

# School-Based Health Services Engagement Guide



# **Acknowledgements**

Since its inception in 2015, school-based health at Nationwide Children's Hospital has experienced steady growth, mirroring a broader statewide trend across Ohio. Increasingly, health care partners are stepping forward to meet the needs of students and families who face barriers to accessing traditional health care services. These efforts are transforming how care is delivered in schools, bringing vital services directly to the communities that need them most.

However, delivering high-quality clinical care is only one part of the equation.

The success of school-based health centers also depends on meaningful engagement with the communities they serve.

Building trust, fostering collaboration and ensuring cultural responsiveness requires a coordinated, team-based approach that extends beyond the center's walls.

This resource guide offers practical tools and strategies to support effective community engagement and sustainable program growth. Whether you are launching a new school-based health center or enhancing an existing one, the approaches outlined here are designed to be adaptable to your local community. As you explore this guide, consider which strategies align with your community's values, needs and strengths, and feel empowered to tailor them to fit your program's unique goals.

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# I. Why does engagement matter?

# Creating the space for collaboration

Funding, designing and opening a school-based health program is no small feat. Upon reaching the implementation phase of their project, many school-based health partnerships are eager to see their services reach families. However, awareness and openness to school-based health must also be built. Engagement activities are the vital next step and can even begin before opening to engage the community.

Families may not be accustomed to the idea of school-based health, or be so inundated with messaging and communication for their children, that they do not digest the information right away. For a significant period of time, families may be unaware that the school health program exists in their school or district.

Often, word-of-mouth recommendations or positive personal experiences are the most effective way to increase momentum for a school-based health program – success comes one conversation, one community event or one patient at a time.

There are plenty of creative and inexpensive ways to reach students and families, letting them know that resources are there to support them.

# **Community Engagement Principles**

- Community engagement is authentic, meaningful, inclusive and culturally relevant.
- Staff are committed to reaching students in the school districts where they are present.
- Youth and families are always at the center of service delivery.
- Collaborative strategies help expand equitable access.
- Common goals are set to improve the health of the child.

Connecting to families, schools and communities through engagement is an essential part of any school-based health program. Misconceptions about school health can prevent families from accessing care – for example, there can be confusion around the costs associated with visiting a school-based health center, the difference between a school health provider and a school nurse, and the services available.

Without thoughtful efforts to communicate with schools and families, a school health program cannot flourish. Engagement requires creativity, understanding of the populations being served, and adaptability to new approaches.

The following resource describes various approaches to link students to care and ensure that their early years – and beyond – are healthy and full of opportunities to learn and grow.

# **II. School Health Liaison Roles and Responsibilities**

# **Connecting and strengthening partnerships**

Many of the activities described in this guide are included in the daily role of a **school health liaison**. This individual (or team of individuals) is tasked with managing relationships between the health care partner and school teams, establishing systems to help patients navigate their care, and increasing awareness and use of school-based health services. The realms of health care and education can speak different languages and use different terms – the school health liaison ideally can navigate both sides.

Not every program can immediately accommodate this role, but the activities can still be delegated or modified to other team members with the capacity to work on them. As teams scale up their operations, they might consider adding more engagement-focused team members or responsibilities. The following table depicts the school health liaison role, typically employed by the health care partner. A full job description is included in the Appendix.

# **Essential Job Functions**

# • Acts as a liaison between relevant stakeholders by monitoring, maintaining and enhancing relationships and partnerships

- Develops, implements and evaluates goals for school health
- Collaborates with school and health care team to develop and track metrics for success
- Identifies and leverages barrier removal strategies, particularly those already overcome by clinical teams
- Recognizes gaps in care and works collaboratively with management, school-based providers, school personnel and community partners to identify resources to fill gaps
- Promotes the organization to the community
- Networks regularly with local and regional organizations to enhance school-based programming

# **Skills**

- Strong leadership and decision-making skills required
- Skill in promoting multidisciplinary collaboration; ability to act as a facilitator and change agent required
- Evidence of project management experience required
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, enabling this individual to relate effectively and efficiently with diverse age and demographic backgrounds
- Strong initiative; excellent interpersonal skills; ability to work effectively in a team environment
- Strong presentation skills; ability to engage an audience
- Computer literate and working knowledge of software applications (word processing, spreadsheet and database)

# **III. School Partnerships**

# **Beginning with strong relationships**

Building a strong school health program relies on fostering strong relationships and clear communication. The roles listed below are crucial in creating a support network for students and their families. Each of these individuals can play a part in building trust and sharing important information:

- School Nurse: Provides direct health care and promotes health education
- Social Worker: Offers support for social and emotional issues
- Counselor: Assists with academic, career and personal development
- Athletic Director: Encourages and coordinates student development through sports
- Coaches: Serve as mentors and promote teamwork and discipline
- Secretaries and Administrative Assistants: Often the first point of contact, they help facilitate
  communication
- Faith Leaders: Provide spiritual support and can connect with families on a personal level
- Building and District Administrators (Principals, Superintendent): Oversee the implementation of school health programs and policies

Establishing these relationships is not a one-time meeting or introduction, but rather an ongoing commitment to collaboration. Determine when staff meetings, professional development days or other opportunities are taking place, and attend where appropriate.

In Ohio, schools use the Teacher Based Team (TBT) structure to strengthen teaching and learning for all students through collaborative planning based on the collective interpretation of formative assessment data. Meetings such as Building Leadership Teams (BLT) or District Leadership Teams (DLT) are good opportunities to understand school dynamics and participate in the culture. When appropriate, the inclusion of health care staff or school health liaisons can strengthen connection and communication.

# Intentional planning and sharing

Throughout the planning process and into the opening of school health services, schedule regularly occurring meetings to check in and gain insight. These meetings might include:

- Updates on design and construction
- Strategies for marketing and communication
- Discussing needs with members of the community

To develop strong lines of communication and establish trust, it is advantageous to schedule monthly check-ins with relevant stakeholders, including school faculty, community partners and health care teams. These recurring touch bases allow for consistent care coordination and information sharing, such as identifying students who could benefit from school-based health services. For an example agenda from a monthly partnership meeting, refer to the Appendix.

# **Collaboration with school nurses**

Perhaps the most important connection in a school health program is with the school nurse, whether in a single building or across a district. The school nurse is often a highly trusted individual in the school community, with unique insight into students' needs and barriers to health or attendance. The school nurse can also facilitate referrals. For example, if a student presents with symptoms in the nurse's office, a call can easily be made to arrange an appointment before the student is dismissed from school.

