



California School Nurses Organization

Position Statement

MENTAL HEALTH

STATEMENT:

The California School Nurses Organization recognizes that the Credentialed School Nurse provides an essential contribution to the mental health services to students, families and staff within the educational setting.

The California School Nurses Organization supports the role of the Credentialed School Nurse in the identification, intervention, referral and follow-up of students, with mental health needs as part of the credentialed school nurse's professional responsibilities.

The California School Nurses Organization asserts the Credentialed School Nurse has a vital role in educating about mental health and mental illness issues in the school community and in advocating for mental health services.

RATIONALE:

Research is providing a better understanding of brain development in children and are discovering a wide range of mental health issues that may appear later in life. The Credentialed School Nurse provides a holistic perspective and makes an essential contribution to the prevention, early identification and interventions which are necessary for positive outcomes for students. Credentialed School Nurses, as members of the school multi-disciplinary team, have the ability to address crisis situations and other mental health issues.

Credentialed School Nurses work with students, parents, school personnel and medical and mental health providers to assess mental health needs, to initiate appropriate referrals, and to develop and implement a plan to provide support at school or upon the students return to school. These plans could be the health portion of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), an Individualized School Healthcare Plan (ISHP) or Section 504 Plan.

The Credentialed School Nurse is a valuable resource to help the school staff understand a variety of mental health issues and help reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

Reference:

Mental health of students. (2008). National Association of School Nurses Website:
<http://www.nasn.org>

Treatment of Children with Mental Illness. U.S. Department of health and Human Services. NIH Publication No. 09-4702. Revised 2009.

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