

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Health Department Joins the Greater Baltimore Asthma Alliance In Recognizing Asthma Awareness Month**

**BALTIMORE** (May 6, 2008) May is Asthma Awareness Month, a month devoted to raising awareness of the risks associated with asthma. The Baltimore City Health Department and the Greater Baltimore Asthma Alliance (GBAA) are marking this occasion by introducing a new Asthma Resource Guide for Baltimore adults and children with asthma and the health professionals who serve them. Unlike existing asthma resources, this new guide is focused solely on identifying local resources available in and around Baltimore City.

In the United States alone, more than 6 million children suffer from asthma, which is the most common serious chronic disease of childhood. Asthma accounts for one third of all pediatric emergency room visits, and is a leading cause of school absenteeism.

The burden of asthma in Baltimore City is especially severe. Baltimore City residents have the highest asthma prevalence and asthma-related emergency department visit, hospitalization, and death rates (compared to Maryland residents as a whole during the time period 2000-2004).<sup>1</sup> In 2004, the rate of emergency department visits due to asthma was almost three times higher among Baltimore City residents compared to Maryland residents. In Baltimore, 24% of high-school students reported having been diagnosed with asthma compared to 17% of students nationwide in 2005.<sup>2</sup>

GBAA will unveil the Asthma Resource Guide on Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 10am. Please find the details below.

Date: Tuesday, May 6, 2008  
Time: 10:00AM  
Location: W.E.B. DuBois Senior High School for Environmental Science  
2201 Pinewood Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21214

*GBAA is a community partnership of individuals and organizations with an interest in asthma that has been active since 1999. Its mission is to promote optimum health and quality of life of persons affected by asthma by increasing awareness, knowledge, and the use of effective asthma treatments and resources. GBAA's core membership is comprised of leadership from the Baltimore City Public Schools System, the Baltimore City Health Department, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation, Johns Hopkins University, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and other organizations.*

<sup>1</sup> Family Health Administration, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Maryland Asthma Surveillance Report 2005  
Online at: <http://www.fha.state.md.us/mch/asthma/pdf/AsthmaReport2005.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control. 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.