



## FORMING A COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH TEAM

### WHAT IS A COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH TEAM?

A Coordinated School Health Team (CSHT) is a coalition of individuals from within and outside the school community interested in improving the health of youth. The overall goal of this group should be to collaborate to create a healthy school environment where students are fit, healthy, and ready to learn.

### WHY JOIN A CSHT?

Participation in CSHTs can empower others by increasing their awareness and knowledge of existing school health policies and programs, providing opportunities for ownership and commitment, opening channels of communication, leveraging resources, and involving them in decision making.

Members of the CSHT should act collectively to provide guidance to the district on the school health policies and program. This team should meet regularly and be comprised of individuals representing all eight components of coordinated school health. Members should be willing to make a commitment of at least two years of service on the CSHT.

Experience has shown that when schools involve parents and other partners from the community the responsibility is shared and difficult issues are more successfully addressed.

For a helpful and detailed guide on starting a school health council or team, go to:

<http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/resources/AGuideToCommunitySchoolHealthCouncils.pdf>

### COMPONENTS OF COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH

There are eight components of coordinated school health: Nutrition Services; Health Services; Healthy School Environment; Counseling and Psychological Services; Health Promotion for Staff; Family and Community Involvement; Health Education; and Physical Education.

It is essential that the district Food Service Director be a member of the CSHT, along with representatives of all components of coordinated school health, and administration.

Broad representation is essential for an effective CSHT. Potential partners include:



**POTENTIAL CSHT PARTNERS**

- Food Service Director
- Students
- Nurse
- Counselor, Social Worker
- Health Teacher
- Physical Education Teacher
- Other Teachers
- Coaches
- Administrators
- Custodial Staff
- Transportation Staff
- Secretarial and other Support Staff
- School Board Members
- Regional School Health Coordinator
- Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator
- Parents
- Parent-Teacher Organization
- Health/Public Health Professionals
- Mental Health Professionals
- Health Organizations
- Clergy/Faith-Based
- Businesses
- Local Government
- Social Service
- Law Enforcement
- Higher Education
- MSU Extension
- Community Leaders
- Non-Profit Sector
- After-School Program Leaders

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Adolescent and School Health (CDC-DASH) outlines eight strategies for implementing a coordinated school health approach. These eight strategies include:

- 1. SECURE AND MAINTAIN ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT**—an essential starting point for any effort toward improving the school health environment;
- 2. ESTABLISH A SCHOOL HEALTH COUNCIL OR TEAM**—a collaborative body of school and community representatives guide programming;
- 3. IDENTIFY A SCHOOL HEALTH COORDINATOR**—an identified champion for school health keeps progress moving;
- 4. DEVELOP A PLAN**—use the Healthy School Action Tools (HSAT) to assess your building and develop an action plan, and work with your school improvement team to incorporate health goals and strategies;
- 5. IMPLEMENT MULTIPLE STRATEGIES THROUGH MULTIPLE COMPONENTS**—each component of coordinated school health is necessary to achieve healthy students and staff;
- 6. FOCUS ON STUDENTS**—meeting the education and health needs of students must be the primary focus;
- 7. ADDRESS PRIORITY HEALTH**—enhancing and health-risk behaviors—research has determined which risky behaviors are most essential to address as well as which healthy behaviors will lead to the most successful outcomes for students;
- 8. PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF**—continuing education for school staff is essential in order to ensure skilled and knowledgeable school employees committed to building and maintaining a healthy school environment.

For more information on each of these strategies go to <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/cshp/schools.htm>

