Preface

This 2019 edition of the Georgia School Health Resource Manual is being made available to schools in Georgia by Children's Healthcare of Atlanta in collaboration with the Georgia Association of School Nurses. The 2019 Georgia School Health Resource Manual contains basic pediatric health information, guidelines and recommendations for developing and enhancing your school health program. It emphasizes the role of school health in preventing disease and promoting wellness for students and staff. The manual is a resource for the school nurse who has responsibility for one or more components of a school health program. Administrators, teachers, health educators, school health aides, physicians and others may also find this book useful.

A school health program includes the following components:

- Parent/community involvement
- Healthy school environment
- Health services
- Health education and health promotion for school staff
- Physical education
- Nutrition services
- Counseling, psychological and social services

In a school health program, the school nurse may provide leadership or play a supporting role in any of these components. Good health is essential to academic success, and healthy habits formed early build the foundation for lifelong well-being and productivity. Health and education literature links risky health behaviors such as tobacco, alcohol and drug use with poor school performance.

Many children are medically underinsured and have limited access to proper preventive health care. Children with special health care needs and chronic illnesses are well enough to participate in the learning process but may need accommodations and supportive health services during the school day. The school nurse can have a positive influence on the health status and health behaviors of students by identifying and minimizing the health-related barriers to learning. Healthy students are more prepared to learn, more likely to attend school and class and better able to manage their health-related needs.

Note: The Georgia School Health Resource Manual’s guidelines reflect evidence-informed practices in school health at the time of publication. Users of this manual are advised to consult federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies when using this manual to plan, implement and evaluate school health programs.

Disclaimer

This manual has been put together to provide you, the school health caregiver, with general information on meeting basic healthcare needs of students in the school setting. However, please remember that these are only guidelines and are not intended to replace your judgment as a caregiver, or to substitute for school policies or advice of a physician. Always consult your school administrator, the student's parent/guardian or a healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns regarding the care of the student at the school. If a situation appears serious or life-threatening, always follow school policies regarding notification of the principal. Call 911 immediately to seek emergency assistance.
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