Cultivating a close working relationship with the school nurse is integral to success. However, some concerns may arise at the beginning of a school health program regarding the differing responsibilities of a school nurse and a school-based health center. The following table outlines the different functions of each role:

Nursing in Schools	School-Based Health Center
<ul> <li>Direct nursing services</li> <li>Triage</li> <li>Medication administration</li> <li>Health care education</li> <li>Emergency plans</li> <li>Training school staff</li> <li>Health assessments</li> <li>School health environment</li> <li>Health policies and programs</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Well-child checks</li> <li>Primary care mental health</li> <li>Laboratory services and testing</li> <li>Immunizations</li> <li>Teen health</li> <li>Sick visits</li> <li>Work permits and sports physicals</li> <li>Chronic disease management</li> <li>Referrals for specialty care</li> </ul>

# Outreach to high-need populations

School-based health centers play a vital role in ensuring that all students have access to the care they need, regardless of barriers such as cost, transportation or other social determinants of health. Rather than replacing a child's existing primary care provider or medical home, these centers complement and enhance the care students receive. They provide quicker access to sick visits, point-of-care testing, vaccines, primary care mental health and other essential appointments that might otherwise have long wait times. For some students who may not be connected to a medical home elsewhere, school-based health centers can become their primary source of health care. By being an integral part of the school community, school health providers become a valuable resource for families from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

In some cases, health care organizations may perform a "roster match," where school or district enrollment is cross-referenced with existing patients. Depending on the depth of a data-sharing agreement in place, this process can identify patients overdue for well visits or necessary follow-up care.

Other methods are also available to identify patients who are overdue for care. School nurses can refer students who have failed vision or hearing screenings. They might also identify those in need of closer monitoring of chronic diseases, follow-up from injuries or other outstanding issues best addressed by the school health provider. Teachers also have a great deal of insight into their students' day-to-day needs, especially if there are behavioral concerns. Specific outreach to – and appreciation for – teachers can go a long way.

Finally, consider partnerships with existing behavioral health providers, social workers and counselors working for or with the school district. These roles often have the greatest awareness of students in need of health care services and may have existing relationships with families to facilitate outreach and obtain consent.

# Removing the burden of outreach

Parents and caregivers can have a great deal of needs, appointments and stressors to navigate for their children. The burden of reaching out to schedule appointments can be a barrier to care, especially for families with young children. This can be mitigated by using an interest form strategy to identify and contact families interested in school health appointments.

To accomplish this, place a QR code onto existing flyers for every school partnership. The flyers may also be converted into yard signs, distributed in local community hubs, and shared electronically via district-wide texts messages and emails, as well as physically with schools. To reach the largest audience, capitalize on various marketing modalities to advertise school health services (i.e., digital signs, magnets, flyers, posters, yard signs, postcards, even shirts). When a user scans the code on these materials, they reach a survey that asks for the following information:

- Child's first and last name
- Child's date of birth
- Child's school
- Parent/guardian first and last name
- Parent/guardian phone number
- Are you interested in primary care services for your children (such as checkups, sick visits, physicals, vaccines, etc.)? (Yes/No)

Users are instructed to fill out the form independently for each child. Once the form is complete, the parent or guardian will receive a phone call from a school health staff member assigned to monitor the survey results. The parent or guardian is then able to speak with someone directly about their child's current health care needs, schedule an appointment with school health, and determine next steps if additional referrals are needed. Responses are recorded on a secure platform to ensure patient confidentiality.

In its first day of circulation to Columbus City Schools, the interest form received hundreds of responses. It has remained a consistent way to capture needs and speak directly to families to answer their questions.

# Aligning with the school calendar

Co-location and partnership with school buildings offer numerous opportunities for connection. When planning engagement efforts throughout the year, health care organizations should work with schools to identify the events that hold the most significance for families and have high attendance rates. Consider being present with a table, handouts and giveaways at popular events, including:

- Prospective student nights and open houses
- Back-to-school events
- Kindergarten screening days
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Art shows, talent shows or choir and orchestra concerts
- Athletic events and pep rallies

Furthermore, athletic seasons also present regular opportunities to provide care for athletes. Consider reaching out to athletic directors and coaches within the district in advance of upcoming sports seasons. School health programs can help teams enter seasons with completed sports physicals, as well as provide evaluations for concussions.

Finally, seasonal and school-required vaccines are a continual source of collaboration for school-based health centers:

- **Flu Vaccines:** Some teams reserve entire days to administer flu vaccines, with communication first sent to parents and guardians to obtain consent.
  - Consider offering flu vaccines to school staff as well, even as a pediatric institution. This builds
    relationships with key members of the school community and provides staff a chance to visit and learn
    about the school-based health center.
- School-Required Vaccines: Depending on students' grade levels or immunization history before entering the district, certain vaccines may be needed before enrollment or advancing to the next grade. Work with the school nurse and school administration to provide a seamless enrollment process and reduce vaccine exclusions.



# **IV. Transportation**

School health programs exist to remove as many barriers as possible to children receiving health care. One faced by many families, especially in rural communities, is transportation. Introducing transportation to a school health program ensures that the whole district can be equally served. Using district transportation that is already bringing kids to and from school is a frequent solution. Some districts choose to use bus drivers with on-call availability or who do not have routes between morning and afternoon pickups.

Once operations are comfortably established in the school-based health center, consider expanding the reach of services to the remaining buildings in the district or possible partner schools nearby. With close coordination, students can be safely transported to and from their appointments without needing the accompaniment of a guardian. If the appointment is for an unexpected sick visit and the student needs sent home, arrangements can also be made for the parent or guardian to pick up the child from the school-based health center if necessary. Although questions may arise at first, families are typically appreciative of the option for their child to be seen during the school day, especially in communities with transportation challenges.

When building the transportation plan, work alongside the following roles to ensure a successful process:

- Principal in school-based health center building
- Principal(s) in transportation pickup school building(s)
- Secretary or attendance office at both school locations
- School nurse and/or health aid
- School-based health provider(s)
- Transportation director/coordinator for the school district
- Nutrition services team, if appointments include lunch hours

Transportation staff who do not have scheduled routes during the middle of the school day are frequently used to accomplish inter-district transportation. The figure on the following page illustrates a step-by-step process for clinical and school staff to use as a starting point.

