EPA

Moderator: Karen Scott
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Operator: Good afternoon. My name is (Vonnie) and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the Environmental Education Webinar Call.

All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After the speaker's remarks, there will be a question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press the pound key. Thank you.

Ms. Scott, you may begin your conference.

Karen Scott: Thank you. This is Karen Scott with EPA's Office Environmental Education. You have joined the Webinar entitled, "What in the World Triggers Asthma? What Every School Should Know." This Webinar is brought to you as part of EPA's new Environmental Education In Action Initiative. This is also part of Asthma Awareness Month. If you have not seen anything else EPA has put out about Asthma Awareness Month, you might want to go to epa.gov/asthma and check out the other resources we have there.

On today's Webinar, after I do the short introductions, we're going to have Leyla McCurdy from the National Environmental Education Foundation give some information to us about asthma awareness triggers and educational resources that her foundation offers, that EPA offers, and that other organizations offer. And then Donna Rogers of EPA's School Flag Program

is going to give us information about that program and other air quality environmental education resources.

As the operator has just announced, we're going to ask that you hold questions until the end. At the end of the two presentations, we will take questions on the phone and through the Webinar at that point. So you are able to ask either way through the phone lines or through the Webinar.

And with that, I'll turn this over to Leyla McCurdy.

Leyla McCurdy: Thank you, Karen.

Karen Scott: Great. Thank you. Go ahead, Leyla.

Leyla McCurdy: Thank you. Well, thank you for the opportunity to talk to all of you about asthma. Today, I will try to give you an overview of asthma, its triggers, and the things that can be done in schools by the school personnel to create a healthier environment for the students. And I will point you to some helpful resources.

So let's start with talking about asthma. What is it? It's a chronic disease that affects the airways in the lungs. And during an asthma attack, airways become inflamed, making it hard to breathe.

Asthma attacks can be mild, moderate, or serious, and even life-threatening. Asthma cannot be cured, but it can be controlled. Students with asthma should be able to live healthy, active lives with few symptoms.

So what are those symptoms? Coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness, pain or pressure.

There are 7 million children in the U.S. who have asthma, and there are significant disparities related to asthma. Lower income populations, minorities, and children living in inner cities experience more emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and deaths due to asthma. Black children are two times more likely to have asthma than white children.

One out of every 10 to 11 school age children has asthma. If you think about a classroom of 30 children, you can expect to have two to three children who have asthma. It is the leading cause of school absenteeism due to a chronic condition. And over 10-1/2 million missed school days per year are due to asthma. Nearly half of the children with asthma report missing at least one day of school each year because of their asthma.

(Grandchildren) are exposed to things in the environment, and an asthma attack can occur. These are, "asthma triggers." Some of the asthma, most important asthma triggers in schools are animal allergens, cockroach and pest allergens, mold and moisture, dust mites, irritants like tobacco smoke, pesticides, paint, cleaners, strong odors, fumes, and other chemicals. And there are also outdoor air pollutants, like ozone and particle pollutions, or school bus diesel exhaust that impact kids with asthma.

Now we want to talk about managing asthma in schools. And these are steps that all school personnel can take. And there are many, many resources that can help you with your effort. And I have a chosen several points from the EPA's Asthma Awareness Month Event Planning Kit, the section of the kit that talks about managing asthma in schools.

So there are 10 points that a resource goes through, and I have the URL on the screen. And I'm going to quickly review them for you.

So, one of the first things that schools can do is use EPA's indoor air quality tools for schools action kit. Again, this kit is available online, and I will have several slides with resources following the 10 points that I will go over regarding managing asthma in schools.

Another step that school personnel can help with, with helping kids with schools, is in schools with asthma is controlling animal allergens. If possible, keeping your classroom free of pets. If not, keeping animals in localized areas and away from sensitive students, carpets, and upholstered furniture. And cleaning classrooms and cages daily are steps that can be really helpful.

