



School-Based Health Clinics *OVERVIEW*

School-based health clinics (SBHCs) provide vital healthcare access for students, especially in underserved areas like Southeast Ohio, where rural and economically challenged communities often face barriers to healthcare access. Here are some of the key benefits SBHCs bring to schools in the Ohio Appalachian region:

1. **Increased Access to Care:** Southeast Ohio has limited healthcare facilities, especially in rural areas. SBHCs bring healthcare directly to students, reducing travel time and costs for families and ensuring that students can receive timely medical attention.
2. **Improved Attendance and Academic Performance:** Access to healthcare on-site helps students stay healthy, which leads to better school attendance and improved concentration in class. Routine care and preventive services reduce absenteeism due to illness, helping students stay engaged academically.
3. **Mental Health Support:** Mental health resources are often scarce in rural areas. SBHCs typically offer mental health counseling, which is essential for addressing issues like anxiety, depression, and behavioral problems. This support is crucial for a positive school experience and fosters a supportive community for students.
4. **Reduced Emergency Room Visits:** SBHCs provide early treatment and management of health issues, preventing conditions from escalating to the point where emergency care is needed. This lowers healthcare costs and relieves pressure on local emergency facilities.
5. **Comprehensive Preventive Care:** Routine screenings, vaccinations, and health education are easily accessible through SBHCs, promoting preventive care and building lifelong healthy habits.
6. **Parental Convenience:** Many parents work long hours or have limited transportation. SBHCs allow students to access healthcare without parents needing to take time off work, making it more convenient for families to prioritize health without disrupting their routines.
7. **Community Health Impact:** By providing healthcare to students and addressing public health concerns, SBHCs indirectly benefit the broader community by preventing the spread of contagious diseases and promoting a culture of health awareness.

For Appalachia Ohio, where geographic and economic challenges are prevalent, SBHCs can be a significant resource, addressing barriers to healthcare and creating a healthier, more resilient student population.