
School Health Services

Introduction:

Definition of school health services:

“Services that are provided by a health worker to students enrolled in primary or secondary education, either within school premises or in a health service situated outside the school.”

Overview

Schools are essential for young people to acquire knowledge, socioemotional skills including self regulation and resilience, and critical thinking skills that provide the foundation for a healthy future. Access to education and safe and supportive school environments have been linked to better health outcomes. In turn, good health is linked to reduced drop-out rates and greater educational attainment, educational performance, employment and productivity.[1]

WHO has long recognized the link between health and education and the potential for schools to play a central role in safeguarding student health and well-being. In 1995, WHO launched the Global School Health Initiative, which aimed to strengthen approaches to health promotion in schools. Among those approaches, pairing children with health services occupies an important place.[1]

Components of school health services:

Comprehensive School Health Program (The Eight-Component Model):

A planned, sequential, K-12 curriculum that addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of health. The curriculum is designed to motivate and assist students to 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.

1. HEALTH EDUCATION

The health education curriculum includes a variety of topics such as personal health, family health, community health consumer health, environmental health, sexuality education, mental and emotional health, injury prevention and control of disease, and substance use and abuse. Qualified, trained teachers provide health education.

2. PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A planned, sequential K-12 curriculum that provided cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activity areas such as basic movement skills; physical fitness; rhythms and dance; 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 student enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives. Qualified, trained teachers teach physical activity.

3. NUTRITION SERVICES

Access to a variety of nutritious and appealing meals that accommodate the health and nutrition needs of all students. School Nutrition programs reflect the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other criteria to achieve nutrition integrity. The school nutrition services offer students a learning laboratory for classroom nutrition and health education and serve as a resource for linkages with nutrition-related community services. Qualified child nutrition professional provide these services.

4. HEALTH SERVICES

Services provided for students to appraise, protect, and promote health. These services are designed to ensure access or referral to primary health care services for both, foster appropriate use of primary health care services, prevent and control communicable disease and other health problems, provide emergency care for illness or injury, promote and provide educational and counseling opportunities for promoting and maintain individual, family, and community health.

Qualified professionals such as physicians, nurses, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel provide these services.

5. COUNSELING, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SERVICE

Services provided to improve student's mental, emotional, and social health. These services include individual and group assessment, interventions, and referrals. Organizational assessment and consultation skills of counselors and psychologists contribute not only to the health of students but also to the health of the school environment. Professionals such as certified school counselors, psychologists, and social workers provide these services.

6. HEALTHFUL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The physical and aesthetic surroundings and the psychosocial climate and culture of the school. Factors that influence the physical environment include the school building and the area surrounding it, and biological or chemical agents that are detrimental to health, and physical conditions such as temperature, noise and lighting. The psychological environment includes the physical, emotional, and social conditions that affect the well-being of students and staff.

7. PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

An integrated school, parent, and community approach for enhancing the health and well-being of students. School health advisory council, coalitions, and broadly based constituencies for school health can build support for school health program efforts. Schools actively solicit parent involvement and engage community resources and services to respond more effectively to the health-related needs of students.

8. HEALTH PROMOTION FOR STAFF

Opportunities for school staff to improve their health status through activities such as health assessment, health education health-related fitness activities. These opportunities encourage school staff to pursue a healthy lifestyle that contributes to their improved health status, improved moral, and a greater personal commitment to the schools's overall coordinated health program. This personal commitment often transfers into greater commitment to the health of students and creates positive role modeling. Health Promotion activities have improved productivity, decreased absenteeism, and reduced health insurance costs.

Responsibilities of the school health team members:

Definition of School health team:

A school health team (also sometimes referred to as a school health council or a school health advisory council) is a group of individuals representing different segments of the community, who collectively act to provide advice to a school on aspects of the school health program. These teams can work with schools to help identify health problems and concerns, set priorities, and design solutions.

Who represents the school Health team?

In general, the school nurse functions as a leader and the coordinator of the school health services team. The team may also include a school physician, licensed practical nurses, health aides and clerical staff, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and substance abuse counselors. The health team may also expand to create a coordinated school health team that integrates health services, health education, physical education, nutrition services, counseling/psychological/social services, healthy school environment, health promotion for staff, and family/community involvement

Role of school nurse:

The school nurse provides direct care to students.

