EVERY CHILD DESERVES A SCHOOL NURSE

(National Association of School Nurses)

Why do we need school nurses?

Answer: Florida has approximately 1087 professional registered nurses (RN) and 680 licensed practical nurses (LPN) that provide a range of preventive health services for more than 2.5 million students in over 3500 Florida public schools.

The school nurse is an invaluable partner in ensuring that students are healthy, safe and prepared to learn. Infections, injuries, asthma, diabetes, allergies and emotional difficulties, and other health conditions may lead to absences from school and, in some cases, academic failure if left unattended and not addressed properly.

According to the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), the role of the school nurse is to advance the well being, academic success and life-long achievement of students. To that end, school nurses facilitate positive student responses to normal development, promote health and safety: intervene with actual and potential health problems, and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning. (http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Family/school/reports/reports.html)

What difference does a school nurse make?

Answer: School nurses promote a safe learning environment for students with allergies, arthritis, asthma, bleeding disorders, cancer, cardiac conditions, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, ADHD, depression, neurological conditions, eating disorders, seizure disorders, sickle cell anemia, and mental health issues. They are also first responders doing first aid, CPR, and emergency management planning.

2008 – 2009 Florida DOH statistics show*:

- ~ Average student health room visit per day – 75,000 daily in 2008, up to 77,500 daily in 2009
- ~ Average medication doses per day – 20,000 daily in 2008, almost 22,000 daily in 2009
- ~ Over 90% of Florida's K, 1st, 3rd, and 6th graders were screened for vision problems
- ~ Almost 88% of all health room visits in Comprehensive schools resulted in students returning to classrooms, continuing their learning.

For the record!*

- ✓ School nurses are present in every school system in Florida. There are 46 ARNP's, 1041 RN's, 679 LPN's and 1159 Health Aides in 3658 public schools and 30 private schools throughout the state.
- ✓ Over 96,000 students failed 2 or more vision exams and were referred to an eye doctor
- ✓ The health of school children has become more complex. One of every five children in Florida has a chronic health condition which they must address or treat every day. These students are enrolled in all of our schools.
- ✓ In addition, there has been a rise in social problems among our youth such as substance abuse, depression and violence.
- ✓ The Department of Health (DOH) states the role of the Basic school nurse is to appraise, protect and promote the health of students. We see more than 77,500 students a day; an increase of more than 2500 students from 2008.
- ✓ School nurses support the health and well-being of children and students in Florida, actively working to prevent the spread of the H1N1 (Swine flu) virus. With the cooperation of the Florida DOH over 29% of all children from the age of 6 month to 18 years were immunized with the H1N1 vaccine. (quote Florida Flu Hotline as of 1/2/10)

***Data from State of Florida 2008-2009 Summary of School Health Services and School Health Services Fact Sheet**

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