



Breathe Easy at Home Webinar

March 5, 2009

2-3:00 pm

Dial: (800) 374-0278
Access code: 84309335

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

Breathe easy at home program



Mayor Thomas M. Menino, City of Boston

The Breathe Easy at Home Team

- Margaret Reid, RN BA, Director, Division of Healthy Homes and Community Supports, Boston Public Health Commission
- Megan Sandel, MD, MPH, FAAP, Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Boston Medical Center
- Dion Irish, BS, MUA, Assistant Commissioner of Housing, City of Boston, Inspectional Services Department
- Amanda LaSane, BA, Breathe Easy at Home Program Coordinator, Boston Public Health Commission

Polling Question

- What key stakeholder group do you represent?
 - Housing
 - Clinical
 - Legal
 - Enforcement
 - Advocacy

Polling Question

- With which key stakeholder groups in your community do you have relationships?
 - Housing
 - Clinical
 - Legal
 - Enforcement
 - Advocacy

Breathe Easy at Home

- BEAH is a web-based referral system, allowing clinicians to request home inspections for their asthma patients.
 - Addresses exposures which trigger asthma and are covered by sanitary codes for housing.
 - Clinicians receive case updates by email.
 - Encourages clinicians to explore environmental asthma triggers with their patients.

Breathe Easy at Home Background

- ISD created Breathe Easy at Home ten years ago, program was under-utilized
 - Clinicians phoned ISD and often left a message
 - No system for ISD to update clinicians
- In 2006, a Boston Medical Center pediatrician approached ISD about modifications
 - Web-based system reflects health care technology and meets the needs of busy medical practices
 - Created a community/government collaboration involving advocacy, housing, legal and health care organizations

Boston Snapshot

- With @ 600,000 residents
 - @50% non-Latino White
 - @23% non-Latino Black
 - @14% Latino
- 33.7% of population age 24 or younger
- Active advocacy and health care presence
- Highest rate of asthma hospitalizations for children under 10 in state of Massachusetts*

*Health of Boston 2006, Boston Public Health Commission Research Office

Boston's Largest Landlord



- Boston Housing Authority administers housing for 10% of Boston's residents
- 22.9% of adults in public housing/rental assistance report doctor diagnosed asthma compared to 9.% in market rate housing**
- BHA properties are aging, problems with pest infestation