The school nurse provides care for injuries and acute illness for all students and long-term management of students with special health care needs. Responsibilities include assessment and treatment within the scope of professional nursing practice, communication with parents, referral to physicians, and provision or supervision of prescribed nursing care.

The school nurse promotes a healthy school environment.

The school nurse provides for the physical and emotional safety of the school community by monitoring immunizations, ensuring appropriate exclusion for infectious illnesses, and reporting communicable diseases as required by law.

The school nurse promotes health.

The school nurse provides health education by providing health information to individual students and groups of students through health education, science, and other classes.

The school nurse serves in a leadership role for health policies and programs.

As a health care expert within the school system, the school nurse is a leader in the development and evaluation of school health policies.

Role of physicians:

Physicians are involved in schools and school health programs from many vantage points, including serving as public health officials to university teachers and researchers and as generalist and specialist providers of direct patient services. The services they provide include consultation on health policy, health curricula, and evaluation of programs and services; direct consultation regarding individual patients or groups of patients; and participation in provision of health services at the school site.

Asthma specialists have set up asthma education programs, orthopedic surgeons have set up scoliosis screening and sports medicine programs, and pediatricians have advocated for and helped to develop sexuality education and health education programs.

Role of School Psychologists:

Consultation:

Collaborate with teachers, parents, and other school personnel about learning, social, emotional, and behavioral problems.

Education:

Provide educational programs on classroom management strategies, parenting skills, substance abuse, and teaching and learning strategies.

Research:

Evaluate the effectiveness of academic programs, behavior management procedures, and other services provided in the school setting.

Assessment:

Work closely with parents and teachers, using a variety of techniques, to evaluate academic skills, social skills, self-help skills, and personality and emotional development.

Intervention:

Work directly with students and families to help solve conflicts related to learning and adjustment. Provide psychological counseling, social skills training, behavior management, and other interventions.

Role of School Counselors:

School counselors are specialists who assist students, school staff, parents, and community members in problem-solving and decision making on issues involving learning, development, and human relations. Counseling can take place in individual, small group, or large group settings. Counselors provide services, from one-on-one counseling on a student's individual problems to large group sessions with teachers to explore effective cooperative learning strategies.

School counselors typically advise students in course selections, career options, college application procedures, and school-to-work programs.

Role of school social worker:

School social workers consider themselves the link among the home, school, and community. Although school social workers and school counselors frequently perform similar tasks, the counselor's focus tends to be inward on the internal functions and programs of the school, whereas the social worker's focus tends to be outward on the family and community context. Social workers regularly deal with discipline

and attendance problems, child abuse and neglect, divorce and family separation, substance abuse, and issues involving pregnancy and parenting, suicide, and even family finances. Services provided by school social workers include the following:

1. Individual and group counseling
2. advocacy for students, parents, and the school system
3. home visits
4. professional case management
5. social-developmental assessments
6. parent education and training

Functions of School Health programs:

Definition of school health programs:

A comprehensive school health program includes a broad spectrum of activities and services which take place in schools and their surrounding communities that enable children and youth to enhance their health, develop to their fullest potential and establish productive and satisfying relationships in their present and future lives.

The goals of a school health programs are to:

- 1- Improve health and wellness.
- 2- Prevent specific diseases, disorders and injury.
- 3- Prevent high risk social behaviors.
- 4- Intervene to help children and youth who are in need or at risk.
- 5- Provide support to those who are already exhibiting special health care needs.
- 6- Encourage positive health and safety behaviors.

Attainment of these goals requires an integrated approach that coordinates multiple programs and provides multiple strategies. Work teams in collaboration with a coordinating council should involve families, students and community members in the program planning process. Further, professional staff development is necessary to effectively address specific health-related issues.

A comprehensive school health program focuses on priority behaviors that contribute to the health, safety and well-being of students, staff and families, while assuring a supportive and healthy environment that nurtures academic growth and development. The successful implementation of this comprehensive approach necessitates leadership from health and education agencies and elected and appointed officials, adequate funding, trained personnel, administrative support, appropriate policy, quantitative and qualitative evaluation, legislation and regulations.