Controlling cockroach allergens is also another important point. Using integrated pest management, which is also called as IPM. It's an important

practice to prevent pest problems. And you shouldn't be leaving food, water, or garbage exposed and store food in tightly sealed containers, check for plumbing leaks, empty waste containers daily, place dumpsters away from the building.

The whole point here is that, you know, cockroaches need food and water to survive. So taking the steps to eliminate those helps eliminate cockroaches. And it's important to be vigilant and look for signs of pests, and explore options of pest control.

Mold is another issue that we have to deal with in schools and in our homes. And it's important to clean mold, because many children with asthma may be allergic to mold. And one of the most important steps in controlling mold is reducing indoor humidity.

And it's really important to observe your workspace. If you smell moldy odors in your workspace or anyplace in the building, that's a good sign that there may be mold. And it's not always visible.

Another area to pay attention to is the ceiling. There may be discoloration due to water leaks. And it could be really important to respond promptly when you see signs of moisture, because mold develops within 24 to 28 hours of untreated moisture in areas where there may be issues with water leaks.

And it should be also important, observation of clean and dry all damp materials in school. Clean up all hard moldy surfaces with water and detergent and dry thoroughly. That's another important step in managing mold.

We all know the second-hand smoke impact on our health. And, of course, it is one of the main triggers of asthma. And it's really important that we need to make an effort to enforce comprehensive tobacco-free school policies. Even though those policies are in place, sometimes they are not enforced.

Another asthma trigger is the dust mite. This is really a huge issue in homes. Less of an issue in schools, but it still is an important trigger. So we need to

make sure the school is dusted and vacuumed thoroughly and regularly, and choosing washable toys for younger kids is very important.

Reducing school bus diesel exhaust is another important step. The older school buses should be replaced with new ones. And installing effective emission control systems on newer buses is another important step. And encourage policies and practices to eliminate unnecessary school bus idling. And you can go to EPA's website, Clean School Bus USA program. I have it here and there are useful tips to achieve these goals.

And there are several other steps that EPA's Managing Asthma in Schools recommendations include. Those are developing an asthma management plan, making sure that there are policies on inhalers and other medication usage and emergency procedures. Making sure that children who have asthma provide their asthma action plans to their teachers and school nurses and others that may need them, like the coaches, and some other school personnel.

And it's important that the students are encouraged to know their environmental triggers so that they can avoid them while they are in school. And another very important healthful resource is the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program's "Managing Asthma, a Guide for Schools."

Two additional steps are many schools do provide school-based asthma education programs. And there are good models for that. And gathering additional asthma resources can also be extremely helpful in achieving a healthier environment for children with asthma in the schools.

So this was a summary of the recommendations I pulled from EPA's "Managing Asthma in Schools" document, which is part of the EPA Asthma Awareness Month Event Planning Kit. And you can go to that website to go over these.

And one of the things that I wanted to cover in this presentation is to be able to give you some resources that you can refer to. This slide shows the resources from our organization, National Environmental Foundation. And this last bullet on this slide is the supplemental resources, and I specifically

mentioned schools here. We have a variety of asthma resources not only in our Environmental Management of Pediatric Guidelines and the Environment History Forum that we encourage health care providers to use to identify triggers. And those health care providers obviously include the school nurses, so it's a really useful tool for the school nurses as well.

In addition to those resources, we have several links to organizations that had additional resources that you can tap into.

What I have done is in the following three slides, I focused on the resources from the three lead government agencies. The first one is the Environmental Protection Agency. As you can you, there are a number of resources that can be helpful in the schools.

And the second one is the CDC. Again, CDC has tons of resources on asthma, obviously, and helpful materials specifically in the school environment.

The last government agency, which I have included in these slides, is the National Heath and Lung and Blood Institute, referred to NHLBI, which is under the National Institutes of Health. And there sometimes you will also hear NAEPP, which is the National Asthma Education Prevention Program that is under the NHLBI. So they have lots of materials that can be really helpful to you. As we can see, many of them are specifically for schools.

And I wanted to highlight one of those resources here from NHLBI, "How Asthma Friendly Is Your School?" I would recommend each school personnel and caregivers are also, of course, really important in this education.