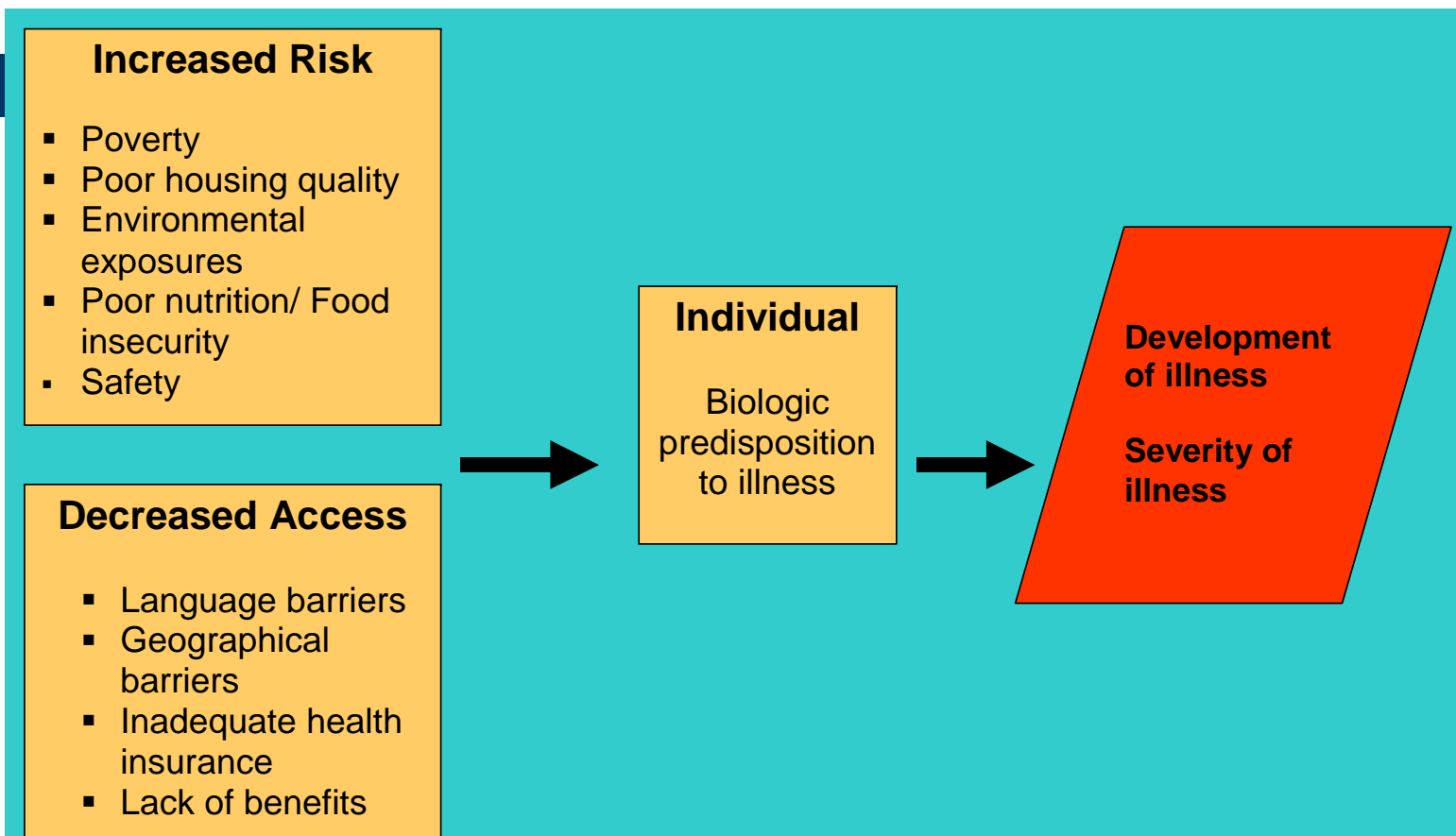
**2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Boston Public Health Commission

National Guidelines for Dx & Tx of Asthma from NAEPP

- New Guidelines in 2007
- Emphasize “Asthma Control” vs “Asthma Severity” classification
- Asthma Control assesses both impairment and risk of asthma attacks
- Comprehensive approach includes step up of asthma medications
- Effective control also means managing special situations, such as environmental triggers



Social Risk Factors & Health



Polling Question

- Which asthma related issues are covered under your sanitary code?
 - Cockroach infestation
 - Rodents
 - Chronic dampness (mold)
 - Damaged/dirty carpeting
 - Temperature extremes

Health Impact of Substandard Housing Conditions

- Rodent and cockroach infestation
- Water leaks and resultant mold
- Exposed wires and uncovered radiators
- Insufficient heat or running water
- Overcrowding
- Increased asthma
- Injuries
 - Radiator burns
 - Fires from improper wiring, lack of smoke detectors, use of space heaters
- Increased infectious diseases

Breathe Easy at Home

How it works



- Doctors or nurses screen for housing problems among their patients with asthma
 - Log onto the BEAH web-based referral system/database
 - Refer families for housing code inspection and sign up for updates
 - Housing code inspectors put results up on website, automatically emailed to referrers
- Patient consent is required for referral and at the time of inspection

BEAH Inspections



Once a referral is received from a Clinician:

- Patient contacted within 24 hours to schedule a home inspection.
- Inspections are conducted, asthma triggers and other code violations are given to the property owner.
- Property owners are provided a compliance deadline & inspectors are instructed to work with them.
- Non-compliant owners are taken to court.
- 70% of cases have violations solved without housing court!