Preventive services that can be provided in school setting;

School can be one of the primary sites through which children and youth learn about the factors that influence their health. It also can be the site that provides or coordinates some or all of the needed health care services. It has been said that youth are one-third of our population and all of our future. As such, their care and nurture within the school setting is of concern to the American School Health Association (ASHA).

These guidelines address the eight separate components of the comprehensive school health program: school environment; health education; health services; physical education; counseling, guidance and mental health; school food and nutrition services; worksite health promotion; and integration of school and community health activities. Developed by the American School Health

Acute emergency

- All schools must have and maintain equipment and supplies needed to implement first aid and universal precautions for infection control
- District and school emergency disaster plans are established and emergency drills held periodically.
- Staff and students are trained in and practice emergency, first aid and infection control procedures including universal precautions.

Chronic disease management

Research shows that some students with chronic health conditions may miss school more often than others. Eventually this may have an impact on academic performance. Schools can help students with chronic health conditions by providing services through a school nurse or at a school-based health center.¹ School health services staff can help students stay at school, safely and ready to learn. In addition, federal and state regulations require schools to provide services and accommodations for students with chronic health conditions.

Vaccination programs

Education administrations across Saudi Arabia began their awareness campaign to vaccinate students aged 12 to 18 years with the coronavirus vaccine.

The Ministry of Education said it plans to vaccinate 2,726,516 students through vaccination centers approved by the Ministry of Health before the start of the academic year, in preparation for the safe

return of students schools. The move is part of directives from the Saudi leadership to preserve public health.

Physical education

Physical Education (PE) develops students' competence and confidence to take part in a range of physical activities that become a central part of their lives, both in and out of school. A high-quality PE curriculum enables all students to enjoy and succeed in many kinds of physical activity.

School health services in KSA, scope and structure:

Overview

The Ministry of Health (MOH), represented by the Public Health Agency, has launched the «Healthy Schools» Program to improve the health of students in concordance with the global standards, policies, and procedures of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Healthy School can be defined as a place where all school community members, including students, their parents, teachers, and administrators work together to enhance student health. Also, the Healthy School takes all measures to promote the student health along with the educational process through the integrated partnership between MOH and the Ministry of Education (MOE), in addition to adopting all existing measures and a set of basic programs of school health education.

MOH has recently developed a more comprehensive approach that focuses on students in all physical, psychological, social, and religious aspects, in line with the National Transformation Program (NTP) 2020 and Saudi Vision 2030, in terms of education and health aspects.

Definition of “Healthy School”

“A school that constantly strengthens its capacity as a safe and healthy setting for living, learning and working”.

Program objectives :

Overall Objective

Promote students' health and school community in particular, and society in general.

Detailed Objectives

- 1- Acquiring knowledge, developing skills, and promoting healthy habits for members of the school community.
- 2- Motivating students to participate in the activities of school health promotion.
- 3- Creating a healthy and safe school environment.
- 4- Strengthen the relations between different schools
- 5- Active promotion of school staff health.
- 6- Maintain closer relations and cooperation between the school and the community.

Justifications for promoting public health through schools

- 1- School age students represent about 25% of the population.
- 2- The long time the student spends from his age at school.
- 3- Ease of access to this group through schools.
- 4- There may be a positive impact on students through comprehensive awareness programs at these ages.
- 5- School students are part of society with all its components and socio-economic backgrounds, and they often suffer from the same health problems.
- 6- Those students can transfer their knowledge and healthy behaviours from the school to their families and communities.

The ten components

1. Health education:

- It is the cornerstone and the beginning of raising awareness and healthy behavior among students and changing wrong behaviors.
- By investing in the health opportunities available in the curricula and initiating health activities within the school in cooperation with the health centers in the neighborhood.[28]
- The textbooks contain a set of planned health messages that provide a real opportunity to gain the information and skills students need to make good health decisions.

2. Healthy nutrition:

- School feeding services provide meals that meet the standards of the Food and Drug Authority. Schools also market and promote healthy foods and drinks and encourage participation in school meal programs and bringing healthy meals from home and ensure that students have access to clean drinking water for free throughout the school day.

