

Health Services/Employee Wellness and School Health Advisory Council

Annual Board Report

August 9, 2011

School Nurses Touching Lives Everyday

More than band aids on booboos

More than immunizations that are not complete

More than hearing, vision and spinal screenings

School nurses make a difference in the lives of the people they meet.

How do they make a difference.....

This year:

A nurse encountered a hysterical parent running into the school carrying a unresponsive three year old- the nurse took the child , recognized the child was most likely having a febrile seizure, and cared for the child until EMS arrived

A nurse observed a student having abnormal muscle movements and encouraged the parents to see a neurologist- the parents who felt the student was just seeking attention finally followed the nurses' recommendation – the child was diagnosed with a brain tumor

Another nurse was shocked as a student described seeing bright colors and swirling movements before she passed out. The nurse realized the student was describing as pre-seizure aura and insisted the parents seek medical care. The student is now on anti-seizure medication.

Another nurse uses puppets to teach a variety of topics, including hand washing, asthma management, diabetes and diversity.

All year a campus nurse has worked tirelessly with a student whose parents insisted could not be toilet trained- the student is now toilet trained and his academic performance, confidence and behavior has improved

A secondary nurse spent hours making menu selection cards for a student who is a type I diabetic and autistic .The cards allowed to student to make cafeteria menu selections and to work with the nurse for appropriate Insulin dosage. This process allowed the student to become more independent and chose the foods he wanted.

When a parent was unable to get a student's glasses repaired- the nurse took the glasses after work, had them repaired and returned them to a very appreciative and happy student

These are just a few examples of the ways school nurses touch and improve the lives and learning of our students each and every day.

The major focus of Health Services has been and remains to support the success of our students inside and outside the classroom. The Registered Nurses of Denton ISD continue to evidence this priority by performing comprehensive physical and psychosocial assessments leading to appropriate care, treatment and referrals.

The Board of Trustees has established goals that serve as a basis for excellence in teaching and learning. The Registered Nurses of Denton ISD support the mission and goals of our district. The information that follows will demonstrate our commitment to the students and staff of Denton ISD.

I. Vision.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will:

- **Develop and maintain a culture where learning is our first priority**

The nurses continue to work with students, parents and staff members to help each student achieve academic success. Each campus RN encourages students to return to the classroom as quickly and safely as possible. When returning to the classroom is not appropriate the nurse educates the student and parent about the need to be excluded and when the student may return.

Denton ISD RNS perform all state required screenings to identify conditions that might impact a student's health or interfere with a student's ability to learn. The screenings are performed. Any student that is screened with an indication for additional care is referred to an outside health care provider. The nurses provide information and resources for students who need assistance in accessing care. Many of our nurses are members of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) who through a program called Sight for Students can provide a voucher for an eye exam and one pair of glasses if the student meets the program guidelines.

Screenings- district totals

Vision 12,444 Referrals 722

Hearing 10,850 Referrals 139

In addition to hearing and vision screening:

Students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, and 7 are screened for Type II Diabetes Risk Assessment

Total Screened Referrals

Students in grades 5 and 8 are screened for Scoliosis

Total Screened Referrals 3,415 Referrals 86

- **Remain committed to providing equitable and outstanding opportunities for every student on every campus**

The nurses realize that each student is valuable and work to support and to assist each student to make decisions to promote long term mental and physical health and to decrease any risk –taking behaviors.

II. Teaching and Learning...In pursuit of excellence the district will:

- The RNs work with the campus instructional leaders to supplement instruction by either providing the class instruction or sponsoring speakers on the following topics:
 - CPR-
All campus RNs are CPR, AED and First Aid Instructors. All campus staff members were given several opportunities to receive CPR training. Two campuses now teach CPR as part of the fifth grade health and science instruction. The Ready, Set, Teach students receive training before beginning their campus experience. Transportation and staff at the Gallian center received CPR instruction before school started.
 - Dental Hygiene-
February is dental hygiene month and many of the elementary campuses .Several campuses were visited by local dental offices that provided basic dental care demonstrations and goody bags with toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss and stickers.
 - Hand washing-
A popular class with kindergarteners – nurses share the importance and proper to wash your hands
 - Growth and Development-
All fourth and fifth grade students receive age and gender appropriate growth and development instruction. Prior to the instruction, we hold several parent preview nights. The preview nights are offered at several locations geographically planned and on several different week nights to offer parents options for attending. The parents can familiarize themselves with the material and ask questions. All parents are given the opportunity to opt their student out of the instruction.
 - Pediculosis Prevention-
The nurses provide a general instruction and prevention program for all elementary students.
The nurses work with the campus counseling staff to provide the state mandated prevention programs of Child Anti-victimization, bully and violence prevention. In addition to the formal instruction, the nurses work with the campus staff to provide information and resources thorough informal instruction, role-modeling

choices that promote health and through bulletin boards, websites and individual meetings with students and parents.