	School-Based Health Center Staff	School Staff
1	Identifies students who are overdue for a well visit. Calls families to inquire if they are interested in an appointment at the school-based health center.	
2	Schedules students for appointments at the school-based health center.	Identifies what class the child will be in during the appointment time and plans for dismissal.
3	Calls student's school to notify time for appointment. Sends written appointment schedule for day via email. Contacts parent or guardian for a reminder and verbal consent and collects information about medical history or concerns to be addressed in the visit.	Notifies transportation staff it is time to retrieve child at school for appointment. Dismisses child from class and walks them to the transportation vehicle.
4		Transports child to school-based health center [typically carried out by district transportation staff].
5	Receives child at center door. If there are multiple children, the other child is either roomed to wait for their appointment or supervised in the lobby area.	
6	Completes appointment(s).	
7	Sends after-visit summary to consenting parent. If the child needs to be sent home, coordinates with school staff and parent or guardian about pickup.	Receives child back to school at the door if returning. Records absence from class.



# Considerations when starting a transportation plan

# Transport students in small batches.

• Do not transport more than three students at one time – ideally, students' time away from class is as minimal as possible, and waiting through several appointments for their peers to be finished can counteract the benefits of school-based health.

# Start small and scale up

- Beginning with one or two school buildings can allow for a more comfortable transition to the process before
  implementing it throughout the district. Designate one or two days per week for transportation to
  appointments and expand later.
- Start with scheduled well visits to become familiar with the workflow that is best for all teams and add sick visits as the workflow allows.

# Keep children comfortable and safe.

- For young children (most programs do not transport younger than the age of 7), ensure they are escorted by a trusted adult from their rooms to the transportation vehicle, into the school-based health center and back again.
- Some children may be apprehensive about being in a new building without their parent or guardian for a
  medical appointment. To keep them entertained and confident, include simple activities such as coloring
  books or toys to pass the time before or after their appointment.
- If appointments interfere with lunch times, communicate with cafeteria staff to arrange for a lunch or save one for the child when they are able to eat it.

# V. Outreach and Community Partnerships

A school's community will extend beyond the boundaries of its campus. While many families might consider their school a central hub, other locations in the area may serve a similar purpose. Aim to meet families where they are, in the spaces they feel comfortable.

For broader outreach, consider where children, parents and caregivers spend their time. Examples of places to attend events or drop informational materials include:

- Libraries
- Bus stops or transit hubs
- Parks and recreation centers
- Child care centers
- Grocery stores
- Faith centers

Furthermore, school health programs should look to create authentic relationships with the leaders and organizers of the roles listed above. Attend events aimed at social service providers in the area and inform them of the benefits and eligibility of your school-based health program. Many will be grateful for the information and the new resource they can add to their community knowledge. Offer to give brief presentations in the community to ensure that questions can be easily answered.

Consider what seasonal events might be taking place in the neighborhoods near your school as well. Community health fairs, fall festivals, back-to-school giveaways and other gatherings are central places to share information. Use refrigerator magnets, pencils, hand sanitizers or other everyday items with the school health scheduling phone number included on them.



Finally, every community event or tabling opportunity is a chance to build trust and strengthen relationships. Be sure to have a method of collecting names and numbers for families interested in appointments if capacity allows for calling them back. An example of a document used in tabling opportunities is included in the Appendix.

# VI. Marketing

Working closely with the school partner, there are many avenues for spreading the word about school-based health services. Conduct a quick audit so you can take advantage of all the methods already being used to share information to families including weekly emails, flyers, newsletters, online forums, social media, auto-dialed phone calls or texts and more.

See the Appendix for more examples of materials that have been used in Nationwide Children's school-based health programs.

# Considerations in marketing a school-based health program

# Audience & accessibility

- Teachers, school nurses, administrators and other school staff are excellent advocates for school health and should be considered the first audience you share information with. Provide this group with timely and accurate information before the program launches to build their trust and enthusiasm for the program. Use them to help brainstorm potential questions your other audiences may have about the program.
- Families are busy and receiving large quantities of information from their school and community. Be sure to
  use plain, approachable language and concise messaging.
- Students, especially in junior high and high school, should be able to easily understand and resonate with
  marketing materials for their school-based health center. Create avenues for them to ask questions, provide
  feedback, and self-refer when possible.
- In districts where numerous languages are spoken, translate marketing materials and work with social workers, interpreters or counselors to ensure all populations have the information they need.

### Measuring success

- Re-evaluate your marketing strategy frequently. Does success look like social media engagement? Visits to the school-based health center webpage? Total visits to the school-based health center? Work with your team to determine your measures of success and how to change course when necessary.
- Do not be afraid to be repetitive in your messaging. New students enter the district each year and throughout, depending on their living environment. Families may not engage with your materials until they need services.

### Wayfinding and visibility

- Is there directional signage around the building that makes it easy for students to locate the school-based health center? Include recognizable signage inside and outside of the building to make it easy to find.
- Digitally, information should be easy to find as well. Can families find operational hours, phone numbers and frequently asked questions quickly on the school district website?

# Consistency with each season

• Every month has "awareness" days and themes that can be used on social media. Take advantage of these when posting and add a call to action.

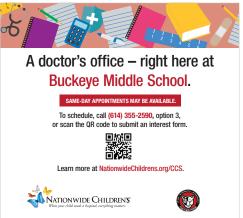
The following figure summarizes various approaches and tactics used to share information. Not every school district will have success with the same marketing plan – use the channels and tactics most frequented by students and families.

Strategy	Sample Tactics
In-school	Posters, Flyers, Hot cards, Fact Sheets, School Newsletter Articles, Emails, Texts, Yard Signs
Community Channels	Flyers, Posters, Newsletter Articles in Partner Channels, Social Media Messages
Events	Ribbon Cutting, Tours + Special Events, Sporting Events, School Plays + Activities, Teacher In-service Days, Special Events/School Events
Outreach and Engagement	Tabling, Teacher In-service Presentations, Classroom Presentations
Digital	Facebook, Instagram, Webpage, Text Messages
Media	News Releases, Column Submission in Local Newspaper

# **Social Media Graphic**



# Yard Sign



# **Open House Invitation**



# VII. Youth Engagement

A key difference between working in a traditional primary care setting and a school-based health setting is the outreach and interaction with students. Successful school health programs recognize that their providers should be viewed as extensions of the school community, allowing students and families to feel comfortable coming to them for care.

Youth engagement opportunities are an excellent way to build rapport. Interacting with students in meaningful ways can look different depending on capacity and school preferences. Every school will have a different dynamic, population and perspective on what engagement looks like. School health professionals from all sides of a partnership should take time to outline the events, approaches and communication channels that appeal most to their families.

Furthermore, take advantage of any opportunities to hear from youth themselves on this matter. Young people know what resonates not only with their parents and guardians, but also their peers. Consider holding focus groups, initiating a Youth Advisory Council (described in the next section), or inviting student leaders to learn more about the school health program and the resources it offers.



