

Fact sheet

School nurses and school-based health centers (SBHCs): Partnership for success



School nurses

School nurses are the first line of illness and injury triage in schools for children. School nurses provide a wide array of services and supports including:

- health screenings
- medication administration
- chronic disease management
- health education
- emergency planning
- training school staff
- health assessments
- environmental health
- and much, much more!



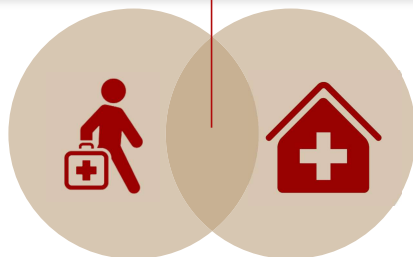
SBHCs

SBHCs operate from a dedicated space on a school campus to ensure students have access to, at minimum, primary care. With parental/guardian consent, SBHCs can offer a wide array of services including:

- well-child care
- laboratory services
- immunizations
- illness and injury acute visits
- work permit exams
- sports physicals
- chronic disease management
- specialty care referrals

An SBHC complements and supports — but does not replace or duplicate — school nurse services. In fact, the most effective SBHCs have strong relationships with their school's nurse and broader school health services team.¹ Together, SBHCs and school nurses can provide a comprehensive, integrated, and robust school-based health care infrastructure that meets the school community's needs and improves student health, wellbeing, and academic success.

School nurses and SBHCs share a common mission — **to ensure students are healthy and ready to learn.**



1. The school health services team includes school nurses, psychologists, counselors, social workers, health aides, and other health professionals employed or contracted by the school.

What is a school-based health center?

School-based health centers (SBHCs) are an evidence-driven strategy that brings health care to where our youngest Ohioans spend most of their time — school.

SBHCs are created through a partnership between a school/ school district and a community healthcare provider to provide access to, at minimum, comprehensive primary care services to students on a school campus. The healthcare provider (also referred to as the SBHC operator) runs the day-to-day operations of the SBHC.

In addition to providing comprehensive primary care services, SBHCs often provide behavioral, oral, and vision health services, as well as care coordination and social services and supports.



What does this partnership look like?

SBHCs are an important vehicle to support school nurses and extend the care and services school nurses can provide. At the same time, school nurses are integral to the success and sustainability of an SBHC. It's important that school nurses serve on SBHC planning and advisory boards and are engaged in the development of an SBHC's operational plan. In addition to supporting SBHC planning, school nurses work in partnership with SBHCs to:

- Identify student health needs and gaps in care
- Act as a liaison with school staff to increase awareness of the SBHC and other school health services
- Increase student, family, and community awareness of the SBHC and other school health services
- Work with families to promote and secure SBHC parental/guardian consent
- Serve as a gate keeper for student referrals to the SBHC
- Partner with the SBHC to manage student's chronic conditions and ensure students are up to date on school-required immunizations

This collaborative healthcare and education partnership puts students and families at the heart of its services and is transformational in improving health and education outcomes.



Ohio School-Based Health Alliance

The Ohio School-Based Health Alliance ("Ohio Alliance") is the only statewide, independent, nonpartisan organization created to improve access to comprehensive, integrated health services by advancing and supporting the sustainability and expansion of school-based health care.



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