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Lehenbauer Receives Asthma School Nursing Award

Registered Nurse Gigi Lehenbauer has been honored with the Asthma School Nursing Award by the Missouri Asthma Prevention and Control Program, a program of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

Lehenbauer is a Monroe County Health Department nurse who works with children and families at Madison C-3, Holliday C-2, Middle Grove C-1, and Holy Rosary. Forty-six nurses from rural counties across Missouri received the Asthma School Nursing Award with an \$800 grant to carry out training, disease management or school health assessment projects. Program manager Peggy Gaddy says, "The department is pleased to support Lehenbauer and other school nurses across Missouri. They are important allies with children, parents, and physicians in the management of asthma."

In Monroe County, Lehenbauer will train coaches on how to detect and manage symptoms of asthma among elementary and high school athletes. She can be contacted directly at 660-327-4259 ext 119 to discuss her project and ongoing work to help children with asthma.

Asthma is the number one cause of hospitalization among children under 15 years of age, and accounts for one-sixth of all pediatric emergency room visits in the United States. Missouri data shows children under 15, particularly males and African Americans, have the highest rates of hospitalization and emergency room visits due to asthma. Asthma is a leading cause of school absenteeism due to a chronic illness, resulting in an average of 8 missed school days per child with asthma and a total of 700,000 days per year across Missouri.

The Missouri Asthma Prevention and Control Program launched Asthma Here in 2006 as its community partnering strategy to recognize and strengthen local efforts for health improvement. Funding is provided by a grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS). By promoting best practices for asthma care improvement to community leaders, such as school nurses, Asthma Here seeks to reduce the severity of asthma in Missouri communities. Open Health LLC is a public health research and consulting firm under contract with MDHSS for services related to Asthma Here.