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MEDIA RELEASE

ASTHMA SPIKE EXPECTED WITH RETURN TO SCHOOL

As thousands of Western Australian children return to school, parents, teachers and hospitals will be preparing for a peak in asthma related hospital presentations. Statistics reveal that the major peak comes about two weeks after the summer holidays, with smaller peaks occurring throughout the year also following school holidays.

Charlotte Allen, Asthma Liaison Nurse at Princess Margaret Hospital said "It is well documented that the "February phenomenon" sees a spike in presentations to hospital."

Research has shown that this increase in asthma attacks is due to a number of factors including the stress of returning to school, children encountering other children who may be carrying viruses and spending longer periods of time indoors.

Local Community Asthma Educator, Yvonne Ashworth says "For parents of children with asthma and anyone who supports them, this can be a particularly concerning time so it is vital that both children and parents are well prepared with the knowledge and skills to ensure their return to school is a happy and safe one."

Yvonne will present two free Understanding Asthma Courses at the Joondalup Community Health Centre on Tuesday February 10th, from 6.30pm - 8.30pm and Saturday 21st February, from 1.00pm - 3.00pm. Anyone who has, or cares for someone who has asthma is invited to attend.

During these interactive courses at Joondalup, participants will learn about common asthma triggers, medications and how to use them, peak flow meters, asthma action plans, tips for children at school and importantly how to assess and manage an asthma emergency situation. Light refreshments will be provided, and asthma products will be available for purchase.

Bookings can be made by calling Danika at the Asthma Foundation of WA on (08) 9289 3643. To find out about free asthma information sessions in your local area, please contact Danika on the details above.

-ENDS-

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