



TEXAS GUIDE TO SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAMS

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The Texas Guide to School Health Programs

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the *Texas Guide to School Health Programs*. This information is intended to enhance the educational process by providing guidance and resources for school administrators, school nurses, teachers and other school staff members in the development, implementation and evaluation of school health programs. The guide is available on the School Health Program Web site at www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/pgtoc.shtm.

The Texas Guide to School Health Programs was developed in 2001 and revised in 2009 under the leadership of the Texas Department of State Health Services, School Health Program, in collaboration with the University of Texas School of Nursing, Texas School Nurse Organization and school nurses with many years of experience in school nursing. Should you have any questions, please contact Anita Wheeler, at (512) 458-7111, Ext. 2909 or anita.wheeler@dshs.state.tx.us.

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Due to the continual advancement of school health programming, we have referenced multiple Web sites including but not limited to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), National Association of School Nurses (NASN), American Heart Association (AHA), National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioner's, American Academy of Allergies and Immunology, National Institute of Health (NIH), National Institute of Mental Health and Texas School Nurse Organization (TSNO). We are very grateful to these organizations who gave us copyright permission to use their information. We would like to thank the Virginia and Massachusetts Department of Health, School Health Guidelines staff who generously provided a wonderful template and information for *The Texas Guide to School Health Programs*. The *Report of the School Health Task Force to the Texas Board of Health* was also instrumental to the creation of this publication.

Special thanks are extended to the school health consultants at the Texas Department of Health (now the Texas Department of State Health Services) who were instrumental in facilitating this project and provided comments and suggestions on a wide variety of topics.

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PREFACE*

This guide is a resource that contains basic information, guidelines and recommendations for establishing and enhancing a school health program. It reflects a growing emphasis on the role of school health in prevention of disease promotion of health and wellness for students. The purpose of the guide is to provide guidelines for independent school districts to develop or strengthen their school health program at the individual, school program or community level. The guidelines are intended to provide direction for independent school districts to develop a school health program at the local level and

- increase the awareness of school health issues and strategies that can be used to address these issues,
- serve as a guide for best practices that relate to school health,
- provide a guide for development of local school health policies and programs; and
- serve as a tool for orienting new personnel.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDE

The intended audience for this guide is the professional who has responsibility for one or more components of a school health program. The professionals may include, but are not limited to the following:

- School health services personnel, such as school nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians, school-based health center staff and health educators;
- Administrators, such as superintendents, assistant superintendents and principals; and
- Teachers.

Although the guide is written for professionals, it may also be used by other persons who are involved in a school health program to increase their

understanding of the issues involved in school health. These persons might include:

- LVNs/LPNs
- School health aides
- Instructional aides

WHAT THE GUIDE INCLUDES

A school health program includes the following eight components: (1) parent and community involvement; (2) healthy and safe school environment; (3) health services; (4) health education; (5) physical education; (6) nutrition services; (7) counseling, and mental health services; and (8) staff wellness promotion.

The guide directly addresses the three traditional components of a school health program (health services, health education and a healthy and safe school environment) and parent and community involvement. In addition the guide also addresses counseling, mental health, nutrition, physical education and staff wellness promotion.

At the end of each module within the guide are relevant exhibits, which include forms, references and helpful resources for school health staff. Links to Texas laws, policies and codes relevant to school health practices can be found throughout the guide, specific to each topic.

Note: Although this guide reflects the most up-to-date information at time of publication, users of *The Texas Guide to School Health Programs* are advised to confirm federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies when using the guide to plan, implement and evaluate school health programs.

**Adapted with permission from the Virginia School Health Guidelines (1999)
Richmond, VA: VA Dept of Health*

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