



# IAQ Tools for Schools Mentor Network

## Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) is a Problem

Throughout the country, nearly 56 million people spend a significant portion of their day inside elementary and secondary schools. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education, in 1999, 43 percent of America's public schools—about 33,800—reported at least one unsatisfactory environmental condition. Ventilation was reported as unsatisfactory in about one quarter of public schools while indoor air quality was reported as unsatisfactory in about one in five schools. Indoor air pollutants commonly found in schools, such as mold, mildew, dust mites, pet dander, pests, and pesticides, build up when routine facility maintenance projects are deferred resulting in a decreased quality of life for students and staff. Poor IAQ should not be ignored and schools that fail to respond promptly and effectively may experience an increase in short-term health problems, such as fatigue and nausea, as well as long-term health problems, such as asthma.

## An IAQ Solution

In 1995, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced the *Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools (IAQ TFS)* Program that offers resources and guidance to help schools identify indoor air quality problems using a practical, cost-effective, step-by-step approach. With an IAQ problem, some schools and school districts may be overwhelmed and uncertain where to begin to tackle the challenges associated with establishing a successful IAQ program. Here is where the *IAQ TFS Mentor Network* can help!

## New IAQ Resource

EPA formed the *Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools (IAQ TFS) Mentor Network* to provide a collaborative network for IAQ advocates—school superintendents, teachers, maintenance and facilities personnel, faculty members, and members of school-based organizations—to share their experiences and successes through this network and also offer advice to schools actively involved in their *IAQ TFS* Programs or in the beginning stages of implementation. Many schools and school districts find it beneficial to model their IAQ programs on successful IAQ efforts at other schools.

## Join the Mentor Network Today

If you are interested in being a mentor or hearing about the experiences of others who have successfully established IAQ programs in their school or school district, send an e-mail to [mentornetwork@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:mentornetwork@cadmusgroup.com) for more information about becoming involved in the Mentor Network Program.

## Join Your Peers

The *IAQ TFS Mentor Network* consists of volunteer mentors who are directly involved in establishing and maintaining their school or school districts IAQ program. Mentors and participants include:

- ★ School Superintendents
- ★ Principals
- ★ Teachers
- ★ Parents
- ★ School Nurses
- ★ Faculty Members
- ★ School-Based Organizations
- ★ Students
- ★ Head custodians
- ★ Engineers
- ★ Maintenance and Facilities Personnel

## Benefits of Participating

The **Mentor Network** will be a community resource. Mentors will share advice and all participants will learn strategies to address IAQ concerns creatively and effectively.

Mentors and participants will receive the Mentor Kit, which is full of resources on the *IAQ TFS* Program and includes materials that mentors can utilize during training sessions. Other supplementary materials include the *IAQ TFS* Road Map, promotional brochure, and the Asthma and Allergy and 2001 Symposium bulletins. The following are just a few of the many benefits for participants and mentors:

### For Participants

- ▶ Access to mentors to assist you with IAQ issues.
- ▶ The **Mentor Network Kit**.
- ▶ A written case study on your experiences as a participant for publication and distribution by U.S. EPA.
- ▶ A commendation for your shared experiences and successes with IAQ.

### For Mentors

- ▶ EPA award recognition as an *IAQ TFS* Mentor.
- ▶ A written case study on your experiences as a mentor for publication and distribution by U.S. EPA.
- ▶ The **Mentor Network Kit**.
- ▶ The *IAQ TFS* Mentor Pin.
- ▶ The satisfaction from helping other schools improve the teaching and learning environment of their staff and students.

### Do you have a success story?

We would love to hear it. To submit your story or learn more about the Network, please visit [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools).

