



Sarah Wilkinson

HEALTH EDUCATOR

a.i.r. BRONX, BPHC Member

Sarah Wilkinson is a Health Educator with a.i.r. nyc, an organization whose mission is to improve the quality of life of asthmatics in New York City, helping families break the revolving cycle of poverty that is worsened by chronic disease. a.i.r. bronx, which is a.i.r. nyc's Bronx-based program, will play an integral role in BPHC's asthma project.

Sarah Wilkinson is a Health Educator with a.i.r. bronx, a.i.r. nyc's Bronx-based program. She works in the four Public Prep Schools in the Bronx, teaching pre-k through seventh grade students about asthma. Her lessons touch on everything from what asthma is, to identifying indoor and outdoor triggers, to the hazards of idling cars.

Her presence in schools also allows her to identify students who need additional support managing their asthma at home.

“It’s an integrated approach,” Ms. Wilkinson says. “A lot of times at parent teacher conferences they’re talking about grades, they’re talking about absences, so if a kid has a lot of absences because of asthma they can say, ‘oh we have this really great asthma program,’ and I’m sitting right there. So that’s a way I’ve gotten a lot of referrals.”

Parent-teacher conferences connected Ms. Wilkinson with one particular 8-year old girl, whose asthma was so severe that she had missed over 28 days of school in a single semester. Ms. Wilkinson visited the girl and her family three times during the remainder of the school year. She taught them when and how to use different medications, explained the importance of reducing clutter and addressing asthma triggers, and even referred them to an integrated pest management company to address a roach infestation.

“By the third visit,” she remembers, “the floors were clean, there were no bugs, there was no clutter. There were still some piles of clothes, but it was so much better. I checked in with the school and she had missed no days of school between the second and third visits ... She had gone through extra tutoring and brought herself up to grade level. It was all in three or four months.”

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