



For Immediate Release

August 7, 2012

Contact: Kenny Lull, Manager of Communications, klull@nasn.org

School Nurses Provide Back-to-School Checklist for Parents **NASN Encourages Student Health and Wellness for Academic Success**

(Silver Spring, MD) – It's that time of year again. Children are getting ready to go back to school and parents are thinking about what they can do to ensure their children remain healthy, in school and ready to learn. For children returning to or starting school with special health concerns, parents should ask if there's a school nurse in the building every day. For many students this school year, the school nurse will be their only point of access to health care. To ensure a healthy and successful school year, the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) has developed a checklist for parents to consider as they prepare to send their children back to school. NASN encourages all parents to be active in their children's health and wellness. Parent engagement in school is a critical predictor of student success.

For Parents Who Have Students with a Health Concern:

- ✓ Make your child's health concern known to the school and school nurse.
- ✓ Introduce yourself and your child to the school nurse.
- ✓ Bring current signed healthcare provider orders.
- ✓ Together with the school nurse and other appropriate school officials, develop an individualized healthcare plan.
- ✓ Give permission for the school nurse to communicate with your family's healthcare provider.
- ✓ Provide parent/guardian contact information and update the school with any changes.
- ✓ Ask if non-nurses will be providing care (for example, verify who will administer medication) and how these authorized individuals will be supervised.
- ✓ Confirm the school's disaster/emergency plan. Make sure your child's medication and/or medical devices (epinephrine auto-injectors, asthma inhalers, insulin, etc.) will be readily available in an emergency.
- ✓ Let the school know how important it is to have a full-time registered school nurse in the building all day, every day.

For All Parents and Students:

- ✓ Make sure immunizations are up-to-date.
- ✓ Review hygiene tips to prevent the spread of infections.
- ✓ Establish a bedtime and wake-up time to ensure adequate and consistent sleep.
- ✓ Develop a routine for homework and afterschool activities.
- ✓ Help make appropriate clothing choices (for example, wear comfortable and safe shoes).
- ✓ Keep an open line of communication with your child to ensure that he/she remains safe at school. If a concern arises (such as bullying), contact the appropriate school officials immediately.
- ✓ Get involved! Sign up for the parent organization (PTA/PTO), school Wellness Committee, and mark events such as back-to-school night and parent/teacher meetings on your calendar.
- ✓ Ask about the school or district's wellness policy (for example, how does the school address nutrition, activity, stress and mental health concerns).
- ✓ Advocate for your child to have a school nurse all day, every day by communicating this message to school administrators and decision-makers.

"Parents should talk to their school nurse and be involved in their child's health and wellness at school," said NASN President, Linda Davis-Alldritt. "Every child deserves a school nurse every day, all day. And every parent deserves to feel their child's safety and wellbeing are a school's top priority," stated Davis-Alldritt.

The National Association of School Nurses is a non-profit specialty nursing organization, organized in 1968 and incorporated in 1977, representing school nurses exclusively. NASN has over 15,000 members and 51 affiliates, including the District of Columbia and overseas. The mission of the NASN is "to advance the specialty practice of school nursing to improve the health and academic success of all students." To learn more about the NASN, please visit us on the Web at www.nasn.org.