Parents and other caregivers whose children may have asthma, if they educate themselves about what needs to be done in the school, they can be an excellent resource. So I recommend everyone, for a quick and easy checklist, to look at this document, "How Asthma Friendly Is Your School?" So that would be a really good step in terms of creating an excellent program in your schools.

What I wanted to do here is just mention to you, as I said, resources from the key government agencies. In the interest of time, I thought that I needed to

limit my slides and the resources that I'm going over. But I want to make sure to communicate that there are many, many other groups that work on asthma, such as your local health departments. There are a lot of local asthma coalitions. There are national and local non-profit organizations, such as the American Lung Association. There are health professional organizations, like the National Association of School Nurses. And they all have programs and resources for schools.

And you can access these organizations either through these websites, or to the government agencies' resource links that I've provided to you. Or you can go to directly, of course, to their Website as well.

So, just to wrap up, the resources demonstrates that successful school-based asthma programs meet certain criteria. They establish strong links with asthma care clinicians to ensure appropriate and ongoing medical care. They target students who are the most affected by asthma at school to identify and intervene with those in greatest need. They get administrative buy-in and build a team of enthusiastic people, including a full-time school nurse to support the program.

They also use a coordinated multi-component and collaborative approach that includes school nursing services, asthma education for students, and professional development for school staff. They support evaluation of school-based programs and use adequate and appropriate outcome measures.

So, in conclusion, I want to leave you with three points. In-school asthma management can result in increased attendance and performance at school. Improvements are most effective when they are coordinated within schools and with the communities. Asthma care clinicians, families, and schools can work together to help students with asthma manage their disease at school.

Asthma friendly schools are those that make the effort to create safe and supportive learning environments for students with asthma. They have policies and procedures that allow students to successfully manage their asthma. And I hope some of the resource that I've provided to you will be helpful to you to achieve those goals.

Thank you and here's my contact information, if you would like to contact me. Thank you.

Karen Scott: Great. Thank you, Leyla. Now we're going to go to Donna Rogers, who is going to present us some information about the school Flag Program and other resources on air quality issues, especially as they relate to asthma. Go ahead, Donna.

Donna Rogers: OK. Thank you, Karen. Today I just want to take a few minutes and share with you some information about the school Flag Program. I'm not sure how many of you that are listening are familiar with the program. There's four easy steps that it takes to get a Flag Program started at your school.

(Carly): Donna, sorry to interrupt. This is (Carly). Could you click the "Show My Screen" button like we did last time?

Female: We're not seeing your presentation.

Donna Rogers: OK, Is it that?

(Carly): Yes. There you go.

Donna Rogers: And then let me do (inaudible). OK. Thanks.

The Flag Program was actually started in 2007, actually, maybe earlier than that, by the South Coast Air Quality Management District in Southern California. And so there, because of their severe air quality issues, the program spread to a number of schools in the districts there, and also in Arizona.

And then no one was really promoting the program outside of that area, and so in 2010, we posted information about the Flag Program on our AIRNow website. And our goal is just to simply, you know, promote the program and increase the number of schools that participate. We think now that there may be about 1,000 schools across the U.S. using the program. We don't have all of those school identified, but from what we can gather, we think there's about 1,000.

So we're going to talk a little about the program, the purpose of the program. I want to share with you some background information about the AQI, and, of course, the four steps to help you get the program started. And let me share with you just a few of the air quality resources that we have for teachers.

The Flag Program helps the students, the teachers, all of the school personnel, parents, as well as the community, to be aware daily of what the air quality conditions are for that area. And they do that by seeing this brightly-colored flag that's raised on the flagpole each day. And the colors of those flags are based on the Air Quality Index.

As a result, when there are recommendations in place that help teachers and coaches and caregivers, knows ways that they can modify outdoor activity, say, if it's a code red day or a code orange day. And so it does protect children's health.

