

School Health Services

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Did you know that healthy students are better learners? Research shows an association between school attendance and lower academic achievement. If children miss a lot of school, they are at risk for having lower overall grades *and* lower standardized test scores. They are also less likely to graduate high school.

“School Health Services” is a term used to describe the health care support given to students while they’re at school. School Health Services staff can help students reduce the number of sick days with preventive care, such as flu shots, as well as emergency care for situations like food allergies and asthma episodes. School Health Services staff may include school nurses, nurse practitioners, dental providers, physicians, mental health professionals, and other allied health personnel.

In the United States, one in four children between the ages of two and eight is affected by health conditions, like asthma, obesity, or behavior or learning problems. For these students, School Health Services staff can play a big role in the daily management of their conditions during the school day. These staff help keep kids in the classroom by evaluating their health status, identifying problems that prevent them from staying on track with school work, and developing a plan to help avoid school absences.

They can also assist students and families in other ways. For example, a school nurse can help students and their families get access to health insurance, they can help coordinate care by communicating with the family and health care providers, and they can educate families on what health care services are available to their child at school.

School nurses not only make a big difference for student health and academic achievement, they also have an effect on parents and society in general. Research shows that for every dollar spent on school nursing, society saves \$2.20. This comes from preventing costly emergency room visits and parents missing time at work.

CDC encourages parents to find out what school health services are provided at their child’s school by reading the school handbook or website, attending a school wellness or PTA meeting, or simply asking their child’s teacher or principal.

The CDC Healthy Schools website, at [cdc.gov/healthyschools](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools), has a number of resources that provide more information about School Health Services and the impact on student performance, including a fact sheet with ideas on how parents can support their child’s school in providing health services.

[Announcer] For additional information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.