

See Health Care Make a Difference

School nurses make a difference. They . . .

>**Give** confidence to parents because parents know their child's health needs and injuries are being appropriately handled during the day;

>**Intervene** to improve children's health that affects attendance, achievement, and success;

>**Allow** teachers to be more available to teach their students when health needs arise;

>**Collaborate** with administrators and the community to promote a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment.

Ensure Your School Has a School Nurse

Healthy children learn better. Licensed school nurses provide frontline health care for children at school. Many children come to school with a variety of health issues that affect their academic success. This is why **every child should have access to school nursing services.** The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) and government agencies (Healthy People 2010) agree the ratio of school nurses to students should be 1 to 750.*

Contact your local school district administration and school board to advocate for essential school nursing services.

For more information about school health services, visit the School Nurse Organization of Minnesota at www.minnesotaschoolnurses.org and the NASN at www.nasn.org.



* References: Children's Defense Fund, 2008; Hennepin County School Nurses Alliance Public Health Task Force, 2007; Healthy People 2010.

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**Making a Difference
in Children's Health and
Learning**



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Who is the school nurse?

The school nurse is a **professional registered nurse (RN)**, licensed by the Minnesota Board of Nursing. The school nurse is a specialist licensed by the Minnesota Board of Teaching.

School nurses are accountable to practice in accordance with current Standards of School Nursing, as stated by the NASN, and with federal and Minnesota laws, rules, and regulations.

Minnesota school nurses are required to have a bachelor's degree in nursing and be certified in Minnesota as a public health nurse under the Minnesota Board of Nursing.

Their expertise in pediatric, public health, mental health, and emergency nursing has a significant impact on schools and children. **School nurses are the most qualified professionals** with the educational expertise to manage, deliver, and delegate health care in our schools.



Know the Role of the School Nurse

School nurses provide many critical services to students. They **offer leadership for providing health services**. They assess health problems that may interfere with a child's ability to learn. When necessary, school nurses train and supervise staff who provide health care. They work closely with the parents and primary care providers to refer the child for evaluation and treatment.

School nurses **provide direct nursing**

care by managing children's injuries, acute and chronic illnesses, and administering medications. Research shows 11-14% of school-aged children have chronic health conditions, 10% have diagnosed mental and behavioral conditions, and 13% are enrolled in special education, some with severe physical disabilities.* School nurses are vital professionals who manage care at schools.

School nurses **ensure a healthy, safe school environment**. They monitor immunizations, and they implement precautions for blood-borne pathogens and infectious diseases. They also develop emergency responses to school building disasters. School nurses take necessary actions to guarantee a healthy and safe school setting.

With their expertise in health, school nurses **manage health policies** by developing and evaluating school health rules. They lead, coordinate, and participate in school health and educational programs.

School nurses address the social and psychological needs of students and families. They advocate for programs that positively affect student health and learning.

School nurses **provide expertise** on the health component of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Section 504, a federal law that protects children with disabilities from being discriminated at school. They also collaborate with student support professionals who work with families, the school, and community.

School nurses **are the liaison among school, family, community, and health care providers**. They coordinate

with families, community health providers, and health care agencies as they develop community partnerships to promote health and learning. This communication is important because 7% of Minnesota children have no health insurance and 12% live in poverty.*

10% of school-aged children have diagnosed mental and behavioral conditions

11-14% of school-aged children have chronic health conditions

7% of Minnesota children have no health insurance