



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**WORLD ASTHMA DAY – MAY 3, 2016**

## The Lung Association Cites Delays in Implementing Ryan's Law

*"Someone needs to explain why Ryan's Law has been put on the back-burner."*

Sandra Gibbons, mother of Ryan Gibbons, 12, who died in 2012 after suffering an asthma attack at school.

Toronto – On the first anniversary of the passage of Ryan's Law (Ensuring Asthma Friendly Schools), the Ontario Lung Association says many of the province's publicly-funded schools still do not know what they need to do to comply with the legislation.

Ryan's Law, which received royal assent on World Asthma Day 2015 (May 6), requires every school in the province to institute policies and procedures to help ensure that the one in five Ontario students who has asthma is able to breathe easily and freely.

Schools must allow students with asthma to carry their emergency inhalers, with permission from a parent or guardian. The new law also replaces the patchwork of school board policies and rules with consistent standards for asthma education and preparedness across the provincial education system.

But on World Asthma Day 2016 (Tuesday, May 3) – a year later after Ryan's Law went into effect – the Ontario Lung Association is calling on the provincial government to accelerate implementation of the legislation in the province's publicly-funded school system.

"Schools are holding their breath, waiting for direction and support," said George Habib, president and CEO of the Ontario Lung Association. "We have worked with Ministry of Education staff and other partners to provide resources to school boards but many schools are still unaware that these materials are available or don't know how to access them."

Habib said that more funding is needed to ensure that teachers and school staff receive the training necessary to recognize and respond to a breathing emergency.

Ryan's Law is named after Ryan Gibbons, the 12-year-old boy who died in November, 2012 after suffering an asthma attack at school.

"The pain of losing my son will never go away," said Ryan's mother, Sandra Gibbons. "But I believed that by fighting for the passage of Ryan's Law I could help to prevent another mother from going through that ordeal."

"Now I hear from parents that their children's school hasn't even heard of Ryan's Law and I find that hard to understand. Someone needs to explain why Ryan's Law has been put on the back-burner."

**About The Lung Association**

The Lung Association is a registered charity dedicated to making Ontario a better place to breathe. It provides programs and services to patients and health-care providers, invests in lung research and campaigns for improved policies on lung health. Information about breathing and lung health issues is available through the Lung Health Information Line 1-888-344-LUNG (5864) or at [info@on.lung.ca](mailto:info@on.lung.ca)

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