Engagement Activity	Example
Lunch & Learns	Provide the health care perspective on specific topics students are interested in, during lunch or an informal setting. Themes may include mental health, vaping and substance use, common signs of sports injuries, or career pathways in health care. During sessions, be sure to mention how the school health program can support students about the topic being discussed.
Health Education	Partner with school health providers to deliver health education to students. Younger students' sessions can center on hygiene and handwashing. Older elementary and middle school students might discuss puberty and personal hygiene. Middle and high school students can focus on reproductive health, mental health or consent and refusal skills.
School & Community Events	Participate in highly attended community days, art shows, sporting events and other traditions. Take time to interact with students and build meaningful relationships.
Lunchtime Tabling	Create time for relationship building through interactive lunchtime activities. Spin a wheel for prizes, host a trivia game, and have sign-in sheets available for students to indicate they have a health question or issue they'd like addressed.
Freshman and Senior Outreach	At transition points in their lives, conduct specific outreach to freshmen entering the building or seniors preparing for the transition to young adulthood.



# **VIII. Youth Advisory Councils**

# Introduction

School-based health centers provide primary care directly to students, families and sometimes community members in the school setting. Providers have the advantage of consistent follow-up and nearby access to patients; families have the advantage of no extra transportation to a primary care office. However, there are unique challenges to the school-based health setting. Connecting to the community and engaging with patients, families and staff is an essential element of success in this environment. One way to approach this is through a **Youth Advisory Council** (**YAC**), a student organization within the school that promotes healthy behaviors, develops student leaders and uplifts student voices within the school.

At the national level, YACs have made a difference in numerous ways. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recognizes the importance of young voices in public health, citing YACs on its website as a "valuable opportunity to provide input to their school and community." YAC members are both presenters and participants at the annual Be The Change Youth Training Program, an opportunity hosted by the National School-Based Health Alliance. Initiating a new council is a chance to connect with a national cohort of students and supportive advisors working to create a culture of health and empowerment in their communities.

Each YAC will ultimately be unique, reflecting the needs and priorities of school districts, families and parents. Typically, YACs are made up of high school students, but middle and junior high school students have also participated successfully. During weekly, monthly or quarterly meetings, depending on capacity, students are asked to identify the strengths, needs and barriers to health in their school and work together on projects addressing health topics that matter to them. Through this exploration, students are also encouraged to promote peer utilization of their school-based health center and provide feedback to the health care team where needed.

Serving as ambassadors and leaders to their peers, members take part in shaping a culture of health, encouragement and personal growth. The following provides insight into the process of initiating and maintaining a YAC within a school.

Community engagement work of any kind should begin with intention. Entering the work with preconceived notions about a community's priorities or with fully formed projects already in mind can lead to exclusive and ineffective programs. As you work to create a Youth Advisory Council, allow youth and district staff to walk through the process authentically. Projects may require adjustments or even re-starts – this is all part of the collaborative process. Young leaders cannot form without the chance to determine their own opinions, voices and ideas.

# **Gaining School & Family Support**

Regardless of who will be leading students in the YAC, buy-in from school and center staff is necessary to create momentum. Key stakeholders may include:

- Principal
- Vice principal
- School nurse
- Guidance counselors
- Center RNs, MAs, nurse practitioners and other staff
- Teachers with capacity/interest to help
- Coaches
- Transportation staff for field trips

Once stakeholders have been identified and it is clear who will facilitate ongoing meetings, take time to meet with members of the list above. Even if those stakeholders are not directly involved, their support will spread the word and help direct students who would be ideal candidates to join the YAC.

Consider the timing of recurring meetings within the school schedule:

- Are there spaces available on a regular basis?
- Could students spend lunch periods meeting if there is no other free period otherwise?

Various stakeholders will be able to talk through those points and provide feedback.

Parents and guardians are also integral to the process of starting up a successful YAC. To spread information about the opportunity, prepare flyers for common spaces, language for newsletters and any other channels typically accessed by families. Aim to be brief but informative. If field trips or off-campus visits are expected to be a part of students' experience, be sure to have access to any necessary consent or permission forms required by the school district.

It's also important to provide information about how the YAC will add value beyond existing extracurricular activities. Some administrators may want to understand the benefits for students if time, space and resources are going to be dedicated each week.

# **Recruiting Students**

Youth Advisory Councils have the capacity to greatly impact students, especially those who have not traditionally engaged in leadership roles or extracurricular activities. When searching for students to participate, consider reaching out to those who may be less likely to have strong attendance records or high GPAs. These students historically have shown improvement in other YACs and exhibited personal growth through peer leadership.

Teachers and school staff can be instrumental in identifying students who could be the best fit for the YAC. Students should still be permitted to decline if they wish, but the additional encouragement and recognition from teachers can bolster their interest.

While adult champions are useful for generating interest in joining a YAC, students are even more likely to listen to their peers. Methods for recruiting students could include:

- Directly reaching out to students identified with the help of administrators, counselors and center staff.
- Posting flyers with clear and concise descriptions in communal spaces, including QR Codes to simple sign-up information.
- Mentioning the YAC in school announcements, newsletters and other channels.
- Tabling during lunchtime hours with incentives/giveaways to attract engagement.
- Including snacks or other incentives to begin conversations with students.
- Incentivizing bringing a friend to join or attend first meeting.
- Hosting an open meeting/lunch and learn to let potential members learn more without a commitment to join.
- Designating student champions to bring in additional members.
- Working with school administrators to offer service hour credit (or other curriculum requirements) for YAC participation.

Once your cohort of students is identified, it's time to work together with them to build the YAC. Every council will have different structures, projects and procedures reflecting the group that puts it together. Remember it's OK to start small – seemingly simple initiatives at first can become the building blocks for a thriving program.

Begin by identifying capacity and building relationships. Aim to answer the following questions in your beginning sessions:

- Do your students know one another?
- If not, what would they like to share about their stories?
- · Have students share about their backgrounds, cultures and interests
- What caused them to apply for the Youth Advisory Council?
- What do students hope to gain from this experience?
- What do students wish teachers, coaches or other school staff understood about them?
- What kinds of barriers, if any, are preventing students from being successful?

As the group finds its flow and students and advisers get to know one another better, work with students to create a structure they feel comfortable with.

- How will work be divided up among the group?
- Who has consistently shown engagement and participation?
- What kinds of leadership structures would make the most sense?
- What strengths in the group can be emphasized?

# **Designing the YAC Curriculum**

Traditionally, YAC meetings take place regularly during lunchtime or another appropriate time during the day. Setting time aside during the school day is one of the best ways to ensure consistent attendance and engagement. Activities can include providing feedback to the health center, serving as health ambassadors to their peers, creating projects to benefit their school community, and more.