3. Physical activity:

- Schools can create an environment that provides many opportunities for students to be physically active throughout the school day.
- It's achieved through five components:
 1. Physical education
 2. Physical activity during classes
 3. Physical activity before and after school
 4. Staff participation

5. Family and community participation

- Physical education is the basis of comprehensive school physical activity, and it is an academic subject characterized by a sequential curriculum based on national standards for physical education.

4. School health services:

- School health services interfere with actual and potential health problems, including providing first aid, emergency medical care, stabilizing them, evaluating and planning for managing and following up on chronic conditions (such as asthma or diabetes, etc.).
- In addition, promoting public health, providing preventive services to the school community, and educating students is what helps them to maintain the highest levels of health, wellness and fitness, and parents' education (through their children or through direct communication) what they must do towards their children to maintain their health and wellness and inform the school about the diseases that the student suffers from, which may be in a dormant phase or under control, with treatments such as epilepsy, asthma, diabetes and other diseases that require follow-up, medical care and prompt intervention by a specialist or trainer present within the school; which may save the life of a student or school employee through the health team or qualified health advisor.
- School health services cooperate effectively with school and community support services to increase the ability of students and families to cope with health and social pressures, such as chronic diseases or social and economic conditions that may have a negative impact on student health, and the ability to manage and overcome these pressures.

5. School environment:

- The healthy school environment deals with physical school materials (such as ventilation, humidity, temperature, noise, natural and artificial lighting). School environments include the following 3 elements:

1. School building
2. School canteen
3. Water (drinking or sewage)

6. Mental health, guidance and counseling:

- These services are concerned with preventive measures and therapeutic interventions that support the psychological, behavioral, social and emotional health of students, thus enhancing their ability to learn better. Mental health is one of the most important factors assisting the progress of educational achievement among students. These services require the integration of the mental health aspect with the other aspects, such as the educational and social aspect, and

the knowledge of the obstacles that may lead to the decline in academic achievement of students.

- These services need specialists in the field of mental health and counseling to provide counseling services to students, harmonize community efforts in the environment surrounding the school and benefit from them, which guarantees students better health and thus better learning.
- These services are provided by a team of qualified professionals who are:
 1. Psychologist
 2. Student advisor
 3. Social worker
- This guarantees the provision of service with greater skill and effectiveness, so that it will positively affect the psychological and social health of students.

7. Social and emotional environment:

- The school's social and emotional environment refers to the psychological and social aspects of students' educational experience, which is an important factor for students' social and emotional growth and may affect students' engagement and participation in school activities and events, as well as their relationships with those around them from other students, their teachers, and the rest of the school staff, and extends also to the family and society.
- The existence of a stable and healthy social and emotional climate inside the school leads to a more effective learning environment and provides great opportunities for continuous improvement through the participation of students in the various activities and events set up and volunteering inside and outside the school such as serving the guests of the two holy mosques "ضيوف الرحمن" and other appropriate beneficial activities that enhance and develop their social and emotional aspects.

8. Staff health:

- Schools are not only places of learning, but also sites of work. Promoting the health of school staff through the following four aspects: physical, mental, spiritual and social, this will protect them and raise their academic and functional performance towards students, and supports students' health, success, and academic achievement.

9. Family contribution:

- Family and school members work together to support and improve students' academic achievement, refine them and enhance their health. School staff is committed to making families feel welcome, engaging families in a variety of ways that are more social and emotional than others, and maintaining continuous family contact.
- Families are obligated to provide effective support for their children's education and improvement of their healthy skills and behaviors. This relationship between school staff and

families is integrated and promotes student health and learning in multiple places - at home, at school, in programs outside the school, and in the community.

10. Community contribution:

- Society and non-profit organizations, companies and private foundations create partnerships with schools and support their own resources and volunteer to support learning, skills-building and health-related activities.
- Examples:
 1. Education of diabetes charities for the school community and distributing glucose meters among patients.
 2. Participation in the awareness programs of health authorities on diseases and prevention methods and attending their activities.

