



Speaking from Experience Asthma in Childhood

Transcript for chapter 10 of 12: Support and coping strategies

Susan (has three children with asthma): I ran for six years a support group for parents out of my own home. For me that was a way of learning more, but also supporting other people and getting support myself. I learnt so much in those early days that now I actually work as an asthma educator.

Lavinia and Geoff (have two daughters with asthma): I actually went down to a local asthma support group, which was down in Hastings at the time. That was where I went down to. And your mum, we spoke to your mum quite a bit. Although...

Lavinia and Geoff: She was more old fashioned. She didn't know any of the new medications.

Paul, Vicky and Michelle (who has asthma): We find out about new treatments and new medications from the general media I guess. We have contacts in the Asthma Foundation.

Marilyn (has three sons with asthma): A lot of it is just learning on the spot. And being prepared to be okay with mistakes you've made and move on. So a lot of it is sort of 'in-house' training, so to speak. But I've definitely found support through places like Asthma Victoria, where I could find and get information; that was essential. But when you get down to your home situation, it's often very individual, and you just 'wing it' a lot of the time.

Susan: Survival techniques that I found helpful for nighttimes were getting addicted to ear plugs, trying to sleep somewhere where I couldn't hear the coughing, and putting my husband on alert. But that was really difficult because if he didn't wake, then I'd lie there thinking, "Will he wake up, will he wake up?" So it was really difficult, and I would try and have a nap in the middle of the day the next day, which is difficult if you've got a job or something like that. But for me, I was able to do that.

Paul, Vicky and Michelle: We've got a poster on the fridge at home, which just reiterates the steps to take when an attack occurs. You know, give them four puffs of ventoline four minutes apart, and that sort of thing. And it tells you when to start to panic, if you like. So yeah, don't just go into denial about it. Make sure you do something about it.