



SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CARE WORKS FOR EDUCATION

Imagine going to school sick, depressed, or with a toothache. You're not sure why you're feeling so down or when you'll be able to see a doctor. Can you thrive? Or even get through the day? Unfortunately, that is the reality for many students in America. And that's where school-based health care comes in.

When health and education come together, great things happen. Attendance improves. Conditions like asthma and diabetes are better managed. Behavioral health issues get quick, expert attention. That's why the School-Based Health Alliance works tirelessly to unite health and education.

The School-Based Health Alliance is the national voice for school-based health care—a transformational and time-tested approach for delivering health care to children and adolescents. School-based health care means that kindergarteners through high-schoolers can get a flu shot, have an annual physical, have their teeth examined and their eyes checked, or speak to a mental health counselor in a safe, nurturing place without the barriers that families too often face. Simply put, school-based health care is one of the best models for assuring ALL children and adolescents can enjoy good health and achieve their fullest potential.

“No matter how well teachers are prepared to teach, no matter what accountability measures are put in place, no matter what governing structures are established for schools, educational progress will be profoundly limited if students are not motivated and able to learn.” - Charles Basch, PhD, Teachers College, Columbia University



WHAT DOES SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CARE MAKE POSSIBLE FOR EDUCATORS?

INCREASED ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT TIME SPENT IN CLASSROOM

- A study conducted in a northeast city found that screening for mental health issues and referrals to appropriate services significantly reduced school absences and tardiness.²
- A multi-site evaluation of elementary schools in the Bronx, New York compared students attending schools with and without SBHCs. Access to SBHCs was associated with a significant reduction in the rate of hospitalization and a gain of three days of school for students with asthma.³
- A study of SBHC users in Seattle found that those who use the clinic for medical purposes had a significant increase in attendance over nonusers.⁴

WHAT DOES SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CARE MAKE POSSIBLE FOR EDUCATORS?

IMPROVED STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DECREASED DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS

- A study in two urban high schools in western New York found that students with access to an SBHC were significantly less likely to be sent home during the school day than those who did not have access. The author concluded that SBHCs were able to increase student learning or “seat” time.⁵

INCREASED GRADE POINT AVERAGE AND TEST SCORES

- A study of Seattle 9th grade students found that SBHC use was significantly associated with improved attendance, particularly among those students who used medical services. SBHC use was significantly associated with grade point average gains, particularly among mental health counseling users. The authors caution that these impacts were limited to higher risk youth and effect sizes were relatively small.⁴

LOWER DROP OUT RATES AND HIGHER GRADUATION RATES

- One study showed that student who visit SBHCs twice a semester are a third less likely to drop out of school.⁶
- Another study showed that students who use SBHCs have higher grade point averages and attendance compared to students who don't use them.⁷

IMPROVED SCHOOL CLIMATE AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- One study found that students in schools that have a SBHC reported better student and parent perceptions of the learning environment regardless of whether or not the student accessed the SBHCs services.⁸
- A recent study of students in San Francisco high schools found that SBHC use was positively related to student-reported caring relationships with SBHC staff and school assets. The authors noted that the strongest effects were observed for students reporting more than ten visits to the SBHC.⁹
- A study conducted in a large northeastern city found that students in schools with SBHCs rated academic expectations and school engagement significantly higher than students without SBHCs.⁸
- One study found that students served by SBHCs had fewer discipline problems, course failures, and school absences.¹⁰

"Healthy kids learn better. It's that simple. Our school-based health center has improved the health and well being of our students physically and mentally, instilling a greater sense of hope in their future."

-Michigan School Superintendent

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