

Department of Health and Human Services
 Division of Public Health
 School and Child Health Program
 10/28/2008

Current Health Screening and Data Practices in Nebraska Schools
 Preliminary Report of a Survey of School Principals and School Nurses

Est. Undup. No. of school buildings represented in survey: 279

155 School Nurse responses

124 Principal responses

Two convenience samples:

School Nurse users of a statewide list serve N = 318

Principal email addresses on a list maintained by Dept. of Ed. N = 1470 (est.)

Survey Question	Response
Q2. During what month of the school year are initial screenings completed at your school? 212 of 318 (66.7%) responses reported screening is completed during the period Aug. Sept. Oct. (during the first quarter of the school year).	
Q4. Who conducts and performs screening at your school? a. Majority responses for all screenings: School nurse. b. Unlicensed school personnel primarily utilized in ht and wt and distant vision screening. c. School nurses report higher use of parent volunteers d. Community volunteers and preprofessional students perform 5-10% of screenings.	
Q5. Do you verify the qualifications of screeners before the screening event?	77% SN yes 70% P yes
Q7. Does your school use an electronic data system for performance and attendance?	75% SN yes 86% P yes
Q9. Does your school use and electronic system for student health data?	64% SN yes 62% P yes
Q10. If yes to Q9, is it the same system as used in Q7?	80% SN yes 77% P yes
Q12. By what method are screening results recorded at the point of screening?	98% SN paper 87% P paper
Q13. By what method are screening results recorded on the individual student health record?	64% SN paper 64% P paper 35% SN elec 30% P elec

<p>Q14. How is it determined the child needs further evaluation? (Check all that apply.)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>School Nurses:</u></td> <td><u>Principals:</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rescreen 75%</td> <td>Parent 73.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parent notified 71%</td> <td>Det. By Screener 59.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Comp. w/ state guidelines 63%</td> <td>Rescreen 39.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Det. By screener 47.3%</td> <td>Comp. w/ state guidelines 31.3%</td> </tr> </table>	<u>School Nurses:</u>	<u>Principals:</u>	Rescreen 75%	Parent 73.3%	Parent notified 71%	Det. By Screener 59.3%	Comp. w/ state guidelines 63%	Rescreen 39.3%	Det. By screener 47.3%	Comp. w/ state guidelines 31.3%													
<u>School Nurses:</u>	<u>Principals:</u>																						
Rescreen 75%	Parent 73.3%																						
Parent notified 71%	Det. By Screener 59.3%																						
Comp. w/ state guidelines 63%	Rescreen 39.3%																						
Det. By screener 47.3%	Comp. w/ state guidelines 31.3%																						
<p>Q15. Do your school screening practices include rescreening procedures prior to referral?</p> <p>School Nurses: Yes 89.3% No 9.6% DK 0.6%</p> <p>Principals: Yes 62.8% No 18.2% DK 18.9%</p>																							
<p>Q17. Is someone available to screen children for hearing and vision at any time school is in session?</p>	<p>60% SN yes 45% P yes</p>																						
<p>Q 20. Three most significant health issues facing your school and students at this time?</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>School Nurses:</u></td> <td><u>Principals:</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asthma</td> <td>Asthma</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Obesity</td> <td>Poor Nutrition</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stress at Home</td> <td>Lack of exercise</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poor Nutrition</td> <td>Stress at Home</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lack of exercise</td> <td>Lack of sleep</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Severe allergies</td> <td>Obesity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lack of sleep</td> <td>Severe allergies</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mental health</td> <td>Alcohol</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alcohol</td> <td>Mental health</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Diabetes I</td> <td>Diabetes I</td> </tr> </table>	<u>School Nurses:</u>	<u>Principals:</u>	Asthma	Asthma	Obesity	Poor Nutrition	Stress at Home	Lack of exercise	Poor Nutrition	Stress at Home	Lack of exercise	Lack of sleep	Severe allergies	Obesity	Lack of sleep	Severe allergies	Mental health	Alcohol	Alcohol	Mental health	Diabetes I	Diabetes I	
<u>School Nurses:</u>	<u>Principals:</u>																						
Asthma	Asthma																						
Obesity	Poor Nutrition																						
Stress at Home	Lack of exercise																						
Poor Nutrition	Stress at Home																						
Lack of exercise	Lack of sleep																						
Severe allergies	Obesity																						
Lack of sleep	Severe allergies																						
Mental health	Alcohol																						
Alcohol	Mental health																						
Diabetes I	Diabetes I																						
<p>Q21. Does your school employ or contract with a licensed school nurse?</p>	<p>98% SN yes 89.3% P yes</p>																						
<p>Q22. If yes, check the amount of time the school nurse is present at school:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Less than 10 hours per week</td> <td>39% SN 43% P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10 – 29 hours per week</td> <td>30% SN and P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 or more hours per week</td> <td>30% SN and P</td> </tr> </table>	Less than 10 hours per week	39% SN 43% P	10 – 29 hours per week	30% SN and P	30 or more hours per week	30% SN and P																	
Less than 10 hours per week	39% SN 43% P																						
10 – 29 hours per week	30% SN and P																						
30 or more hours per week	30% SN and P																						

