

Take-Home Talk

Lesson 3: Breathing Easy: Keeping the Inside of Our Homes Healthy and Clean

To Share:

- When we take air in, the oxygen in the air passes throughout our bodies through our blood.
- The air we breathe in is only about 20 percent oxygen. Most of the rest of our air is nitrogen, which is another invisible, odorless gas, like oxygen.
- Lead is a metal that has many uses and is in a lot of places that we might not realize—like paint in older homes and soil in cities. But lead can be dangerous for humans if it's in our air, water, or food. It's especially dangerous for babies and children under age 6.

To Do and Talk About:

- **Get the Straight Scoop!** More than 25 million people in the United States have asthma, including 1 out of every 10 school-aged children. Many more people have breathing difficulties and problems other than asthma. Does anyone in your family or someone you know have asthma? Interview them about what they do to stay healthy. Do they have special precautions that they take? Do they take medicine? Have they had to change their lifestyle at all?
- **Asthma Triggers Tracking!** Even if you don't have asthma, it's important to keep the air in your home healthy and clean. There are a few things that you and your family can look for and can do to breathe a little easier. Below is a list of the most well-known asthma triggers and some steps to take to avoid them. Once you've talked about these triggers and investigated ways your family can address them, check it off!
 - Dust and Dust Mites – Keep your space clean and consider covering mattresses and pillows with airtight bedding. Wash sheets and bedding regularly.
 - Pollen – On days when the pollen count is very high, stay indoors and close the windows.

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- Mold and Mildew – Clean up mold and mildew in bathrooms and keep it away by running the fan in the bathroom during and after showers.
 - Pet Dander – Many folks are allergic to pets and find it difficult to breathe around them. If you have pets, brush them outside instead of inside.
 - Secondhand Smoke – Smoking and secondhand smoke are bad for everyone. If someone in your family smokes, encourage them to stop.
- **Lead Paint Patrol!** Find out if your home was built before 1978. If it was, be extra careful with flaking paint. Get an adult's help to clean up dust and paint chips right away.

To Take Back:

- What was the coolest thing that you learned from talking about this topic with your family and friends?