Many programs encourage students to make data-driven decisions when working on projects and gathering feedback about various health and wellness topics. Walking students through the process of collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data is a helpful way to drive decisions as a council and gain experience.

Projects, either individually, in small groups, or as a singular council, drive the YAC year forward. If a fully separate YAC is not an option at a particular school, incorporating these projects into a health class could also be effective. Examples of previous projects executed by other councils include:

Торіс	Project Example
Mental Health Awareness	Students hosted a Mental Health Spirit Week, during which flyers were posted around the school (see Appendix). Daily activities included offering words of encouragement to peers, sending a kind note or giving compliments.
Health Surveys	Students designed and circulated a survey to their peers focused on stress and burnout. After tabling in the cafeteria, students collected more than 200 responses and learned how to analyze data to inform their next steps.
Care Corner	Students held "Care Corner" sessions in their school to provide encouragement, study time and mentorship for younger students and peers.
Self-Care Fair	Students hosted a year-end celebration was held for their classmates, offering opportunities to explore creative coping mechanisms through a partnership with a local nonprofit.
Food Insecurity	Students educated their peers about food insecurity to reduce the stigma of seeking help and toured a local community garden that distributes free produce.

# **Including the School-Based Health Center and Additional Partners**

Mutual goal setting and collaboration between the YAC and School-Based Health Centers can be extremely helpful for both groups. Council members can receive feedback and guidance on projects, develop relationships with the providers and staff in the center and learn helpful health education basics to share with their peers. School-based health center staff can engage with student-ambassadors, learn more about the unique needs and priorities of the student body, and educate the community about the services offered.

Examples of collaborative projects could include:

- Planning scavenger hunts with prizes located in the center to draw traffic and awareness from students
- Tabling or volunteering at school sports events
- Seasonal programming: back-to-school vaccine appointments, mental health resources during the holiday season, healthy relationships and substance use education leading up to prom

As ambassadors for their classmates and advocates for health, YAC members are an excellent link to their school-based health center. Other students in the building may be unaware or underinformed about the services offered and could be more likely to access those with encouragement from peers.

Consider other partners to connect with your students as well. Have students help prepare an "elevator pitch" to reach out to community members who might be useful in the YAC's learning and development. Examples may include:

- Alumni from the YAC location school
- Local business owners
- Additional staff members from the school's health care partner
- Local nonprofits

# **Keeping Students Engaged**

As you get to know the students involved in your YAC, take note of the activities, styles and incentives that motivate them. Students in middle school or early high school may benefit from more structured sessions. For example, using a PowerPoint for students to easily follow along with what is being asked can lead to more success. High school students, on the other hand, may prefer a more open-ended, conversational structure that allows them to directly contribute their thoughts.

Be thoughtful about the ways students can be rewarded for their hard work and participation. Celebrate the goals students meet along the way completing their project – if there were barriers or stressors along the way, be sure to acknowledge what it took to overcome them. One council held a self-care party at the end of the semester to spend time reflecting on their progress, where students received lunch, made stress balls, colored and did breathing exercises.

Creating sweatshirts or other merchandise students can wear has been effective. When students wear their YAC items to school, they automatically identify themselves to their peers as a trusted, welcoming person with information about the school-based health center and other health-related topics.

Creating sweatshirts or other merchandise students can wear has been effective. When students wear their YAC items to school, they automatically identify themselves to their peers as a trusted, welcoming person with information about the school-based health center and other health-related topics.

At the end of the school year, recognition for graduating seniors is an excellent way to build the legacy of the YAC program. Consider creating senior gifts such as graduation stoles, working with the school district to add seals to students' diplomas, and offering goody bags. Remind students that their role as an advocate for their peers and a champion for their own health is just beginning. Send students off with resources on how to enroll for health insurance, locate in-network providers, and other skills needed for the transition to adulthood.

Recognition is accessible for younger students, too. Consider holding a year-end program and allow students to invite loved ones, where they can share the projects they have created and present their year's work to their community.

Students may also need guidance to stay on-task when they become disengaged or distracted. For example, one YAC group struggling with slipping grades repurposed their time as a study hall until students improved their grades. Leveraging students' camaraderie can help refocus the group and bring academic success.

# **Measuring Success**

Over time, measuring success and positive outcomes that result from the YAC is an excellent way to demonstrate impact. There are several ways to do so:

- Center Visits: Increased school-based health center visits can be an indicator of a thriving YAC. Coordinate with staff to see if volume before and after the YAC's initiation has increased, as well as any other health data metrics that are available.
- YAC Attendance: Other YACs have experienced improved attendance rates among their members. If this data is available, be sure to share it with teachers and administrators, as it demonstrates the program's value. Note that data-sharing agreements with districts can be difficult to obtain. Be patient and creative with the metrics you can access. This may initially look like taking attendance at YAC meetings and observing trends throughout the school year.
- **School Climate:** Examining school climate whether through surveys designed by YAC members or other metrics collected at the administrative level is another possible avenue of demonstrating impact of the council.

# **Creating Sustainability**

After the YAC has been created, it's important to look ahead and build the program for future students to enjoy. The following ideas can generate momentum and sustainability:

- Capacity: Depending on the school's bandwidth, consider fitting the YAC into other existing initiatives to
  promote sustainability. For example, the Student Council or other health-related clubs or organizations may
  consider taking on the project.
- Funding: Many of the initiatives described in this manual can be accomplished on a limited budget. However, growing the available funding can help with program visibility and sustainability. Consider following the fundraising format of other school and community groups, such as car washes, bake sales, etc. These opportunities can provide additional teambuilding time for students and increase collective ownership over the group. Local businesses may be willing partners to sponsor T-shirts, host fundraisers or donate time and materials.

- **Staff and Advising:** Ensuring buy-in from staff and administration will help program longevity. However, creative solutions may be necessary for schools with limited staff capacity. Consider partnering with universities undergraduate or graduate students may be able to serve as advisors to fulfill their curriculum requirements.
- Yearly Structure: Summer can cause momentum to drop off, but it doesn't have to. At the end of the school year, use the natural break in the year to teach the importance of evaluation. Hold a reflection session to walk through what was successful about the YAC in the past year and what could be improved. Guide students to plan fall recruitment efforts to replace seniors who may have graduated and host an orientation at the beginning of the school year. Identify rising juniors and seniors who can serve as leaders, further empowering them to continue the group's success. Finally, map out the coming year's calendar of events, noting specific contacts and spaces that will be needed to accomplish different meetings and events.



# **Appendix**

# School health liaison job description

This role has flexibility, and its responsibilities can be assigned to other team members if a fully dedicated role cannot be assigned.