Registering with BEAH

- Clinical sites have a “super-user” and the ability to add other site users.
- Clinical sites are password protected for HIPAA protections

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the City of Boston website. The address bar shows the URL: <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/housing/bmc/register.asp?agree=yes>. The page title is "City of Boston.gov" and the subtitle is "Official Web Site of the City of Boston". The navigation menu includes "Home", "Online Services", "Residents", "Business", "Visitors", "Students", and "Government". The main content area is titled "Housing Division - Breathe Easy Program" and contains a "Registration" form. The form fields are: * Contact: [text input], * Title: [text input], * Facility: [text input], * Address: [text input], [text input], [dropdown menu], * Phone: [text input], and * Email: [text input]. Below the registration form is a "Comments" section with a large text area. At the bottom of the form are "submit" and "reset" buttons. The left sidebar contains a "Inspectional Services Department" menu with options like "ISD Home", "Building", "Housing", "Sanitary Code", "FAQ", "Bed Bugs", "Rental Inspections", "Breathe Easy", "Health", "Environmental Services", and "Weights & Measures". The right sidebar includes a search box, "Expanded Search >>", "News & Press Releases >>", "News & Press Releases", "Related Links", and a "Get Adobe Reader" advertisement.

City of Boston - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites RSS Print Mail Address Bar

Address <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/housing/bmc/admin/login.asp> Go Links

City of Boston.gov

Official Web Site of the City of Boston

[Home](#) [Online Services](#) [Residents](#) [Business](#) [Visitors](#) [Students](#) [Government](#)

Inspectional Services Department

- ISD Home
- Building
- Housing**
 - Sanitary Code
 - FAQ
 - Bed Bugs
 - Rental Inspections
 - Breathe Easy
- Health
- Environmental Services
- Weights & Measures

Contact Us

- [Boston Inspectional Services](#)
- [City Hall Hours & Directions](#)
- [Mayor's Online Constituent Service](#)

Housing Division - Breathe Easy Program

Login is required. Please sign in:

User Name:

Password:

Search:


[Expanded Search »](#)

News & Press Releases »

[News & Press Releases](#)

Related Links

[Get Adobe Reader](#)
Many forms are available in PDF format. To view and print in PDF format, you must download and install the reader.



Local intranet

Breathe Easy Program - Update Case - City of Boston - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites

Address <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/housing/bmc/isd/isdupdate.asp?caseid=126> Go Links

Google Search Bookmarks Find Check AutoFill Sign In

Home Online Services Residents Business Visitors Students Government

Inspectional Services Department

- | ISD Home
- | Building
- | Housing
- | **Breathe Easy**
 - Case Search
 - Auth. Clinics
 - Registration
 - Metrics
 - Log Out
- | Health
- | Environmental Services
- | Weights & Measures

Contact Us

Boston Inspectional Services

City Hall Hours & Directions

Mayor's Online Constituent Service

Breathe Easy Program - Update Case

Date:

Inspector:

Notes:

Status:

Date	Inspector	notes
8/3/2006	Yolanda Thomas	Unit left room ceiling has stains & cracks, bathroom ceiling has stains and cracks, Unit has evidence of infestation (rodents). Legal waiting service
8/11/2006	Yolanda Thomas	Legal served reinspection scheduled for 9/7/06
8/11/2006	Yolanda Thomas	Legal served reinspection scheduled for 9/7/06
9/7/2006	Yolanda Thomas	All violation corrected case closed.

Search:

News & Press Releases >>

[CITY FINES AIRLINE FOR USING FAULTY SCALE](#)

[BUILDING INSPECTOR RECEIVES HIGH HONORS FROM ARCHBISHOP](#)

Announcements

ISD Hours of Operation:
 1010 Mass Ave.
 Monday - Friday:
 8:00am - 4:00pm
 Thursday Evening:
 8:00am - 7:00pm

Please note that the cashier closes 15 minutes prior to closing

ISD Directions

[Click here](#) for directions to the Inspectional Services Department.