- **Establish quality staff development programs and promote professional learning communities**

During the 2009-10 school year, with a desire to participate at the same professional level as our teaching colleagues, Health Services formed a PLC. The committee that began as the Education committee began the transformation to a PLC. The Director attended the PLC Conference in the Fall to understand and help lead the development of the concept for our department. The committee had already surveyed the nurses and identified learning needs and areas of concern. Staff development programs were focused on the previously identified needs. An example, several nurses asked for additional training in performing ear exams. Ginny Smith, a member of the PLC and former nursing clinical instructor, provided a 2 hour in service with slides and hands on instruction. Evaluations of the program were positive and similar programs have been requested. The next program is scheduled for August in service and includes identifying abnormal heart and lung sounds.

Nurses remain geographically grouped into Sisterhoods. (our male RN has agreed to our continued use of the term) The sisterhoods continue to provide support and back up to a campus if additional support is needed. In the event a campus RN is absent and a substitute RN could not be secured, the nurses at the sister schools were on call for emergencies and questions. The sisterhoods assisted each other with screenings. A designated "big Sister" or seasoned nurse was available to answer questions, mentor, listen and assist with difficulties if needed. The sisterhoods were able to collaborate and identify the needs of families who had students at different campuses.

New Nurse Academy was again provided to those RNs new to school nursing or Denton ISD. Kathy Malmberg and Jonita Widmer continued to build on the previously established program. The program again allowed the mentoring and direction of our newest staff members by seasoned school nurses.

In addition to our own PLC and professional development workshops, DISD nurses participated in learning events throughout the area. Learning opportunities hosted by Cook Children's, Children's Medical Center, Region XI, Texas School Nurses Organization and the National Association of School Nurses provided new information that was shared by the attendees with the entire group.

- **Strive to deliver all academic programs through teachers possessing advanced degrees and demonstrate competence in the areas of professional responsibility**

The entry level for a professional school RN is a Bachelor's Degree. Several nurses are pursuing advanced degrees. The Director is the only National Certified School Nurse and others are being encouraged to sit for the certification exam.

- **Stay abreast of and incorporate best practices into teaching, learning technology and leadership**

Fourteen nurses are members of NASN, the National Association of School Nurses and TSNO, the state school nurse organization. Three nurses serve on the Region XI TSNO Board of Directors. President of the organization is director, Jonita Widmer with Dee Guay serving as President-Elect and Barbara Scott is serving as Publicity and Communications Director.

DISD nurses continue to be represented on the School Nurse Advisory Board for Cook Children's and Children's Medical Center. The advisory boards serve as liaisons between the campus RN and the health care facilities to bridge any gap in communication to assure a smooth return to school for any students who are injured or ill. The communication has led to better care and allows the needs of students to be anticipated providing the school an opportunity to be proactive for the student. This ability has allowed many parents to realize how important school is to the overall physical and mental wellbeing of their child.

The director is an active member of the Texas School Nurses Administrators Association. Denton ISD will be hosting the fall meeting in October.

Texas School Health Association continues to have Denton ISD representation as Jonita Widmer was elected the treasurer for the state level organization.

Denton ISD nurses were given an opportunity to attend a TIA session designed just for them. The session called "IHPS (Individual Health Plans) are NOT Created by Dummies" was provided twice to provide the nurses with hands on training in creating IHPS utilizing the nursing software program, SNAP.

III Climate.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will...

- **Celebrate and respect the diversity in our DISD community**

The nurses of DISD believe that each child is sacred and special and deserves a safe and health place to learn, grow and succeed. Each student, parent and staff member is respected and valued for the unique individual qualities that they possess. The role of the nurse is to guide and support each person in safe and healthy decision making.

- **Promote and nourish a safe learning and working environment which is supportive, cooperative, ethical, and ensures open communication**

School nurses serve as valuable resources for health information. Many parents and students want simple reassurance that a decision they made regarding a health issue was appropriate. Some need to be encouraged to seek additional medical care. Nurses provide support for those who need a listening ear and a gentle spirit.

- **Motivate and prepare students to embrace their full responsibilities as active citizens of their community, nation and world**

It is the responsibility of each of the nurses in DISD to equip students to take responsibility for their own health. Nurses begin with teaching the importance of something as simple as hand washing to our preschoolers and kindergarteners to providing information about sexually transmitted infections to secondary students. We provide instruction and resources to all students as they grow to make decisions that foster good physical, mental and emotional health.

Nurses work with students and parents of students with chronic health problems to minimize the impact of the health problem on the success of the student. Students are encouraged to assume more of the role of decision maker for their own health as their age and development allows.

