

Behavioral Health is Essential To Health



Prevention Works



Treatment is Effective



People Recover



The Impact of School Nurses on Mental and Emotional Well-Being in Schools

Nancy Kelly, M Ed

Captain Maryann Robinson, Ph.D, RN



Mental Disorders in Adolescence Often Persist Into Adulthood

- **About 30% of visits are for mental health issues (Dr. Kjolhede, Bassett Healthcare Network's 19 school-based clinics)**
- **Cumulative rate of mental health and behavioral disorders during adolescents may exceed 60%, and nonspecific mental health issues may affect 80% of adolescents**
- **More than 60% of individuals fulfilled criteria for at least one mental disorder at some point between the ages of nine and 21 years.**
- **About 29% of boys (236/821) and 54% of girls (498/929) had “an episode of prominent depressive and anxiety symptoms at least once during mid-to-late adolescence”**

Mental Disorders in Adolescence Often Persist Into Adulthood

- **Early clinical interventions that shorten the duration of episodes have the potential to reduce the later life disease burden from these disorders**
- **These problems are very common, almost universal, but there is a real risk of them becoming entrenched**
- **Take emotional problems in adolescents seriously and where they persist for more than a few weeks, get an assessment from a family physician or a clinical psychologist**

Statistics

- **Health issues school nurses encounter, with prevalence rates among all school-aged children**
 - *Obese, overweight, 32%*
 - *Prescribed medication for more than 90 days, 13%*
 - *Mental, emotional or behavioral problems, 10%*
 - *Seizure disorder, 5%*
 - *ADHD, 5%*

- **Among 12th-graders:**
 - *Sexually active, 65%*
 - *Use of an illicit drug, 47%*

History

- **The practice of school nursing began in the US on October 1, 1902, when a school nurse was hired to reduce absenteeism by intervening with students and families regarding health care needs related to communicable diseases**
- **After one month of successful nursing interventions in the NYC schools, by Lina Rogers, the first school nurse, was able to provide leadership to implement evidence-based nursing care across the city**
- **The school nurse serves as a liaison between school personnel, family, community and healthcare providers to advocate for health care and a healthy school environment**

Evolution

- **After the child's home, school represents the second most influential environment in a child's life**
- **As more students enter schools with health or mental health problems, pediatricians face the challenge of managing their care throughout the school day**
- **There is a recognized relationship between health and learning, as there is between school nurse availability and student well-being and educational success**
- **Students today may face family crises, homelessness, immigration, poverty, and violence, which increase both their physical and mental health needs**

Joplin MO - 2011

- **School staff (teachers, psychologists, guidance counselor, nurse, principal), public health official, and physicians reported after the tornado that school staff immediately worked to contact every enrolled child to provide assistance and coordinate recovery services.**
- **Evidence from Joplin adds to a small body of empirical experience demonstrating the important contribution of schools to post disaster community recovery. Despite timely and proactive services, many families and children struggled after the tornado.**

Mental and Emotional Well-Being

- **Oversee the health and well-being of students**
- **Assist in identifying children and staff who may need additional mental health services and support, especially students and personnel who present with somatic complaints**
- **Provide training, when appropriate, to students and personnel about the interplay of health and mental health factors**
- **Monitor the health of high-risk students**
- **Coordinate health and mental health referrals from staff**

<http://www.nctsn.org/content/school-nurse-guidelines>

Trauma and Recovery

- **Support the long-term recovery of students and staff by providing information and consultation about the effects that psychological trauma and depression may have on health.**
- **Active member of the crisis team along with the school counselor, school psychologist, and school social worker, assisting with the identification of students who are at risk for long-term mental health challenges because of the traumatic event.**
- **Set the tone for recovery, actively reducing or eliminating stigma for students who seek additional health and mental health services and care through screening, health education, and outreach services.**

<http://www.nctsn.org/content/school-nurse-guidelines>

SAMHSA Resources

- *BJP* 2009, 195:142-148. Alexander C. McFarlane and Miranda Van Hooff
Mental health: 20-year longitudinal follow-up study Impact of childhood exposure to a natural disaster on adult mental health: 20-year longitudinal follow-up study
<http://bjp.rcpsych.org/content/195/2/142.full.pdf+html>
- [Disaster Distress Helpline](http://www.samhsa.gov/2k10/disaster-distress-helpline) 1-800-985-5990 or Text TalkWithUs to 66746
- NCTSN. (2006). *Psychological First Aid field operations guide* (second ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.nctsn.org/content/psychological-first-aid>
- NCTSN Resources for School Personnel
<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/school-personnel>

Disaster Behavioral Health Information Series (DBHIS) Resource Collections

- Children and Youth
- Immediate Disaster Response
 - Drought
 - Hurricane Sandy
 - Tornadoes
- Languages Other than English
- Persons with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs
- Resilience and Stress Management

<http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/dbhis>

SAMHSA Disaster App

The SAMHSA Disaster App helps responders focus on what really matters—the people in need.

- **Be ready**—access resources for any type of traumatic event, including tip sheets; guides for responders, teachers, parents, and caregivers; and a directory of behavioral health service providers in the impacted area.
- **Be prepared**—rely on and access pre-downloaded resources on your phone in case of limited Internet connectivity in the field.
- **Be confident**—review key preparedness materials so you're confident you're providing the best support possible.
- **Share resources easily**—send information to colleagues and survivors via text message, email, or transfer to a computer for printing.



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