

A Year in Review

Breathe easy at home program

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Breathe Easy Focus on Neighborhoods

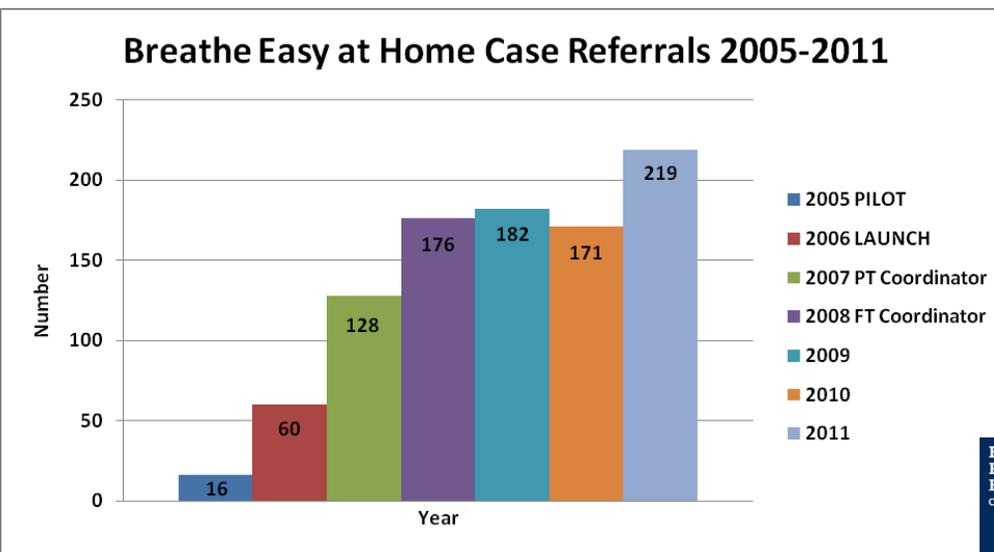
Breathe Easy at Home has grown significantly since its pilot phase in 2005. Since 2006, the program's referrals have increased from 60 to 219 in 2011 (see chart). The program has also been modeled and adopted by several municipalities throughout the country.

Breathe Easy at Home is consistent with a focus on neighborhoods most affected by asthma. Black and Latino females in adult populations have higher asthma rates than Asian and White females in the city. Blacks and Latinos (particularly males) ages 0-2 and 3-4 have the highest asthma hospitalization rates in the city (2011 Health of Boston Report). Black and Latino populations are largely concentrated in Boston's Mattapan, North and South Dorchester, and Roxbury. Residents who identify as Black make up 22% of the city's population while Latino residents make up 17% of the city.

Dorchester (North and South combined) makes up 21% of Boston's residents. Forty-three percent of Dorchester residents identify as Black and 15 % as Latino. A little more than half (56%) of South Dorchester properties are rental while 68% of North Dorchester's properties are rental. In 2011, Breathe Easy cases in Dorchester (North and South, combined) comprised 36% of cases.

Roxbury holds 9% of Boston's residents. Half of Roxbury residents identify as Black and 23% identify as Latino. Most (79%) of Roxbury housing are rental properties. Roxbury cases made up 24% of our caseload.

Lastly, Mattapan contains 3 % of Boston's residents. Eighty-three percent of Mattapan's residents identify as Black and ten percent identify as Latino. Mattapan, though a small percentage of cases (1-2%), almost half (45%) of its housing is owner-occupied. We do not expect to hear from many property owners requesting visits from Inspectional Services.



BEAH Website Trouble

Breathe Easy at Home extends its deepest apologies for our recent website difficulties. We are still working to resolve issues with the website. The city of Boston’s Management Information System (MIS) Department has been relocating our entire database to another server. This means that referrals could not initially go through to Inspectional Services and case lists appeared incomplete.

Although this did not stop referrals from coming in and being scheduled, case lists are still incomplete.

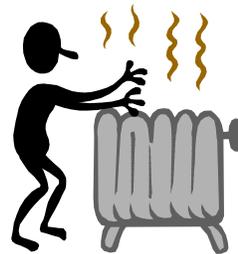
Carbon Monoxide & Asthma

Are your patients having problems affording to heat their homes? If so, ask what other ways they are using to heat their home. Certain alternative sources of heat can be sources of carbon monoxide (CO) exposure. Symptoms of CO poisoning are flu-like such as headaches, fatigue and nausea. Carbon monoxide detectors are required by the State Sanitary Code for Housing in Massachusetts but if patients have questions about CO levels in their home, they can call the Boston Fire Department in their neighborhood. Property owners are responsible for servicing and maintaining the heating system within the home. Common sources of CO include:

- Space heaters (Potential fire hazard: make sure nothing is left on top of them and that the electrical outlet is sufficient to prevent shortage)
- Fireplaces
- Gas ranges and ovens
- Gas and oil heating systems

To protect your patients and their loved ones from CO poisoning, remind them to be careful not to have windows open near running cars or trucks, keep working batteries in CO detectors have all heating systems and appliances inspected and cleaned yearly, and keep all oil and gas-fired heating systems vented outside and well maintained.

For more information, please call the Environmental Haz-



Success Story

Breathe Easy at Home functions as part of a city-wide collaboration of health and housing institutions. As such, the program is often able to draw resources from these institutions to move cases along in a more comprehensive manner.

A child at the Boston Medical Center was referred to Breathe Easy recently. This child was well-known to the program after being hospitalized and admitted to the Emergency Room several times; nearly dying from an asthma attack once. His parents recently moved to a new apartment and found that the new home environment was also triggering their son’s asthma and needed to be taken back to the hospital.

Not only was Breathe Easy quickly responsive to calls from the primary care provider to schedule the home inspection but also teamed up with the Boston Public Health Commission’s Office of Environmental Health about mold concerns. Environmental Health and Inspectional Services inspectors both went out to this child’s home and worked together to resolve the violations found. Great team work!

5 Year Report Coming Soon!

Breathe Easy at Home is five years young! Since launching Breathe Easy in 2006, the program has grown and surpassed goals originally set. We plan to report this growth in a document recounting the past 5 years’ successes.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Total # Institutions Registered	32	33	35	37	40