A School Nurse’s View:
Mental Health and Nursing Scope of Practice

Debra Ruppert R.N.
Independence Nontraditional School
P.W.C.S
It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) that registered, *professional school nurses* (hereinafter referred to as school nurses) serve a vital role in promoting positive behavioral health outcomes in students through evidence-based programs and curricula in schools and communities. Behavioral health, which encompasses mental health, is as critical to academic success as physical well-being. As members of interdisciplinary teams, school nurses collaborate with school personnel, community healthcare professionals, students, and families in the assessment, identification, intervention, referral, and follow-up of children in need of behavioral health services. School nurses, because of their regular access to students, are *uniquely qualified* to identify students with potential behavioral health concerns. School nurses can serve as advocates, facilitators, and counselors of behavioral health services within the school environment and in the community.
The Escalating Need

- Increased diagnoses
- Unknown origins
- Substance abuse
Safety and Wellness

Collaboration with building security and local police departments

Staff Development for safety and wellness
Collaboration in the purest sense

- School Counseling, Social workers, school psychologists, Administration and Security specialists and School Resource Officer
- Real-time information sharing
- Collaborative planning
- Need to know information
- Faculty Updates
- 360 degree care
- Continuity of care
Physical safety within our campus

- Team meetings to include:
  - Real time information
  - Inclusion of school SROs within school emergency interventions
  - Practice and 911 Protocols
  - Staff education in regards to students living with mental illness
Information Sharing

CONSENT TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
PRIMARY CARE
PRIMARY LANGUAGE INTERVENTIONS
FEEDBACK
COMMUNITY RESOURCES
Administrative Teaming: Real Time

- Daily debriefing
- Accountability to administration
- Medical memos and Nurse’s notes
- Information for families
- Anecdotal records
Primary language interventions

and

Primary language Health care

- Multilingual paperwork
- Multilingual community resources
- Sufficient appropriate translators for empathetic conversation
- Follow-up for feedback
- Multilingual care providers
Partnering with Community medicine resources

Inviting community resources into the school

Parent information nights

School Nurse’s visiting community care offices and ERs
All information sharing must be student-centered.

Data gathered should be purposeful for maintaining a safe, effective, efficient, and academically supported environment.

Families should be in ongoing communication with school staff and school health and safety plans should be living documents that change according to the needs of the student and with the endorsement of outside care providers.