We want to create public awareness of air quality and the health effects of air pollution through this program. Of course, we want to protect children's health, that's our number one goal. We want to get these activity guidelines out and so teachers feel confident in knowing what to do when the air is unhealthy to breathe. And, of course, we want to also increase the knowledge of air quality issues and the Air Quality Index.

So what is the Air Quality Index? Well, it's simple a guide for reporting the daily air quality. And it indicates how clean or dirty the air is, and it identifies the health effects. And so EPA calculates the AQI on five major air pollutants that's regulated by the Clean Air Act. We have ozone and particulate matter, also known as P.M., or particle pollution. And we have nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide.

But in looking at and using the Flag Program, we're most concerned with the ozone and particle pollution. And just briefly, you know that ozone can be good when it's in the stratosphere – I mean, yes, stratosphere – and protects us from the U.V. radiation. That's good. And a lot of students and young children, you know, they really understand, you know, the good ozone but the

ground level ozone that's formed in the presence of sunlight, when a chemical reaction takes place between volatile organic chemicals and nitrogen oxides.

When ozone is formed and it's really unhealthy to breathe and so one of the phrases we try to teach our teachers to help our students know is that ozone is good up high, but bad nearby. So we are concerned about ozone, and we do refer to it often as our summertime pollutant, since it occurs in the presence of sunlight.

And particle pollutions are those particles in the air. They can be seen when they're coarse, a (P.M.) 10. But when they're very, very small and they can only be seen with an electron microscope, they are very – it causes some very serious health effects because the can get deep into our lungs and it's very serious. So, but we're looking at ozone and particles in terms of the Flag Program.

So here's a chart that shows you the Air Quality Index, or the AQI, and the colors. And you might want to think of the AQI as a yardstick, and it kind of runs from, say, zero all the way to 500. And the higher the AQI value, of course, the greater the level of air pollution and the greater the level of health concern.

An AQI value of 100 corresponds to the national air quality standards for that pollutant, which is the level that EPA sets to protect public health. So any values less than 100 here are generally thought of to be satisfactory. But when the levels are greater than 100, then we consider the air quality to be unhealthy.

And as far as the colors, what they mean is that when it's green, that means the air is – it's good air quality and it's a good time to be outside. When it's yellow, it's moderate. Orange, it's unhealthy for sensitive groups, such as children or those who have asthma. When it's red, the air is unhealthy. When it's purple, it's very unhealthy. Maroon is hazardous.

For the Flag Program, you'll see as I talk about the flags, that we do include purple. We don't often have those kinds of conditions, but there are times

when maybe you have an air pollution episode or an event like a wildfire that might cause some very unhealthy conditions. So we do include the purple.

So as you can see here, air pollution comes from many different sources. Our power plants, our heavy diesel engines, and our cars and trucks, which continue to increase in number, our industrial sources and even our forest fires, our non-road vehicles, like construction equipment and our natural sources, like trees and our wood-burning stoves, you know, just to name a few.

So what are the health effects of our common air pollutants? Well, when inhaled, outdoor pollutants can aggravate the lungs. It can lead to chest pains, coughing, digestive problems, dizziness, fever, sneezing, shortness of breath, throat irritation and watery eyes. Outdoor air pollution can worsen chronic respiratory disease, such as asthma, as Leyla talked about. And in addition, it can cause the development of chronic bronchitis, chest tightness, chest pain, irregular heart beat, and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

I have a teacher workshop each summer, and I often ask the teachers the very first morning of the workshop, "Has anyone ever died from air pollution?" And many of them are always shocked to really have to think about that, and realize that, yes, people do die from air pollution.

So when we mentioned that for the orange one, it's a code orange day, it's unhealthy for sensitive groups. This is what the sensitive groups are. One, it's people with heart or lung disease, and because these conditions make them more vulnerable to air pollution. It's older adults, aged 55 and older. And a lot of times when we think of older adults, we think of, you know, someone with their cane or walker, but age 55 is still what I consider very young. But the older adults have a great incidence of heart and lung disease.

And then, of course, our children, birth to age 18. And I will point out here to note that it's to age 18. We often think of our children being in elementary school, maybe in middle school. But we don't often refer to our high school students as "children." But, indeed, they are still part of the sensitive group.

