

APRIL 2018 NEWSLETTER: Youth Friendly Services

Expanding Partnerships to Reduce HIV and other STDs among Adolescents through National Non-Governmental Organizations (PS16-1603)

Featured Blogs

'Nothing About Us, Without Us': Advancing Health through a Youth Driven Lens

Guest Author: Cameron Estrada



School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) have been a safe haven and a reliable resource for me throughout middle and high school. Now as a college student, I still advocate for youth health and leadership with the School Based Health Alliance. I hope to share my experiences, what I have learned, and strategies for how other centers can become more youth driven.

I have seen each side of school-based health from a student's perspective. I have gone into my SBHC for check-ups for my physical wellbeing, seen a provider for mental health, and was the president of my SBHC's Youth Advisory Council. From the primary care side of the center the staff was amazing. They cared about me, remembered my name, and encouraged me to take an active role in my health. My staff treated every client with respect and confidentiality and made the transition to a youth driven SBHC simple. When my SBHC wanted to be more youth driven, they asked the students they served the best way to start a group. The Youth Advisory Council increased the center's focus on youth. As a council we launched student health initiatives with our SBHC that were important to students. We knew when and how to reach our peers. This aided our center's ability to help more students and provide the services they needed. From my experience, there are three key steps to making an SBHC more youth driven.

1. The first step is to **build relationships**. Building relationships with students begins the moment they walk through the door. Be authentic with them and reassuring. You do not have to pretend to be their best friend but encourage the healthy behaviors they are exhibiting. Provide students with youth friendly literature in the lobby. If a student has something they want to know more about but are too afraid to ask, a pamphlet or poster might be the answer for them. It might even give them the confidence to ask questions. Build relationships with the faculty at your school. Faculty can be a great resource especially the health teacher, the advisor of student council, or an advisor of any service organizations on campus. These relationships can connect you to students who might want to be involved with the SBHC beyond a patient level. Lastly, build relationships with community partners. My home state is fairly conservative and my SBHC wasn't allowed to provide full sexual health services or education (only STI screening and condoms without advertising their availability). Partnering with community agencies who could meet these needs meant building relationships and establishing a steady referral process. This holds true to any service your center cannot provide. Relationships are the foundation for the next step.

2. The second step to making an SBHC more youth focused **is to ask for help**. Ask your students if they would be interested in starting a council. Ask the National Honor Society if they want to fulfill their service hours by helping to create a health fair. Ask your student council if they want to start a campaign surrounding sexual health. It is important to remember that the center is not only a resource to the school, but the school is a resource for the center. You can partner with different people within your school to improve the function and reach of your SBHC. The center can not only be a place of healing and learning, but also a place of opportunity and development for students to make a difference in their schools and in their health.

3. The final step is to **take action**. With better school integration, use your new relationships and resources to do something. This can take on many forms. Ask your youth what needs they have. If your council wants more education and access to reproductive health services, help them educate stakeholders at the school, local, and state levels for better policy suited for this. If your student council wants to create their own pamphlet about the health risks of underage drinking to be handed out with every prom ticket, your center can help provide information to guide them. Even something as small as a school club asking for a staff member from the SBHC to come speak at a meeting about anxiety can be a powerful action. The information you gather from asking for help should fuel the actions the SBHC takes.

My school-based health center was more than a place where I got my physicals for sports. I learned how to be a leader, how to organize and how to be an advocate. It is no coincidence that, even in college, my involvement in youth health has not stopped. I am a School-Based Health Alliance Youth Development Intern and a member of the Alliance's [Youth Advisory Council](#). On my campus, Texas Christian University, I am involved in setting up an event called "Take Back the Night" that raises awareness about sexual violence and supports survivors. The skills and confidence that I gained in high school are the basis of my advocacy and a youth driven SBHC was instrumental to my life. From my experience, an SBHC serves students better when they recognize them as partners and assets to inform and lead the movement for quality, equitable health care.

Resources

Sexual Health Services Factsheet: This CDC developed [resource](#) highlights five actionable steps for schools to increase access to sexual health services for youth.

Resource for Parents: This CDC-developed [info-brief](#) identifies strategies for parents to support the relationship development between their young adults and healthcare providers in order to establish a trusting and secure relationship and environment.

Developing a Referral System for Sexual Health Services (SHS): This [resource](#) was developed by the CDC, National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD), and Cicatelli Associate Inc. (CAI) for education agencies to develop and implement a SHS referral system.

How to Make an Effective Referral System Toolkit: [Tools](#) were developed by CAI and include flyers and posters used to market SHS to students and staff, referral counting logs, documents and webinars developed to support professional development for staff making SHS referrals, and referral guides. These resources can be used to inform your work as you continue to develop an SHS referral system in your district.

Success Stories

Success Story: Duval County Public Schools Teen Health Centers CDC supports state, territorial, and local agencies and tribal governments to help strengthen their capacity to improve child and adolescent health. Collectively, the programs CDC supports are making a difference in the lives of our nation's youth. Click [here](#) to read more about the exemplary work of the teen health centers in Duval County Public Schools.