#### Wellness Initiatives: School Health Liaison

### General Description:

Maximizes student outcomes by managing relationships between Nationwide Children's Hospital, school personnel and community partners. Responsible for establishing systems to help patients navigate their care and to increase awareness and utilization of school-based health services.

#### **Essential Job Functions:**

- Acts as a liaison between all relevant stakeholders by monitoring, maintaining and enhancing relationships and partnerships.
- Participates in developing, implementing, and evaluating Nationwide Children's goals, objectives and metrics for school health services.
- Collaborates with members of the quality improvement team to develop and track metrics of success for school health services.
- Monitors data collection and prepares quarterly progress reports for School Health Services initiatives.
- Facilitates school-based teams in student case reviews and serves as a liaison between NCH and school teams to ensure recommendations of all stakeholders are incorporated into the school/care plan.
- Identifies and leverages barrier removal strategies, particularly those already overcome by clinical teams.
- Recognizes gaps in care and works collaboratively with management, school-based providers, school personnel and community partners to identify resources to fill gaps.
- Leads stakeholders in problem-solving activities to assist with system and process issues, volume concerns, staff concerns, etc.
- In collaboration with leadership, establishes effective vehicles of communication across internal and external parties involved in school health related initiatives.
   Communicates problems and resolutions to leadership at the school and Nationwide Children's Hospital.
- Leads expanding team as the school-health liaison team grows.
- Recruit, train, evaluate, develop, and as necessary, discipline and/or terminate subordinate staff.
- Assists in the development of procedures for the dual purpose of maximizing efficiency and creating a framework for duplication.
- Develops, updates and provides original education/medical programs and materials
  for educators, students, parents and the community as needed. Assists leadership in
  developing a system to review existing curriculum, teaching methodologies and
  strategies prior to implementation of school-based programs.

Updated November 2024

700 Children's Drive | Columbus, Ohio 43205 | 614.722.2000 | NationwideChildrens.org

# School health liaison job description

This role has flexibility, and its responsibilities can be assigned to other team members if a fully dedicated role cannot be assigned.



- Works with all stakeholders involved school health services to research, establish and share best practices in School-Based Healthcare.
- Promotes the organization to the community.
- Networks regularly with local and regional external school supports to enhance school-based programming.

**Note**: Regular, reliable and consistent attendance is an essential job function. Employees are expected to perform work as scheduled. Please see the physical requirements for this position listed below.

### Education and Experience:

- Master's degree in education, public health or related fields or equivalent degree/experience required.
- 5-8 years of professional experience in K-12 school setting; teaching experience preferred.
- At least 5 years of experience and strong track record of success with relationship management, program planning and coordinating efforts with internal and external partnerships for the benefit of a common cause.

### Skills:

- Supervisory skills required to plan, assign, and evaluate the work of subordinate staff.
   Analytical skills required to oversee and organize the work of others, and to develop and administer sound policies, procedures, budgets, and multidisciplinary practices required.
- Strong leadership and decision-making skills required.
- Skill in promoting multidisciplinary collaboration; ability to act as a facilitator and change agent required.
- Evidence of project management experience required.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills enabling this individual to relate
  effectively and efficiently with diverse age and demographic backgrounds.
- Strong initiative; excellent interpersonal skills; ability to work effectively in team environment.
- Strong presentation skills; ability to engage an audience.
- Computer literate and working knowledge of software applications (word processing, spreadsheet, and database)

The above list of duties is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by individuals assigned to this classification. It is not to be construed as an exhaustive list of duties performed by the individual so classified, nor is it intended to limit or modify the right of any supervisor to assign, direct, and control the work of employees under his/her supervision.

Updated November 2024

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# Monthly partnership meeting agenda

Monthly meetings are a valuable chance to reconnect health care and school staff, address and remove road blocks, and plan engagement and communication opportunities.

NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S When your child needs a hospital, everything mattern."	School Health Partnership: Sample Agenda Meeting Date:
Meeting Purpose:	To connect regarding the partnership between Nationwide Children's and its partner schools including: successes, opportunities for growth, and opportunities for continued collaboration and support.
School-Based Health Center Updates:	Visit volume  Discuss patient visit volume and recent trends, if applicable.  Clinic operations  Share anticipated clinic closures, support needed, or other operations needs.  Student needs  Share available services to help in the calendar year (ie immunizations for backto-school or flu; sports physicals; sick visits if there are high rates of illness in students and/or staff.
School Updates:	<ul> <li>Upcoming events</li> <li>Share events that healthcare team can attend or participate in to connect with the community.         <ul> <li>le: open houses, sporting events, performances, celebrations or other opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Communications         <ul> <li>Share opportunities for newsletters, texts or emails to parents and caregivers; spread the word about clinic hours, services and availability.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Building operations         <ul> <li>Share upcoming fire drills, testing dates.</li> <li>Building or schedule-related updates.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Future Plans:	
Other Items:	
Next Meeting:	

# **Tabling interest form**

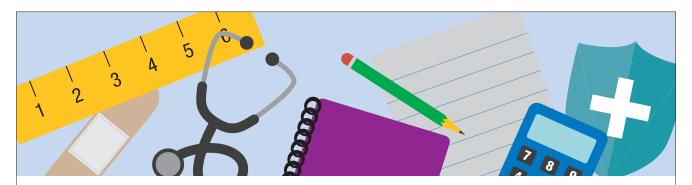
When conducting outreach activities in the community, this document can help record interest in receiving a call for an appointment. Registration staff will use this document to contact families.



# School Health Appointment Interest Sheet

Child's Name	Date of Birth	School	Guardian Name	Phone #	Services Needed

# School Health FAQ fact sheet



# School-Based Health Center Frequently Asked Questions

### What services are provided?

The school health center offers annual checkups and sick visits, including help when your child has a sore throat, bad cough or headache. Other services include shots (vaccinations), blood work, work permit physicals, asthma treatment, anxiety treatment, ADHD treatment and more.

### Who can be seen at the school-based health center?

All children and young adults, ages 0 to 21, can be seen at the center. Community members who schedule appointments will stay in the clinic space and will not enter the school beyond the front lobby.

## Does the center accept insurance?

Yes, just like a doctor's office, we accept Medicaid and other insurance. No child will be denied care due to inability to pay for services.

# How can I give permission for my child to go to the center?

A consent form from Nationwide Children's will be provided. This must be signed and returned before your child can be seen at the center. You may also give verbal permission over the phone if needed.

# Will you contact me before seeing my child?

Yes. You will be contacted before your child receives any services from the center.

## Can I be part of the visit if I can't be there in person?

Yes. Parents/guardians are welcome to be on the phone during the visit.