And why is that? Because they're more likely to be active and more likely to be active outdoors. They breathe more air per pound of body weight. And also, because their bodies are still developing.

And then, as Leyla talked about asthma. Anyone with asthmas puts them into the sensitive group, because it is a serious respiratory disease that affects 25 million Americans, and, as she said, including 7 million children.

Am I supposed to close the box on the right? No? OK.

Here are the steps that I have been talking about if you want to get a Flag Program started at your school. One, you purchase the flags. Two, you educate and inform the school and the community. Three, you will need to check the daily air quality forecast so that you'll know what color flag to fly on the flagpole. And four, you're going to simply follow the recommendations chart that we have available so that you'll know when to modify outdoor activity.

One of the questions we get most often is about the flags. Where do I get them? How much do they cost? The flags cost approximately $100. They can be purchased by your school or your Parent-Teacher Organization. If that is not possible, then you could look to a local health organization, such as an asthma coalition or maybe a chapter of the American Lung Association. You might even ask a local business that's within eyesight of the school, because they would be very proud to sponsor a program like this. So I think that there are many different ways that you can find the money, the $100 to support the program.

We often get asked where to get the flags. We have been very fortunate in working with a particular vendor that's located in North Carolina. And if you use a flag vendor that's located in your community or in your state, there are many flag vendors that you can find online. I just would caution your, if they give you a quote, and please do not pay more than $100. I just ordered a set, and they were only $89. But they are affordable.

We also encourage you to order a set of the (inaudible) flags, green, yellow, orange, red, and purple. I know some schools only get four, and they don't

feel it's necessary to get the purple. But like I said, you just never know when there's going to be some episode or condition. And, you know, of all times, that's when you would really want the community to know about the conditions.

We use pennant style flags, which you see in the picture here. And that's 5 by 3 feet, so they're really large flags. We recommend that you keep the flags plain, although you can add logos or graphics. But once you get that flag up on the flagpole, you won't be able to see the logo or graphic very easily. And it also adds to the cost of the flags. So we recommend that you keep them plain.

It's important that you educate your teachers and your parents and the community about the Flag Program, what the colors mean. Help them to understand what the AQI is; and help them to understand why you're doing it and the importance of this. We provide all the materials you could possibly want or need on the School Flag website, and so all the work's been done for you. It's just a matter of you sharing the information.

We recommend that you recruit or have a volunteer to be the flag coordinator, preferably two teachers. It could also be the school nurse. And there's a coordinator's handbook that's on our Website that they can download, and they have all the information there that they would need.

And there are different ways that you can help the school and the community know about the program, and you can use your newsletters or emails or flyers. You can put an article in the local newspaper, or even have your local radio station talk about the program. And just your enthusiasm about the program as you teach your students, and get them excited. And then they would go home and share it with their parents.

At this point, you're probably wondering, "Well, how am I going to know what the air quality forecast is each day?" Well, it's very simple. We have air quality notifications systems called EnviroFlash. And anyone can go and subscribe, go on the website and subscribe to EnviroFlash free. And it's very easy. You simply enter your ZIP code, which ensures that the forecast you're

getting is for your area. And then you give your email address, where you want that forecast to come to because it comes through your email. You could also download the three AIRNow apps that's available at AIRNow.gov.

One other thing about this program is that we in no way want to have someone believe that when it's a code orange day or code red day that we want children to go inside and not get their exercise or activities. And we are very careful in, you know, making sure that you understand that even if it's recommended that children be moved indoors, that they still get activities. So the health benefits of regular exercise is well documented, and so the intent of this chart is to help children continue to exercise while protecting their health.

This chart is really used to modify outdoor activities when ozone levels are elevated and if it's a code orange day or a code red day, it should be used to modify plans for outdoor activities, such as recess, outside lunch, physical education classes or athletic practices or sporting events.

