



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008**

**CLEARING THE AIR IN PERTH  
Asthma Week 1 – 7 September 2008**

With asthma affecting 1 in 9 adults and 1 in 6 children in Australia and over 220,000 Western Australians; it is hoped that during Asthma Week, which starts today, the community will access the range of free services being offered to teach people about asthma management, the correct way to use asthma medication and how to save someone's life in the event of an asthma attack.

Every week throughout Australia, more than 2,000 people visit a hospital emergency department with asthma, and almost 800 of them are admitted to hospital. Asthma is one of the greatest causes of hospital admission in children under 12 years, and is responsible for just under 1,000,000 days of school absenteeism nationally every year. Sadly, one Australian dies almost every day from this condition.

CEO of the Asthma Foundation, John Gummer says "In order to reach as many people impacted by asthma as we can, our asthma educators have scheduled educational events at various times and locations, in and around Perth. With so many people mismanaging their asthma, it is hoped and encouraged that the community come along and ask for advice", he said.

"New to the Asthma Week agenda this year is a special interactive education event that is being held in the Perth CBD to conclude Asthma Week on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September. A number of asthma educators will be on hand for the community and a number of interactive and entertaining activities will be run throughout the middle of the day. We invite everyone to stop by and meet with us", he said.

The Asthma Awareness Activity will involve a range of asthma games whereby the community can participate in light hearted competitions including an *Asthma Chocolate Wheel*, during which the community can learn about asthma and have the chance to win small prizes, kindly donated by local businesses. An exercise bike will also be up for grabs for those who partake in activities and drop a business card in to the draw!

During the Asthma Awareness Activity on 5<sup>th</sup> September, a group of volunteers will be conducting an Asthma Week Street Appeal through the surrounding streets of the CBD. The Asthma Foundation urges the community to donate and support those living with asthma and the services and research conducted by the Asthma Foundation.

A number of schools and childcare centres are also getting involved in Asthma Week this year by running their own special asthma focused activities and FUNraising events for asthma.

The Asthma Foundation of WA offers free personalised asthma education sessions all throughout the year. Members of the community are encouraged to access the Foundation's educational services to learn how to best manage their asthma, or their family member's asthma.

To make a donation or for more information about the Asthma Foundation of WA and the services for the community, please visit [www.asthmawa.org.au](http://www.asthmawa.org.au), or phone 9289 3600.

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*...Helping People Breathe Better...*

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Please make contact if interested in scheduling an interview or photograph this week.

Media are also invited to come along to any number of the activities happening throughout Asthma Week.