### Will I get information after my child's visit?

Yes. An After Visit Summary (AVS) will be printed and given to your student or you can request for it to be mailed to your home. The AVS can also be accessed electronically via MyChart.

#### How can my child be seen at the center?

Parents/guardians can schedule an appointment, the school nurse can refer them to the center, or students, who have a completed consent form on file, can request an appointment for themselves.

Scan the QR code below to complete our intake form. Someone from our team will be in touch to help schedule an appointment.



For more information, visit NationwideChildrens.org/SchoolHealth or call (614) 355-2590, option 3.





W156100 (02/25

# **Transportation FAQ fact sheet**



# Transportation available for school health services

# Q: How can my student get transportation to a school-based health center?

**A:** The school nurse and the school-based health center identify students in need and work with the student's parent/guardian to secure consent. Small groups of students will be scheduled and transported to a school-based health center during select days and hours during the week.

### Q: Who can receive health services?

**A:** Students who have provided a signed consent form from a parent or guardian can use Columbus City Schools transportation services and be seen at a school-based health center in the school district.

### Q: What services are provided?

**A:** Students will have access to primary care services and vision services provided by trusted Nationwide Children's Hospital experts, including:

- Checkups
- Physicals
- Vaccinations
- Blood work

- Medication management
- Eye exams
- And more!

# Q: Does insurance cover this visit?

**A:** Yes, just like a doctor's office, we accept Medicaid and other insurance. If you do not have insurance, please let the school nurse know before scheduling an appointment.

#### Q: Do I have to be at the visit?

**A:** Parents and guardians are not required to be at the visit, but you're welcome to attend. If you would like to be present, we recommend you call (614) 355-2590 to schedule at a convenient time in one of our school-based health centers.

### Q: Will the provider follow-up with me after the visit?

**A:** Yes. Parents/guardians will receive information about the child's visit after the appointment and any follow-up medication or care needed.

See the school nurse or call (614) 355-2590, option 3, to schedule an appointment.



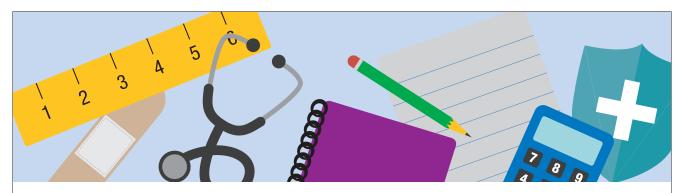
Tell them your child will need transportation.

Interpreters available. Interpretes disponible. Turjumaano ayaa jooga. दोभासे उपलब्ध छ



W1026325 9/22/2023

# **School Health Flyer with Interest Form**



# Sick Visits. Physicals. Vaccines. You can get these health services and more at school.

Nationwide Children's Hospital has a doctor's office at St. Mary School German Village on the second floor of the Burkley Center (700 S. Third St.), open to all children, ages 0 to 21.

# SAME-DAY APPOINTMENTS MAY BE AVAILABLE.

### We can:

- Help when you are sick
- Give vaccines (shots)
- · Do blood work
- · Perform checkups

- Help with medication management
- Provide sports physicals
- Treat asthma

- Help with work permit physicals
- Treat anxiety, depression and ADHD
- And more



To schedule an appointment, call (614) 355-2590, option 3, or scan the QR code to submit an interest form.

Learn more about all our school health services at NationwideChildrens.org/SchoolHealth.

Interpreters available. Interpretes disponible. Turjumaano ayaa jooga. दोभासे उपलब्ध छ

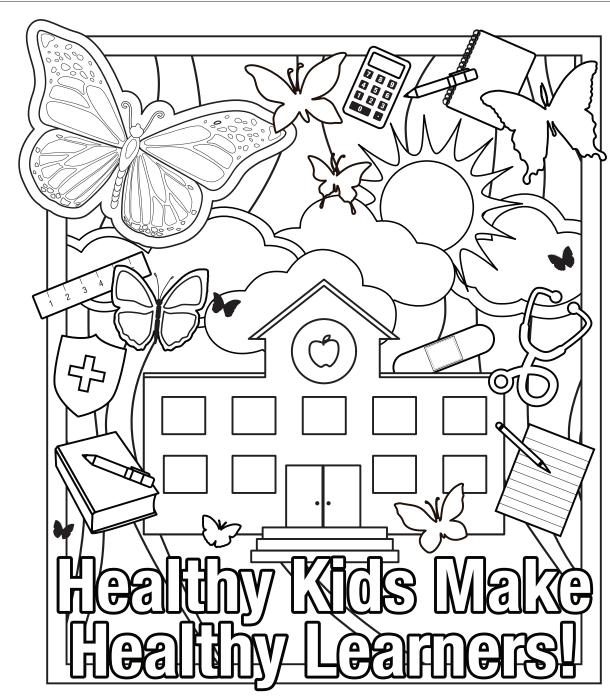
The services provided are not meant to replace your pediatrician or family doctor. When you have any medical need, your first call should always be to your pediatrician or family doctor who knows you best. Just like a doctor's office, we accept Medicaid and other insurance. No child will be denied care due to inability to pay for services.





W1325850 St Mary School 07/2024

# **School Health coloring page**



Nationwide Children's Hospital offers health centers at local schools.

To schedule an appointment, call **(614) 355-2590**.

For more information, visit **NationwideChildrens.org/SchoolHealth** 



W1556956 (3/25

# **Immunization Flyer**



# The Nationwide Children's Hospital School-Based Health Center offers shots (immunizations) to all students.

Frease return this form to the school hurse by
<ul> <li>YES! Please give my student the required immunizations at school.</li> <li>If your student does not have a consent form on file, please complete the form attached and return it to the school health center. You must give permission for immunizations on the form.</li> </ul>
NO. I do not want my student to receive immunizations at school.
Student's Name:
Student's Date of Birth:
Parent's/Guardian's Name (Print):
Parent's/Guardian's Signature:
Parent's/Guardian's Contact Number:

Questions? Visit your school health center or call (614) 355-2590, option 3.



W1261164 (05/24

# Youth Advisory Council (YAC) proposal for Mental Health Spirit Week

### **Event Proposal**

Who: Nationwide Children's Hospital Youth Advisory Council Members

When: Monday, December 12th - Friday, December 16th

### What: Mental Health Awareness Spirit Week

<u>Description</u>: In the hopes of uplifting morale and school pride throughout the student body, we would like to introduce a spirit week focused on mental health awareness and the pride that comes with being a Northland Viking.