For example, if it's a code red day, or, excuse me. If a code red day is expected, then consider moving prolonged or vigorous activities inside, or reschedule them to the morning hours because ozone is higher at levels in the mid-day to afternoons. And so if you have something planned for the afternoon, but you know that it's going to be a code red day, then you could, if possible, move it to the morning. That would be fine.

So what we're doing now is we're working on adding particle pollution, because this chart only represents ozone. And we're also making it more user friendly, simpler. And we are using this now because it's what we have. But you'll soon find that that's been replaced with a new chart.

Some of the air quality resources that we have available, you can almost find all of them through AIRNow.gov. We have a number of online curricula, and just to mention two, we have "Air Pollution, What's the Solution?" which is designed for grades six through nine. It has the students using real-time data. It's really an outstanding curricula. I highly recommend that. And we have the AQI Took Kit for Teachers. It has many, many lessons and activities and

hands-on activities for students to do that helps make learning about air quality kind of fun and interactive.

We have the AIRNow for Kids. And in this Website, or these Website for children, even ages 5 and 6, 7, 8, and 9, 10 years old. They learn about air quality. They learn about the AQI. They learn about the colors. There's characters. There's narration. There's music. There's interactive games, where they play like game shows. And so this is a great website to, you know, investigate and see what's there that might be helpful to you.

And then as far as the air quality simulator, I'm not sure if any of you are familiar with Smog City 2, but it is a simulator where the user can increase or decrease the amount of emissions sources, the weather effects, and other calculations. And as you do that, you see this cityscape, where you see the (level) sources and the power plants. And the clouds or the sun appear as you manipulate the controls. So it's a great project or program for students to use, even in middle school and high school, you know, to support their, you know, learning about air quality and air pollution.

And the children's book, called "Why is Coco Orange?" I have a picture there for that. That is free to anyone, and this is a book using chameleons, because chameleons change colors, and the help solve the mystery of why is Coco orange? And as they learn about air quality and they learn about asthma, it is a great book, and I encourage you to not only order it to have it free of charge, but also to share it with others, and let them know that they can order it as well.

So if you go to the AIRNow Website, at AIRNow.gov, you'll see on the right hand, a box called "The Learning Center." And if you do, you're going to see the words "students," "teachers," "kids." And all of those links will take you to many resources that we have available.

And you might ask, "Well, how do you order the books free?" It's through the National Service Center for Environmental Publications. We refer to it as NCEP. And so if you go to this Website, it will show you how to order the

book. And if you have any questions about that, you can contact me, if you have a problem getting through that.

So the School Flag Program is a site that I've mentioned that we have available. You can find it just by Googling the words, but AIRNow.gov/schoolflag will take you directly to the site. And there, there's a fact sheet. I've mentioned the coordinator's handbook. The chart, you've seen the recommendations chart. We have a press release template, so when you're getting ready to let the community know more about the program, you have the template already there, and you can insert your own personal information and quotes, and kind of make it your own article. But we've kind of got that language there to help you get started.

There's a registration form that I would like for any school that's going to adopt the program to send in. And then we have student activities that will help the children learn about the colors and then other teacher and student resources.

Any my contact information is here. It's just rogers.donna@epa.gov. Feel free to contact me with any questions. And I'll be glad to help you. Thank you.

Karen Scott: Thank, you, Donna. That was very interesting, very helpful. And I think we're ready to take questions now. As I said earlier, people can send questions in through the webinar, or you can do it through the phone line. So, operator, if you want see if anybody has any questions.

Operator: At this time, I would like to remind everyone, in order to ask a question, press star and the number one on your telephone keypad. We'll pause for a moment to compile the Q&A roster.

Karen Scott: OK. And while we're doing that, compiling the roster on the phone lines, we have a question on the webinar.

Female: We do. I don't know. I think, Donna, this one is directed towards you. But we talked about criteria air pollutants. Which of the hazardous air pollutants

are asthma triggers? Is there a list of HAPs that are asthma triggers? I don't know if either one of you can answer that.

Donna Rogers: I don't know specific pollutants. I know, you know, ozone and particles both contribute. But I don't know specifically anything beyond that.