School RNs develop IHPs and Emergency Action Plans for students with significant health care needs. Nurses attend campus ARDs to collaborate with parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, diagnosticians and transportation and to meet the needs of the individual student at school. Nurses also work closely with individual health care providers, campus personnel and parents to plan and implement the Emergency Action Plans for those students with life threatening conditions such as asthma, diabetes, seizure disorders and cardiac issues. If a student has a mobility issue, the nurse and the campus administrators plan for the safe removal of a student from the building if an evacuation is required.

The nurses continue to role model healthy behaviors, guide students and staff to make healthy life style choices and to avoid or minimize those decisions that might have a negative impact or influence on the student's health or the health of those around them. As nurses we want students to understand the choices they make now will influence their health in the future. It is the responsibility of the nurse to provide true and accurate information to assist those around us to make informed decisions.

Parent and Community Involvement.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will:

- **Foster a positive and welcoming environment that encourages parent and community partnerships to achieve success for all our students**

In an effort to better serve our students and improve communication and understanding with parents, the Health Services team participated in a two hour

workshop with Mike Widmer, on customer service and dealing with difficult people. The concept that each person who enters our door is actually a customer who wants or needs or service was introduced. The idea was expanded to examine how someone who is angry or upset cannot really hear or understand what you are saying. The team spent time looking and discussing methods to calm the upset person. Only after a level of calm and understanding was reached could actual communication take place. The session was rated as very helpful by the nurses. Additional sessions on customer service and dealing with difficult situations are being considered.

School nurses realize how valuable parent involvement and interaction is to student success. Each nurse works closely with parents to foster a relationship of concern and communication. Parents may contact the nurse by phone, email and in person. Each nurse maintains a website with contact information and office hours. The nurses do ask that parents wanting to discuss concerns, schedule an appointment to avoid uninterrupted time for the nurse to focus on the needs and concerns of the student and parent. One campus nurse met with a parent at 5:30pm for a preview of the growth and development video and teaching materials. The parent was unable to attend any of the scheduled evening meetings and the nurse recognized the importance of this to the parent. The parents expressed their appreciation.

Nurses recognize the value of parents being informed of a student's visit to the health room for a minor injury or illness. The nurses made over contacts with parents and guardians last school year. Many of the contacts were to inform parents of a visit to the nurse. Approximately 60 % of the students seen by the nurse were safely returned to class minimizing the loss of instructional time and learning opportunities.

The nurses and counselors of DISD often identified specific needs and services that the school was unable to provide. Parents more frequently expressed concerns that their children were either uninsured or underinsured. Many said they lacked the resources to provide for their children. Nurses made over 1920 referrals to community resources and agencies to assist our students and their families.

- **Work continuously with the community in planning and facility development**

Denton ISD is represented in the community by the Director at the Denton Emergency Planning Action Committee and the Denton Reportable Disease Communication Team. Both groups meet periodically to discuss and plan for critical events that could impact the health and environmental concerns of our community.

Denton County has joined with Cook Children's as part of the CCHAPS program. The CHHAPS program, Community-wide Children's Health Assessment and Planning Survey, was a survey of over 7,439 families in the six county area that Cook serves. After review and intensive study of the needs identified by the surveys, 7 areas of critical key issues were established. The key areas that were identified as common concerns were: abuse,

access to care, asthma, dental health, mental health, obesity and safety. Each county has formed a task force of key leaders and community activists that culminated in a County Child Health Summit. Denton County Coalition met and selected as our focus mental health. After the initial selection of a focus additional community members were asked to join the coalition.

- **Utilize citizen's advisory committees to focus on short and long term tasks**

Health Services utilizes the SHAC, School Health Advisory Committee, as a source for community input and advisement. The SHAC membership includes parents of DISD students, DISD employees, community business partners and local concerned citizens. The group is in compliance with legislative guidelines meeting four times a year and being co- chaired by a parent member.

- **Provides support services and promote, wellness and safety for students and families**

Each and every day the nurses of DISD along with the faculty and staff provide support for student success. The campus RN is responsible for completing a comprehensive physical and psychosocial assessment of a student and making the determination if the student can safely return to class, if a parent needs to be notified or in a critical situation provide care and support until EMS arrives. The RN is the only person who is routinely on the campus with the skills to perform the assessment. This is the reason it is critical to maintain our staffing of one RN assigned to each campus. The students of our district have been fortunate to be governed by a Board of Trustees and a Superintendent that recognizes the critical role nurses play in student success. Denton ISD values the role of the nurse as we provide support service to students and staff.

In the 2010-2011 school year, 67 students and staff required EMS support and transport to local hospitals.

The nurses saw:

23,809 injuries plus 67,667 health concerns and illnesses - totaling

91, 476 student visits that the campus RN assessed and cared for –

Averaging 508 health room visits per day throughout our district

With the fact that 60% of visits resulted in the student remaining at school and receiving instruction, most would have been sent home had there not been an RN readily available to assess the student and assure the student, parent and staff that the student could remain at school. The support of the Board to keep RNs on campus demonstrates an understanding of the support that nurses provide to support student success in the classroom.