Internet

start | Inbox - Micros... | Interview with ... | Interview with ... | Dionsdrive (E.) | Microsoft Powe... | Breathe Easy P... | 2:26 PM

City of Boston - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

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Home Online Services Residents Business Visitors Students Government

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- Building
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 - Breathe Easy**
 - Case List
 - New Case
- Health
- Environmental Services
- Weights & Measures

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Housing Division - Breathe Easy Program

New Case Referral

Patient Information [hide](#)

- * **Salutation:**
- * **First Name:**
- Last Name:**
- * **Language:**
- * **Gender:**
- * **Phone (a):** Home Cell Other
(primary phone)
- Phone (b):** Home Cell Other
(alternate phone)
- * **Under Six?** Yes No

Address Information [hide](#)

Referral Information [hide](#)

- * **Clinic:** Public Health Commission
- * **Group Email:** Emily_Litonjua@bphc.org
- * **Referred By:**
- * All updates to this case are returned to the above address. Would you like to be notified of any case changes?
Yes No

Inspectional Services Department

ISD Home

Building

Housing

Sanitary Code

FAQ

Bed Bugs

Rental Inspections

Breathe Easy

Health

Environmental Services

Weights & Measures

Vacant Foreclosing and Foreclosed Application

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City Departments

Select a Department

Housing Division - Breathe Easy Program

The Breathe Easy at Home program is designed to improve access and communication between medical homes for children with asthma, public health agencies and housing agencies within the City of Boston. A collaboration effort amongst several city agencies, which includes the Inspectional Services Department's Housing Inspection Division, Boston Medical Center, Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Urban Asthma Coalition, Bowdoin St Neighborhood Health Center, and Asthma Regional Council of New England, it was developed to ensure that inspections, where warranted, are performed quickly and any follow up inspections are performed to make sure substandard conditions are resolved.

Through this shared website doctors, nurses or other health professionals can refer patients with asthma for housing inspections if they suspect substandard housing conditions may be triggering a child's asthma in their home. Triggers such as the presence of cockroaches, mice or mold or moisture problems can cause serious issues for some children with asthma.

This innovative program will track kids through the inspection, violation preparation, reinspections, and housing court systems, to improve communication between medical, public health and housing in hope of reducing these conditions to make kids healthier.

Please know that Breathe Easy is not a relocation program. We try to ensure the best possible living conditions so that tenants can remain where they are!

Publications & Online Services

[Register for Breathe Easy](#)

[Login to Breathe Easy](#)

[Breathe Easy Brochure](#)

[Winter Newsletter 2009](#)

[What to Expect from your Breathe Easy Inspection](#)

[Safe Cleaning for People with Asthma](#)