Karen Scott: Leyla would you be able to add anything to that?

Leyla McCurdy: Yes. Nitrogen dioxide and sulphur also are triggers.

Karen Scott: OK. Great. Thank you. Do we have any phone questions ready, operator?

Operator: Yes. We do have a question from Scott Tucker of Document Video Service.

Karen Scott: OK. Go ahead.

Scott Tucker: Yes, I'm curious. Is there any opportunity to apply for funding to create a short video designed to educate communities about asthma? And about these very well-described issues and opportunities for schools to make changes?

Karen Scott: Actually, this was Karen Scott. I'll answer first, because I also run a grant program. We are going to be issuing a request for proposals probably some time in June. You can go to our website, EPA.gov/education, to find an announcement about that.

You do have to qualify, and there are just certain types of organizations and institutions that would qualify to get a grant from us. But when the RFP is published, you can look at that and see if you would be qualified. And creating things like educations videos would be possibly something that would qualify as a project that we would fund.

But then, I don't know if Leyla or Donna, if you have anything to add to that? Of any other funding sources?

Donna Rogers: No. Not that I'm aware of.

Leyla McCurdy: No. I'm not aware of any, either. Sorry.

Karen Scott: OK. So, yes, watch our website, EPA.gov/education. Oh great, (Carly) put it up for you. So go to that site, and either keep watching through the month of June, or you can go to that site and sign up to get a notification for when the RFP is published.

Scott Tucker: Thank you.

Karen Scott: You're welcome. We have another one. Another question from the webinar?

(Carly): Sure. Is there an increase in asthma frequency in the last 20 years as compared to the previous 20?

Leyla McCurdy: Yes. Asthma rates have been increasing and so all those facts are actually – are available on CDC's website. Yes, they continue to increase.

Karen Scott: OK, thank you. Do we have another question on the phone line?

Operator: We do have a question from (Inayak Ekanim) of (Christ International).

(Inayak Ekanim): Yes, I discover that the presentation is mostly for school-based programs. How can we implement these kinds of programs for a church-based organization?

Karen Scott: Are you talking about the School Flag Program?

(Inayak Ekanim): Yes. I think the entire presentation appears to be school-based. Is it possible to design this kind of program for a community-based – a site like a church or a synagogue or similar, other than a school?

Karen Scott: I'll let Leyla and Donna answer, but I would think any of these three courses would be adaptable to any of those types of settings. But maybe Donna or Leyla would like to add to that?

Donna Rogers: That's right, Karen. And you are certainly welcome to adopt the concept and, you know, have any business or church, as you said, to use the program.

(Inayak Ekanim): Thank you very much.

Leyla McCurdy: I would echo that, too. You know, faith-based communities are extremely important in helping people and especially children to have better quality of life, even if they have asthma. And clearly, you know, the churches can really participate as part of the community to make the schools healthier. But also, all of these materials can be adapted to use within the – I guess the building itself is what you're concerned about. And those can be – all the school-based materials can be adapted to the church itself.

And also, I'm kind of looking at it from the community perspective, and the role that the faith-based institutions can play in improving the lives of people. And I feel like, you know, these materials can be really helpful to educate the participants in that community. And there are many, many resources for the public that can be used to educate the, you know, the particular membership. And the resources that I put up – if you go to these websites and there are many educational materials that are offered by several organizations that you can pull from.

Karen Scott: Thank you, both Donna and Leyla. Do we have any more questions on the phone lines?

Operator: At this time, there are no further audio question.

Karen Scott: And it looks like we don't have any more questions from the webinar, either. So I think that concludes our presentation. I would just urge everybody who's online; to go to EPA.gov/asthma is you'd like to learn more about this topic. And also, visit our website, which is EPA.gov/education, if you're interested in other kinds of educational programs and materials. Or if you're interested in applying for a grant, as I said, we will be publishing a request for proposals, probably some time in June.

Thank you very much for joining us, and good afternoon.

Operator: This concludes today's conference call. You may now disconnect.

END