School Health Screening: What Nebraska's School Nurses Have to Say

This report summarizes key results from two surveys of school nurses.

Survey #1: Conducted in focus-group style, between September, 2007 and April 2008. Groups of school nurses attending a training event were asked to respond with discussion to four topic areas related to school health screening, covering "qualified screeners", scoliosis screening, BMI measurement, and dental screening.

Results #1: Over 250 school nurses participated in over 20 sessions, all facilitated similarly by Kathy Karsting, RN.

Qualified screeners: school nurses clearly saw the need for a Registered Nurse to oversee the process of the screening program, but many noted that screening involves many more helpers along with the nurse. Appropriate confidentiality controls arose as a concern when non-school personnel are used. The need for good tools to promote quality screening methods consistently applied was noted. As was the value of working with local community professionals and pre-professional students for screening help. Many schools rely on the Lion's Club for screening assistance, by lay volunteers, without rescreening.

Dental screening was explored by inquiring both about screening practices and adequacy of referral and treatment sources. Dental access is clearly an issue, from both financial and geographic standpoints. The need for training resources to educate the school nurse screener was again strongly noted.

BMI measurement: School nurses explored the subjects of height and weight measurement, school food and activity environments, school wellness policies, eating behaviors of students, medical issues affecting weight and growth, and parent reactions to referrals for overweight. In some locations, schools are already involved in local efforts to combat childhood obesity and are using report cards to inform parents about student weight and fitness. Nurses generally acknowledge the futility of making medical referrals for overweight, unless there are also identified medical concerns. Many nurses are familiar with school wellness policy requirements and agree aggregate BMI measures provide useful evaluation measures.

Scoliosis: A number of locations have already discontinued scoliosis screening. The number of referrals is low compared to the numbers screened. Nurses raised questions about whether guidelines to screen at the 6th to 8th grade level is up-to-date, given population trends toward earlier puberty.

Miscellaneous results also obtained from the focus group surveys included reflections on the role of parents in the successful screening process, the need for guidelines and methods for proficient accurate screening, time constraints and limitations, inclusion of very young children and children with special health care needs in the screening program.

Survey #2: Conducted in the fall of 2008, school nurse users of the snconsult listserv were invited to complete an electronic survey describing screening practices in their schools.

Results #2: 155 School Nurse responses from a potential 318 listserv users. Selected responses are shown below.

During what month of the year are initial screenings at your school completed?
62.3% complete screening in Aug-Sept-Oct.
Another 19.2% complete in Nov. and 7.2% by Dec.

Do your school screening practices include rescreening procedures prior to referral?
89.3% yes 9.6% no

Is someone available to screen children for hearing and vision at any time school is in session?
60% yes 40% no

How much time is the school nurse present at your school?
Less than 10 hours per week 39%
10 - 29 hours per week 30%
30 or more hours per week 30%