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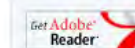
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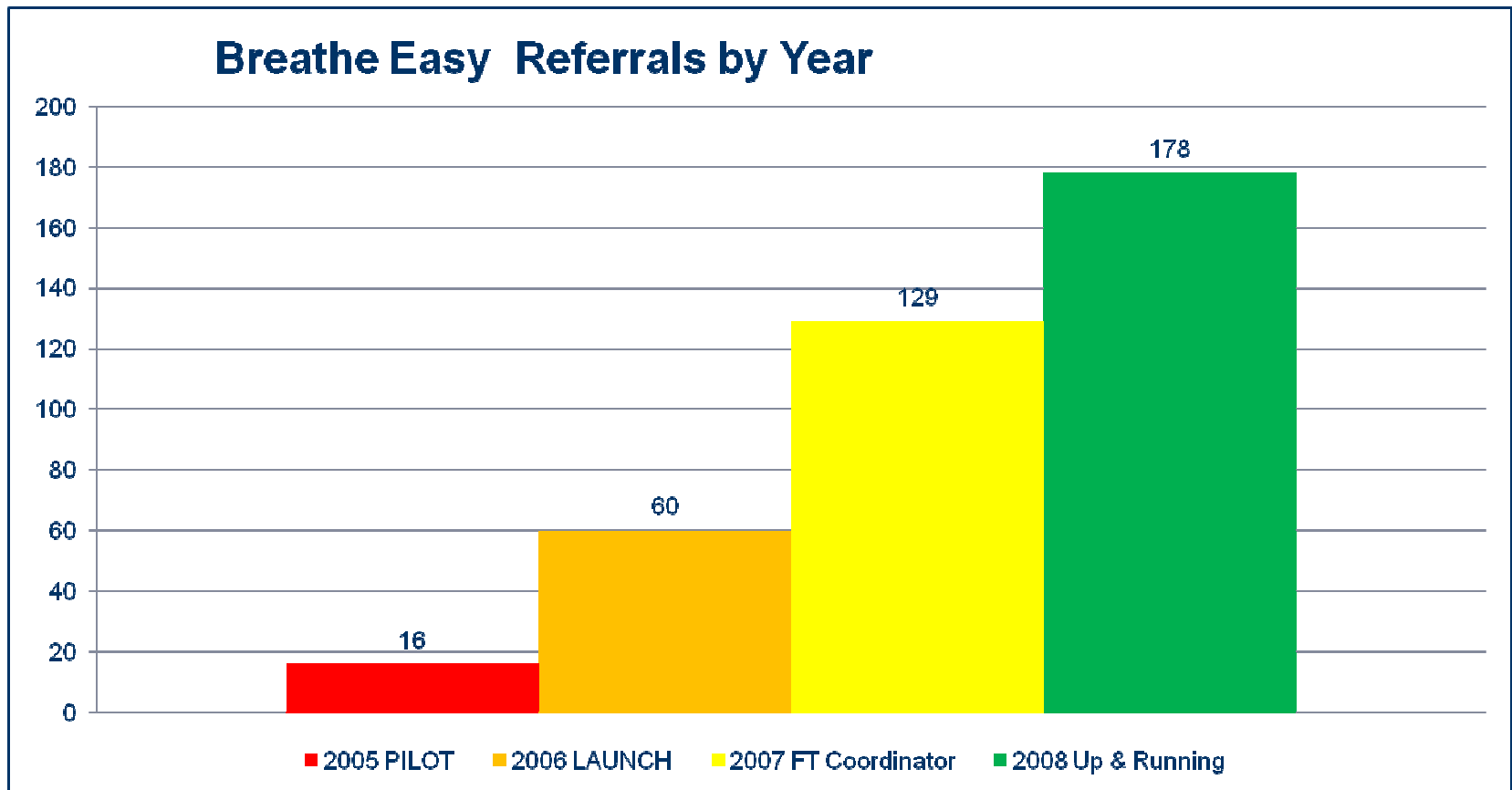
BEAH Inspectors

Inspector “buy-in” is critical!

- *Training & Communication*
- Listening
- Encourage “big thinking”
- Feedback & Evaluation
- Inspecting with Resident Doctors.



