cessation materials and resource to staff and students.
Walk- off mats at entrances			Ensure that there are walk-off mats at all entrances. Make sure mats are cleaned often. Replace worn and damaged mats to prevent accidents.
<b>Air quality</b>			
Ventilation			Ensure HVAC systems are maintained regularly. Ensure proper fitted filters; change per manufacture's recommendations. Ensure that ventilation units are not blocked.

Humidity			Keep relative humidity < 60 %. Use dehumidifiers as needed. Use air conditioners as needed.
Extreme room temperature (hot, cold)			Maintain heating systems to ensure that indoor temperatures (cool, heat) are adequate and at appropriate settings.
Strong odors (arts & crafts, markers, paint, perfumes,			Establish a fragrance-free environment (perfume, scented lotions, etc.). Use fragrance-free art supplies, markers, paints, etc.
Chemical fumes (bus idling, cleaning products, lab experimental chemicals)			Establish a “No bus idling” policy. Close windows during bus unloading times. Only use cleaning agents recommended by BPS. Avoid using bleach, disinfectants, and products with strong fumes. Ensure proper ventilation and precautions with chemicals used in lab experiments.
<b>Recycling</b>			
Does your school recycle			If no, create a <b>reduce, reuse, and recycle</b> program. Encourage school to adopt program.
Are recycle bins clearly marked i.e. paper, plastic, cardboard, printer cartridges, etc.)			Ensure bins are properly marked, visibly placed and appropriately used. Educate and encourage staff and students of the importance and impact of recycling. Encourage a school-wide practice.

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\*Integrated pest management (IPM) is a prevention-based approach to controlling cockroaches, rodents and/or other pests known to trigger asthma.

\*Pests require food, water and shelter (clutter, cardboard, newspaper) to survive just as all living things. IPM includes:

- Seal all cracks in walls, floors and ceiling (entry sites for pests)
- Use traps (roach motel, mice traps, bait, etc.), keep them out of the reach of children (**chemical sprays are toxic**)
- Remove areas of clutter where roaches like to hide
- Keep food and garbage in tightly sealed containers (Do not leave food or garbage out overnight)
- Clean up all food items as soon as possible after eating
- Keep sink area dry

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\*\*High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) is a special filter that is tested and certified to remove at least 99.9% of particles from the air.

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**Sources:**

EPA-IAQ Tools for school

Jama-mouse-study-2007

Pipatanakul W, Eggleston PA, Wright EC, Wood RA. Mouse allergen, I: the prevalence of mouse allergen in inner-city homes. The National Cooperative Inner-City Asthma Study. *J Allergy Clin Immunol*. 2000;106(6):1070-1074

Back to School Environmental Checklist - [greenflagschools.org](http://greenflagschools.org)

MassCOSH - Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health, School Environmental Checklist