Each day will highlight a different way our students have the ability to embrace a positive attitude and show kindness to staff and peers alike. Below are the proposed Spirit Week specifications:

- Monday- Offer words of encouragement to a peer
- Tuesday- Wear comfy clothes/pajamas, offer a hug to a friend
- Wednesday- Write a nice note to a peer or friend
  - Ideally, a table would be set up in the lobby offering students the option of writing a general message to be shared with students/showcased in a common area
- Thursday- Sweater/flannel day, give someone a compliment
- Friday- Vikings Day (wear green & gold), show support to your teachers

In addition to the above activities, we would like Northland HS to host the following events:

### Monday 12/12- School Pep Rally

- A pep rally will kick-off the start of Spirit Week and promote all upcoming activities.
- Our Winter Sports teams can be showcased, increasing the amount of support shown for our Northland Vikings!

# Friday 12/16- School Involvement Fair

- Our students should be aware of the many opportunities they have to get involved in our various clubs, teams, and groups here at Northland HS.
- By utilizing the gym or cafeteria, each group can reserve a table and promote their organization to interested students.
- Google Forms can be utilized to gauge interest in which clubs would like to participate.

<u>Closing:</u> We all are extremely excited to propose these ideas and hope we are able to bring our vision to light. We full-heartedly believe this will be a great start to embracing our school culture and uplifting the mental health of our peers. Thank you for your time and consideration!

# **August**

- Activity: prepare for students and staff to return to school.
  - Determine dates for back to school events (open houses, back to school fairs, teacher meetings, staff meetings, school nurse meetings).
  - o Connect with schools to confirm clinic days, times and paperwork
  - Prepare consents, vaccine forms and any other forms to send home in school packets.
- Activity: prepare to open clinics at the start of the school year.
  - o Finalize clinic dates and times.
  - Finalize staff schedule.
  - Meet with school leadership to share clinic schedules, confirm consent process and identify engagement opportunities.
  - o Work with school janitorial staff to have each clinic area thoroughly cleaned.
  - o Order medications, supplies and vaccines.
- Important dates / events
  - o County fairs
- Monthly themes
  - Immunizations (all ages)

# September

- Activity: schedule vaccine clinics school-based health centers, Vaccine-only (K, 7, 12).
  - o Identify schools that need vaccine clinics obtain student lists.
  - o Identify additional staff availability and dates to host vaccine-only clinics.
- Activity: schedule flu shot clinics.
  - Determine date for flu vaccine availability.
  - Identify dates to host flu vaccine clinics.
  - o Prepare flu vaccine incentive flyer.
  - Schedule clinic for employee flu shots.
- Activity: finalize mobile unit clinic schedule for the school year.
  - Determine set list of schools and community partners for regularly scheduled visits.
  - Confirm all days, times and frequencies with partners.
  - Update calendar with final schedule.
- Activity: confirm school calendars.

- Determine remainder of school year testing and activity dates.
- Identify school closure dates professional development, parent teacher conferences.
- o Schedule monthly meetings with schools.
- o Plan for staff skills days based on school closures.
- Monthly themes
  - o Elementary school: bullying.
  - o Middle school/high school: TB awareness/sports injuries.

### October

- Activity: promote sports physicals for winter sports.
  - Connect with athletic directors and coaches.
  - Send marketing materials.
  - o Plan for school break down times in November/December.
- Important dates
  - o Medical Assistants Recognition Day.
  - National Principals Month.
  - o National Custodial Worker Recognition Day.
  - American Academy of Pediatrics Conference.
- Monthly themes
  - o Elementary school: healthy eating.
  - o Middle school: puberty/hygiene.
  - o High school: health literacy.

### November

- Important dates
  - National Nurse Practitioner Week.

# December

- Activity: Order any end of year supplies.
- Typically a school testing time.
- Monthly themes
  - o Elementary school: mental health awareness.
  - o Middle school/high school: suicide prevention / mental health.

### **January**

- Activity: promote physicals for spring sports.
  - o Connect with athletic directors and coaches.

- Send marketing materials.
- · Activity: other
  - o Determine remainder of school year testing and activity dates.
  - o Continue push for vaccines after winter break.
- Monthly themes
  - o Elementary/middle school: cold safety.
  - o High school: blood & organ donor awareness.

# **February**

- Activity: begin prom program planning Education, HPV, STI
  - Determine date of from for school.
  - Select engagement format health education sessions, raffle off tickets, lunchtime trivia, etc.
  - o Collect incentives.
- Activity: draft summer clinic schedule.
  - Confirm staff availability for school-based mobile clinics for June through August.
  - Draft marketing flyers as needed for school-based and mobile.
  - o Check back in on school testing schedules for remainder of school year.
  - o Confirm summer PR events and clinic locations for each mobile unit.
- Monthly themes:
  - o Elementary school, middle and high school: dental health.

### March

- Activity: plan for school staff appreciation.
  - o Determine dates for school nurses, teachers and administration.
  - o Order gifts, cards and supplies.
- Activity: schedule vaccine clinics for remainder of school year (grades 6, 11).
  - Select the engagement format for each school
  - Collect incentives for each of the schools
- Monthly themes:
  - o Elementary school: handwashing.
  - o Middle school: teen dating violence / consent.
  - o High school: teen dating violence & sexual health.

### **April**

Activity: prepare for summer and school year.

- o Finalize and publish summer schedule.
- o Prepare end of year survey to send in May for school partnerships.
- o Compile next school year calendars.
- o Schedule monthly meetings for next school year.
- Schedule staff trainings for next school year.
- Important dates
  - o Administrative professionals day
- Monthly themes
  - o Elementary/middle school: online safety.
  - High school: distracted driving; alcohol awareness.

# May

- Activity: finalize summer center schedule.
  - o Order and distribute tri-folded flyers for report cards.
  - o Provider posters and flyers to enrollment office.
  - o Develop list for downtime and assign to staff for summer.
  - o Create a list for center opening in the fall.
- Activity: close out center for summer.
- Activity: other
  - Carry out school staff appreciation activities.
  - o Promote physicals for work permits.
- Important dates / events
  - School Principals' Day
  - Teacher Appreciation Week
  - National Nurses Week
  - School Nurse Day
  - National Children's Day
- Monthly themes
  - o Elementary, middle & high school: asthma & allergy

# June

- Activity: community outreach.
  - Participate in summer festivals, fairs or other opportunities to engage with families
- Monthly themes
  - Elementary, middle & high school: helmets, safe play, sun & water safety

# July

• A	ctivity: promote sports physicals for fall sports.  Connect with athletic directors and coaches.  Send marketing materials.  ctivity: other  Schedule monthly meetings for upcoming school year  flonthly themes  Elementary, middle & high school: Vision