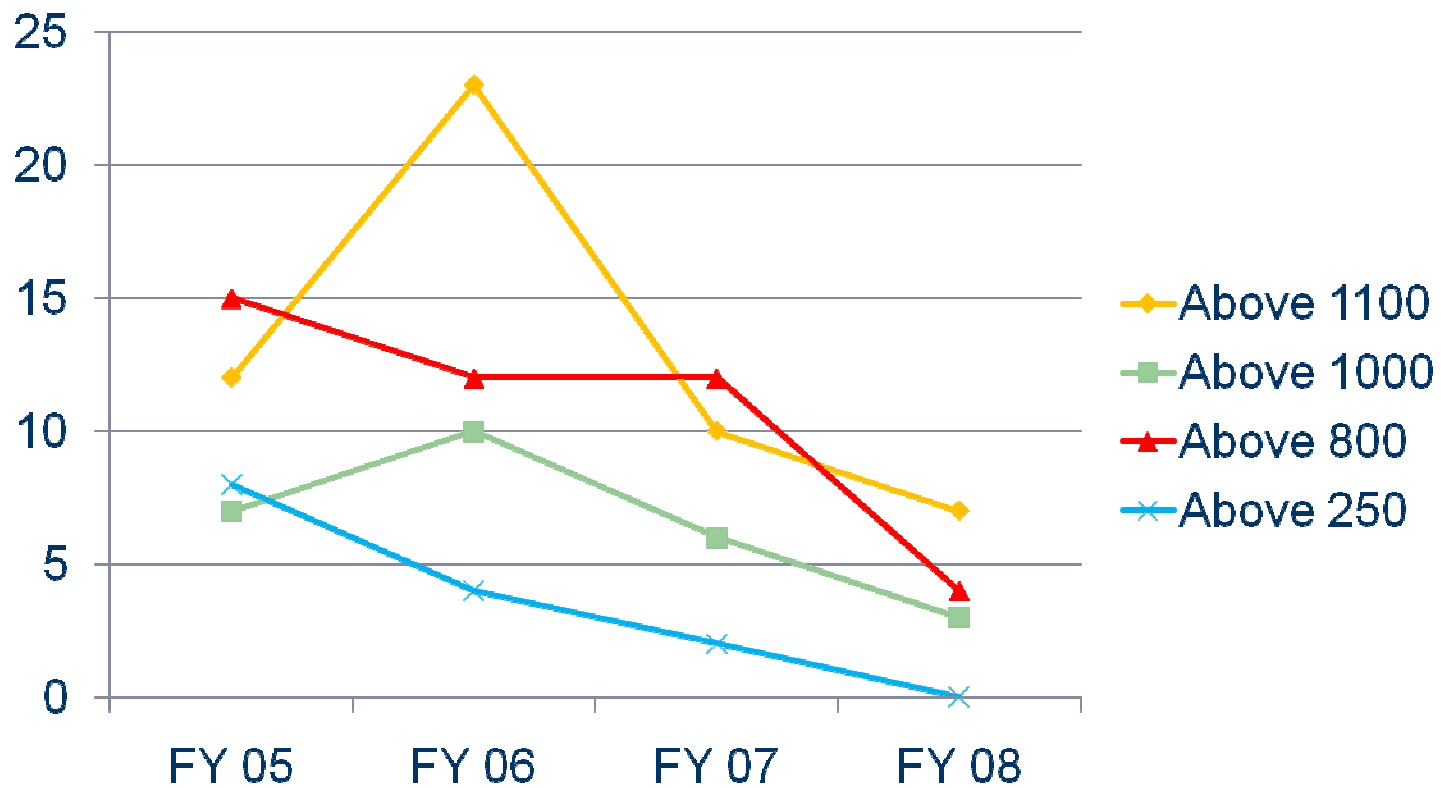
BEAH Growth



BEAH Most Frequent Violations

	2006	2007	2008
Rodents	42%	37%	33%
Roaches	13%	19%	25%
Mold/Moisture	18%	14%	23%
Carpet	7%	5%	3%

Decline in ISD Housing Division complaints due to Infestation



Evaluation

- Monitor data
 - Violations, neighborhoods, housing type, tenancy, case resolution
- Survey providers and clients
 - Satisfaction, resolution of cases
 - Website navigation
- Focus group of inspectors
 - Tenant housekeeping frequently an issue

Applying the Evaluation

- Outreach to un-registered or inactive health institutions
- Develop educational materials on safe cleaning products, BEAH process, tenant rights
- Educational outreach on integrated pest management
- Rapid Response Agreement with ISD

Client Feedback

“Thanks to Breathe Easy, [the cockroach, mice and mold] problems were fixed.”

“I am satisfied with the inspection, and I don't have any pests after Breathe Easy at Home came to my house.”

Provider Feedback

I was following a mother with a 2 year-old child, who had been hospitalized for asthma. The mother was doing everything she could to control asthma triggers in her home, but the apartment had mice. She had reported the mouse problem to the property manager multiple times.

Mom requested that I make a BEAH referral after she saw a mouse run over her sleeping son. The housing inspector cited the evidence of a mouse infestation to the property manager, who was then required to bring in a professional pest control company to fill in all the holes and exterminate properly.

After one month, all the violations had been corrected. After months of struggling with the property manager to exterminate, the mother was thrilled.

Children's Hospital Boston

For further information, contact BEAH Program Coordinator, Amanda LaSane at ALaSane@bphc.org .



THANK YOU!
Questions/Comments?



Thank you for joining us!

- Visit the *Communities in Action* Online Network for further information and slides from this presentation
 - www.asthmacommunitynetwork.org