Upcoming Conferences, Workshops and Webinars

Conference: National School-Based Health Care Convention (sponsored by School-Based Health Alliance)

Date & Location: June 24-27, 2018 in Indianapolis, IN

The theme for this year's meeting is "Fueling Your Growth in Confidence, Competence, and Vision." As the premier national gathering for our field, the convention is a fantastic opportunity to connect with hundreds of fellow school-based health care professionals and advocates from across the nation. More than 3,000 school-based health centers nationwide are delivering integrated, patient-centered care, screenings for conditions like obesity and depression, and preventive services—all with a special focus on vulnerable children and adolescents. Convention attendees will also explore new ways health centers are serving their schools and their communities by promoting wellness and health equity. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Conference: National Association of School Nurses

Date & Location: June 29-July 3, 2018 in Baltimore, MD

The theme of this year's conference, Power of the Past, Force of the Future, provides the following learning opportunities: Incorporate the principles of the Framework for 21st Century School Nursing Practice™ into daily practice to advance student and population health, identify school nursing trends that have evolved over the last 50 years of NASN, and apply evidence-based best practices that promote student health, academic success and healthy school communities. Click [here](#) to register!

Conference: [Gender Spectrum Conference and Professionals Symposium](#)

Date & Time: July 7-8, 2018 in Moraga, CA

The Gender Spectrum Conference is an opportunity for youth and families to spend a weekend gaining the resources, information, and community needed to help young people effectively navigate their world. Workshops for caregivers, parents, and other family members will focus on expanding your knowledge base on key subjects and providing access to some of the leading experts in a variety of fields. The conference promises to be an unforgettable event for everyone who attends. The peaceful surroundings, amazing staff, and incredibly supportive community will make it a weekend that will stay with you long after your trip home. Click [here](#) to register!

Conference: NACCHO Annual 2018

Date & Time: July 10-12, 2018 in New Orleans, LA

The theme of this year's conference, Unleashing the Power of Local Public Health, highlights the unique opportunity local public health has to convene discussions and efforts around population health, clinical medicine, and the management of systems that measure health and healthcare outcomes. Click [here](#) to register!

Additional Resources

Webinar: Enhancing Your Approach to Working with Teen Patients: Understanding Adolescent Brain Development and Non-Judgmental Communication Bias

Date & Location: April 3, 2018, 1 PM EST

Adolescents have health care needs that are different than those of other age groups; yet many health care providers do not feel adequately equipped to meet those needs. This engaging webinar will explore how our understanding of adolescent brain development impacts our interactions with teen patients, examine how nonverbal communication can set the tone for youth/adult interaction, and discuss strategies on how make youth feel comfortable asking for support by being an "Askable Adult". Participants will receive training tools and resources that can be implemented in their own health care setting or youth-serving organization. Click [here](#) to register!

In Case You Missed It

Webinar: Making Room for Gender Diversity in School Health Services and Sex Education

Presenters: Kim Westheimer (Gender Spectrum) & Becca Mui (GLSEN)

Transgender and gender nonconforming students experience high levels of victimization in our nation's schools, increasing their risk of adverse mental and physical health outcomes, including sexual health outcomes such as STIs and HIV. One strategy to improve health outcomes is to ensure that gender diverse students feel included and affirmed within the larger school community and their school-based health center. In this webinar, we shared relevant research, inclusive approaches and affirming practices that can be used when teaching or discussing puberty and reproductive health with students. Click [here](#) to listen to a recording of the webinar.

Webinar: LGBTQ Inclusivity in Sexual Health Education

Presenter: Brittany McBride (Advocates for Youth)

Health education curricula to reduce HIV/STDs in young people should be inclusive for all students. Advocates for Youths' Rights, Respect, Responsibility (3Rs) endeavors to be the first K-12 curriculum that affirms LGBTQ youth and teaches the respect and dignity that all young people deserve. Upon completion of the webinar, attendees will be able to explain why inclusive sexual health education is critical for LGBTQ youth, provide strategies to adapt lesson plans to make them more inclusive for LGBTQ youth, and highlight unique features regarding inclusivity of the Rights, Respect, Responsibility (3Rs) curriculum. Click [here](#) to listen to a recording of the webinar!

Webinar: Educating Decision Makers and Developing Effective Messaging on Adolescent Sexual Health Webinar

Presenters: Taryn Couture (NCSD) and Glynis Shea (Healthy Youth Development, Konopka Institute for Best Practices in Adolescent Health)

It can be challenging to educate community leaders, decision makers, and key stakeholders on adolescent sexual health issues in your jurisdiction within the confines of your job. To address this unique challenge, NCSD designed a webinar specifically to help you gain the skills and techniques necessary to actively and effectively address adolescent sexual health issues through the education of your community's decision makers. The presenters provided strategies for identifying and mapping decision makers and public health champions and for developing messages that resonate with decision makers. The webinar also covered appropriate policy education actions and strategies for framing your adolescent sexual health messages with shared beliefs/values so that they are compelling and memorable. Click [here](#) to view the webinar slides!

Workshop at the School Superintendents Association Conference: Strategies for Creating Safe and Supportive Environments for LGBTQ+ Students in Sexual Health Education Programming and Services

Presenters: Brittany McBride (Advocates for Youth) and Suzanne Mackey (School Based Health Alliance)

LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning, and others) youth face increased risk of depression, bullying, suicide, substance use, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). [In the workshop](#), participants learned about the CDC-developed school-based approaches to reducing HIV/STDs. Promoting and providing a learning environment in which all students feel safe and supported is an essential function of schools, and is associated with improved education and health outcomes for all students. Recognizing the impact of adolescent brain development on risk taking behaviors and the vulnerability of LGBTQ+ students, it is essential that sexual health education and health services delivered in schools are inclusive and affirming of LGBTQ+ students.

