



American Academy of Nursing

transforming health care policy and practice through nursing knowledge

American Academy of Nursing Releases Policy Brief on Vital Role of School Nurses in Ensuring Health of Nation's Youth

Academy Emphasizes Need for Every School to Have a Full-Time Registered Nurse

Washington, D.C. (March 13, 2018) – The American Academy of Nursing released a policy brief today calling for all students to have daily access to a full-time, baccalaureate prepared, registered nurse in school. The Academy's policy brief, "The vital role of school nurses in ensuring the health of our nation's youth," was published in the Academy's journal, *Nursing Outlook*.

"Ensuring every school has at least one full-time nurse provides an unparalleled opportunity to improve the health and well-being of our youth, their families, and our communities. In addition, mental and behavioral health issues among students are on the rise," said Academy President Karen Cox, PhD, RN, FAAN, executive vice president and chief operating officer at Children's Mercy Kansas City. "School nurses provide an essential link between health and education, and their importance to every student in every school should be financially supported by both health and education dollars."

Researchers have found that having a school nurse present decreases absenteeism, increases immunization compliance, improves chronic condition management, promotes health, and assists with identification and management of mental health issues.

Schools are confronting an increasing number of children with chronic health conditions, such as asthma and diabetes, as well as more communicable disease outbreaks resulting from increases in immunization exemptions. Depression, school/personal violence, and bullying are increasing and beginning at younger ages, with 13% to 20% of children in the United States experiencing a mental health issue each year.

School nurses deliver skilled health care to students, provide referrals to other providers, and assist families in gaining access to specialized care. Yet, despite these undisputed benefits, many schools do not have daily access to a full-time school nurse due to inadequate funding and lack of integration of School Health Services to the broader health-care system.

Read the Academy's full policy brief: [http://www.nursingoutlook.org/article/S0029-6554\(17\)30626-7/fulltext](http://www.nursingoutlook.org/article/S0029-6554(17)30626-7/fulltext).

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The American Academy of Nursing (www.AANnet.org) serves the public and the nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis, and dissemination of nursing knowledge. The Academy's more than 2,500 fellows are nursing's most accomplished leaders in education, management, practice, and research. They have been recognized for their extraordinary contributions to nursing and healthcare.

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