

A COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM

The following are the revised Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of Adolescent and School Health's (DASH) descriptions of the eight components of a coordinated school health program:

1. **Health Education**: This is a planned, sequential, K-12 curriculum that addresses the physical, mental, emotional and social dimensions of health. The curriculum is designed to motivate and help students maintain and improve their health, prevent disease, and reduce health-related risk behaviors. It allows students to develop and demonstrate increasingly sophisticated health-related knowledge, attitudes, skill, and practices. The curriculum is comprehensive and includes a variety of topics such as: personal health, family health, community health, consumer health, environmental health, family life, mental and emotional health, injury prevention and safety, nutrition, prevention and control of disease, and substance use and abuse. Some school programs focus health education curriculum on the priority health risk factors of the nation and state: behaviors that result in unintentional and intentional injuries; tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use; sexual behaviors that result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies; dietary behaviors; and physical activity. Qualified teachers trained in health education should teach the subject.
2. **Physical Education**: This is a planned, sequential K-12 curriculum that provides cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activity areas such as: basic movement skills; physical fitness; rhythms and dance; games; team, dual, and individual sports; tumbling and gymnastics; and aquatics. Quality physical education should promote, through a variety of planned physical activities, each student's optimum physical, mental, emotional, and social development, and should promote activities and sports that all students enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives. Qualified teachers trained to teach the subject should teach physical education.
3. **School Health Services**: These services should appraise, protect, and promote health among students. These services should ensure access and/or referral to primary health care services, foster appropriate use of primary health care services, prevent and control emergency care for illness or injury, promote and provide optimum sanitary conditions for a safe school facility and school environment, and provide educational and counseling opportunities for promoting and maintaining individual, family, and community health. The following professionals provide such services: physicians, nurses, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel.

4. **School Nutrition Services:** School nutrition services promote the health and education of students through access to a variety of nutritious and appealing meals. Programs respond to the health and nutrition needs of all students. School nutrition programs reflect the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other quality criteria to achieve nutrition integrity. The school nutrition programs offer an opportunity for students to experience a learning laboratory for classroom nutrition and health education, and serve as a resource for linkages with nutrition-related community services. Qualified child nutrition professionals should provide school nutrition services.
5. **School-site Health Promotion for Staff:** This refers to programs for school staff that provide health assessments, health education, and health-related fitness activities. Such programs encourage and motivate school staff to pursue a healthy lifestyle, thus promoting better health, improved morale, and a greater personal commitment to the school's overall comprehensive health program. This personal commitment may transfer into greater commitment to the health of students, and create positive role remodeling. Health promotion programs can improve productivity, decrease absenteeism, and reduce health insurance cost.
6. **School Counseling, Psychological and Social Services:** These services include broad-based individual and group assessments, interventions and referrals that attend to the mental, emotional, and social health of students. Organizational assessment and consultation skills of counselors and psychologists contribute skills of counselors and psychologists contribute to the overall health of students, and the health of the school environment. The following professionals provide such services: trained/certified school counselors, psychologists, and social workers.
7. **Healthy School Environment:** This includes the physical and aesthetic surroundings, the psychosocial climate and the culture in a school that maximizes the health of students and staff. Factors that influence the physical environment include the school building and the surrounding area, any biological or chemical agents that might be detrimental to health, and physical conditions such as temperature, noise, and lighting. The psychological environment includes the interrelated physical, emotional, and social conditions that affect the well-being and productivity of the students and the staff such as: physical and psychological safety, positive interpersonal relationships, recognition of the needs and successes of the individual, and support for building self-esteem in students and staff.
8. **Parent/Family/Community Involvement:** This is an integrated school, parent, and community approach that establishes a dynamic partnership to enhance the health and well-being of students. School health advisory boards, coalitions, and broadly-based constituencies for school health can provide a means to effectively build support for school health program efforts. Schools should be encouraged to actively solicit parent involvement and engage community resources and services to respond more effectively to the health-related needs of students.