As our district continues to grow, the health needs of our student population increases and had become more diversified. We have students with no known health problems and some with very critical and complicated needs. The summary is based on the health needs of students throughout the district based on information provided by a parent.

ADD/ADHD

Asthma 3509 Some recent studies demonstrate that 18-23% of children ages 0-14 have been diagnosed with asthma.

Autism Spectrum

Cardiac Conditions Including several with heart transplants

Cystic Fibrosis

Diabetes Type I 56

Life Threatening Allergies 429 Identified as needing an EPI- pen

Psychiatric Conditions Bipolar, Depression, OCD, ODD, Severe
Depression and Psychosis

Seizure Disorders 208

In addition to the health room visits, the nurses administered over 53,900 medications and treatments without error. The average number of medications and treatments administered each day is 300 throughout the district.

The maintenance of RNs on each campus allows our students to receive medications and treatments that might otherwise keep them at home.

In addition to working with students, parents and faculty members on the campus, the professional nurses of DISD participated in programs that were beneficial to the entire community. On the second Saturday in May, eight nurses joined the efforts of the University of North Texas , the City of Denton to collect, log, and package for safe disposal excess prescription and over the counter human and veterinary medications . The efforts gleaned over 750 pounds of medication that could have fallen into the hands of children or found its way through the waste water system into our lakes and waterways. The team could be seen wearing t-shirts picturing fish, birds and local wildlife with the slogan, “ We take drugs so they won’t”. Local law enforcement rounded out the team to provide safety and supervision over the medications.

Human Resources.... In pursuit of excellence, the district will

- **Develop and expect a consistently high level of, and respect for , professional performance by all staff**

Each member of the Health Services team is a Registered Nurse. Each is a professional. Each nurse maintains a high standard of professional practice. The personal commitment to professional performance and ethical behavior demonstrates the value and self respect to each nurse and to their colleagues.

- **Maintain a diverse workforce with respect to qualifications, expertise and commitment to excellence**

The 35 nurses of DISD are diversified in age, race and now gender. The team consists of three African American nurses, one Latino, a variety of ages and areas of clinical expertise and one male. Our male nurse doesn't mind the sisterhood organization and was good natured when we selected pink shirts for Employee Wellness. Our male nurse has assisted with growth and development with some of our male students and serves as an outstanding male role model for students on his campus. One of our new members spent the previous year serving as a school nurse at a school in Ahman, Jordan. She shared some interesting stories and what can be done with little or no medical supplies. She even shared her plight of trying to explain what a band aid was to a non-English street vendor. All of the nurses have a minimum of five years clinical experience before joining the team. The diversity of the team provides a wealth of resources in many areas of expertise. The nurses are quick to share ideas and solutions for problem situations.

- **Promote Health and Wellness in the Workforce**

The nurses of DISD administered over 1240 flu vaccines to full time employees at 7 locations in October. These vaccines were provided at no cost by the district to employees.

The Employee Wellness Day was held on February 18, 2011 at the ATC. The ATC came to life on Friday evening as nurses, wellness representatives and vendors arrived to set up for the big day. Saturday morning found the facility filled with employees, their families and vendors. The morning began with a ribbon cutting by two members of the Board, Mrs. Mia Price and Dr. Rudy Rodriguez sporting the bright pink t-shirts provided to them at the previous Board meeting. Before the morning was over, over 700 employees, their families, DISD retirees and vendors had the opportunity to see many displays, participate in a variety of free health screenings, and view a wide range of demonstrations including everything from Jazzercise to cooking classes. The attendees were given tote bags that many filled with free samples and health related information. Over 75 people left with door prizes donated by vendors. The event normally an expense to the district was self funded this year through sponsorships that were offered

to vendors. The vendors were given the opportunity to donate at one of three levels to the Wellness Day. The top level of platinum donor offered the sponsor the chance to select their booth location, 4 reserved parking places, business name on the t-shirt and on the posters advertising the event. The sponsors seemed pleased with the package.

Students were not left out of the event. Student Council members from Ryan and Denton High school assisted with the event. The Fillie officers provided entertainment and greeted attendees and helped with directions. Child care was provided to allow adults to visit the booths while their little ones were watched by high school volunteers and nurses.

Growth, Change and Fiscal Responsibility In pursuit of excellence, the district will:

- **Demonstrate effective and efficient management of district resources**

The nurses have worked and collaborated this year to minimize any waste of supplies and the supplies have been inventoried to prevent any duplications of similar products. The Director contacted several vendors to receive the best available pricing.

In summary, the members of Health Services work with the students, parents and staff to touch and improve the lives and learning of our students each and every day.