



MEDIA ALERT

Friday 5th September 2008

BREATHING FRESH AIR IN TO THE PERTH CBD!

Asthma Week 1 – 7 September 2008

Asthma educators from the Asthma Foundation of WA, along with volunteers and a number of students from Sacred Heart College will be taking asthma education to the streets today from 11am – 2pm at Wesley Corner, in an attempt to reach the 220,000+ Western Australians who are living with asthma.

The community and the media are invited to come along to the special Asthma Awareness Activity to learn more about their asthma, triggers, asthma medications and asthma first aid.

CEO of the Asthma Foundation, John Gummer says “The Asthma Awareness Activity is new to the Asthma Week agenda this year and it is hoped that it will help to address the common complacency surrounding asthma. Our message to the community for Asthma Week this year is a simple one - *Asthma is serious. You can take control*”, he said.

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.

“Joining our Asthma Foundation team today is Anne-Maree Ryan who tragically lost her son after he had a fatal asthma attack in 2006. Anne-Maree is an active campaigner for asthma awareness and education and she will be helping to spread the word about asthma today”, 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 great 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!

“A group of volunteers will be conducting an Asthma Week Street Appeal through the surrounding streets of the CBD as part of today’s activities. The Asthma Foundation urges the community to donate and support those living with asthma and the services and research conducted by the Asthma Foundation of WA”, he said.

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, or phone 9289 3600.

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...Helping People Breathe Better...

Media are welcome from 11am – 2pm. Please advise the media contact of your interest in attending and/or to schedule interviews with any of the media spokespeople (see below).

Media Contact: Events Coordinator, Kate Van Saane 0423 856 821
kate.vansaane@asthmawa.org.au

Address:

Wesley Corner (corners of William St and Hay St) – please note there is no parking on site.

Media Spokespeople:

Asthma Foundation CEO – Mr. John Gummer

Asthma Expert, Community Education Manager – Yvonne Ashworth

Asthma Awareness Ambassador – Anne-Maree Ryan