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Acting Troupe Joins Elementary Students to Promote Healthy Behaviors in Brooklyn

“No Idling” skit educates and empowers children to reduce asthma triggers in their community.

New York, NY January 14, 2008 — This Friday, January 18 at 10:00 AM, PS 20 in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn will welcome the PossEble Theatre Company to join their own *Open Airways* students at an all-school assembly. The company will perform *Help Wanted*, the newest feature of the Asthma Free School Zone asthma prevention and management program. The play informs students about the health impacts of idling vehicles and encourages change in the community; students participating in *Open Airways* at PS 20 will demonstrate the proper way to handle an asthma attack.

PS 20 Clinton Hill (225 Adelphi, Brooklyn, 11205) is a part of the 2007-2008 Asthma Free School Zone program. The school joined the program last fall after school nurse Janice Jefferson found out about the DOH NYC Asthma Partnership *Asthma Friendly Schools Award*. She contacted AFSZ Schools Coordinator Lori Bukiewicz seeking ‘No Idling’ and ‘No Smoking’ signs that meet environmental criteria for the award.

“Nurse Jefferson is a model nurse in NYC schools. She has the support of school administrators and uses it to expand her reach outside of the nurse’s office – creating health bulletin boards and bringing outside programs to PS 20. Jefferson acts to prevent asthma symptoms and other illnesses, not just treat them.” Says Bukiewicz, “She may be the most proactive nurse I have worked with in my three years at AFSZ.”

Help Wanted, is a 15-minute skit written by AFSZ Program Director Rebecca Kalin that reinforces the program’s principle message: Vehicle idling is an asthma trigger that should be eliminated from school zones. “People receive information in different ways. Some read, some listen and some *watch or do*.” Says Kalin, “A play is a perfect way for children to learn. And, when they tell the story at home, they pass on the lesson.”

The sketch is performed by members of the Manhattan-based PossEble Theatre Company. “We jumped at the opportunity to work with AFSZ.” Says PossEble president Katie Cappiello. “As a theater company, it has always been our mission to use theater as a tool for enhancing education and empowering communities. We are very proud to be a part of this project.”

This is the premiere performance of *Help Wanted*. Following the skit, Janice Jefferson will join *Open Airways* children on stage to directly address asthma and demonstrate proper handling of an asthma attack. The play is a part of an all-school assembly in the auditorium of this Brooklyn Elementary School. All parents, community members and members of the press are encouraged to attend.

The *Asthma Friendly School Award* was designed by the NYCAP Schools Committee to acknowledge NYC Schools who take an active role to manage and prevent asthma at their school. Schools have a list of mandatory criteria to be named Asthma Friendly Schools; they can attain Bronze, Silver or Gold status by meeting additional criteria. By holding this asthma-awareness assembly, PS 20 meets one additional criteria.

- For more information on *Help Wanted* or Asthma Free School Zone, contact Rebecca Kalin at 212-533-6615 or rk@afsz.org or visit www.afsz.org.
- For more information on the Asthma Friendly Schools Award contact NYCAP at (212) 513-0528 or email nycap@health.nyc.gov.
- For more information on PossEble Theatre Company, visit <http://www.possebletheater.com/contact.php>