Common conditions school health deals with in KSA :

The Common conditions that school health deals with in Saudi Arabia are:

1-COVID-19:

There are multiple conditions that can be commonly seen in Schools that the health services deal with in KSA, the most important condition that health services are dealing with nowadays is COVID-19 which is considered worldwide pandemic. Since Schools are considered as a source of infection and outbreak between students and staff. schools administration prepared a plan under the supervision of the School Health Affairs Department at the Ministry of Education and includes the following:

- The school administration must conduct training courses for the educational and administrative staff on the training package for the basics of infection control that prepared by the School Health Department at the Ministry of Health.
- The plan should cover all the activities that the teacher or student goes through during his school day (transportation – classrooms – gathering places – the cafeteria – toilets – school clinics ... etc.).
- Social distancing must be observed by students in crowded places such as classrooms and other facilities.
- The communication mechanisms for employees, parents and the healthcare center are as follows:
 1. A clear communication mechanism between the school, the responsible healthcare center, and the responsible authorities, and reporting the emergency cases in the school as soon as possible.
 2. A clear mechanism to deal with suspected cases and isolate them from the rest of the contacts to stop the infection.
 3. A clear mechanism for dealing with positive cases that may exist in the school and tracing the contacts and suspension of the educational process as determined by the local health authorities.
- The school must prepare the plan in cooperation with the healthcare center to provide the necessary support to complete the plan in order to raise the schools' readiness

2-Obesity:

the MOH, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, adopted an initiative to reduce obesity rates among school students (Rashaqa), by means of improving food habits, increasing physical activity for student (male and female) and raising awareness about the risks of obesity and ways of prevention, considering that the school is the right place for preventive interventions, in addition to taking advantage of the spread of primary health care centers inside housing areas in all region of the Kingdom and easy access to them and that all schools have connection with the nearest center. Also, the initiative aims to reduce obesity prevalence rates amongst children and adolescents in the Kingdom by 5% in selected schools, during the coming 5 years.

3-Diabetes Mellitus:

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Saudi Arabia has the second highest number of diabetes cases in the Middle East and is ranked seventh in the world for diabetes rates. It is estimated that around 7 million of the population are diabetic and almost around 3 million have pre-diabetes. Diabetes mellitus is rapidly increasing in prevalence, and becoming a significant cause of medical complications and even death.

4-Mental illnesses:

A study was conducted on high school students at National Guard Housing in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and the results showed that the prevalence of mental disorders was 48% (41% in males and 51% in females); more than 80% of these disorders were mild to moderate in nature. There were more severe disorders among females than males, so it is crucial to have a school counselor who can understand and elevate the pressure from the student

5-Smoking:

Another issue is smoking which is a common in Saudi Arabia according to WHO in 2015, over 1.1 billion people smoked tobacco. Far more males than females smoked tobacco. Although it is declining worldwide and in many countries, the prevalence of tobacco smoking appears to be increasing in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region and the African Region with prevalence of current smoking in Saudi Arabia ranges from 2.4-52.3% while a study made in adolescent showed that between 2007 and 2018, the prevalence of tobacco smoking among adolescents in Saudi Arabia ranged from 2.4% to 39.6%, 13-38% of them are males and 1-16% females while among school student it ranges from 12-29.8% in total the ministry of health in cooperation with the ministry of education they provide visits from smoking

cessation clinic team to try to change this habits and provide the support since this habit is due to ether one of the following : 1- social situations 2- Family negligence 3- stress relief 4- pleasure

6-Physical Inactivity:

A study showed that the majority of Saudi children, youth and adults were not active enough to meet the recommended guidelines for moderate to vigorous PA. Saudi females were disproportionately less active than males which can be due to the lack of variety of activity at schools

7-Substance Abuse

Schools may partner with rehabilitation programs to provide care for a student to help successfully reintegrate him or her. Educational planning is an integral part of after-care contracts that pediatricians, mental health professionals, or rehabilitation programs form with students and their families. The school's roles in such a collaborative relationship include identifying any underlying learning disabilities that may have contributed to the problem, making special accommodations for students when necessary, providing remedial work so that students can catch up with their classmates, helping to reinforce expectations for students to attend school and to comply with follow-up or monitoring as prescribed by the health care professional or rehabilitation facility, and assisting with finding after-school programs.

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