School nurses and school-based health centers working together share a critical mission: protecting and advancing the health and well-being of our nation's school-age children. One does not replace the need for the other. Each has a distinct and complementary function.

- Students' health, overall well-being, and academic success improve.¹
- Students acquire the health knowledge and skills they need to become independent in providing self-care.
- School absence rates decrease and graduation rates increase.²
- Student access to equitable health care increases, including health promotion, disease prevention, and illness management.
- Continuity of care occurs when health professionals coordinate with each other about student health needs. This frees educators to focus on teaching and allows parents/caregivers to remain at work.³
Why should schools have both a school nurse and a school-based health center?

School nurses and school-based health centers assume leadership roles to advocate for healthcare & education reform, which includes funding and reimbursement, policy development/implementation, as well as a uniform data set.

Communication that is reciprocal and respectful helps to ensure continuity of healthcare services inside and outside the school setting. This allows both the school nurse and the School Based Health Center to work together toward a common health goal for the student.

School nurses and school-based health centers coordinate care, thus providing the best student-centered care possible, and ensuring the student is healthy, safe, and ready to learn.

School nurses and school-based health centers work collaboratively to address both social needs and to advocate as partners for systems level changes to help alleviate social determinants to health and their causes. The “social determinants of health” refers to the conditions in which people are born, live, learn, play, work, age, and worship, as well as what kind of access they have to healthcare services. Together these affect a wide range of health functions and overall quality-of-life outcomes.


