

Frequently Asked Questions

[What is a School-Based Health Center?](#)

A school-based health center (SBHC) is a doctor's office located in the school or on school property that provides a full range of health care services so students can avoid health-related absences and get support to succeed in the classroom. SBHCs are sponsored and operated by community-based health organizations, hospitals, and similar organizations; and adhere to state and federal laws, policies, procedures and professional standards for provision of medical and mental health care.

[What are the benefits of SBHCs?](#)

School-based health centers reduce barriers that have historically prevented youth from seeking the health services they need including accessibility, cost, transportation, concerns about confidentiality, and apprehension about discussing personal health problems. Since the SBHC is located on or near school property, students are able to receive health care services and return back to learning in their classrooms.

Additionally, parents do not need to take time off of work in order to transport the sick student to a doctor, or be present at the time of the SBHC visit.

[What are the hours of SBHC ?](#)

The SBHC is open whenever school is in session.

[What is the cost?](#)

There is no copay for any child seen at SBHC. HHC will bill all insurances.

[Who provides care at a SBHC?](#)

Health care is generally provided by a nurse practitioner or physician assistant. A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse who has received advanced training and education to care for the general health of most individuals. A physician assistant has also received advanced training to provide health care to members of the community. Both nurse practitioners and physician assistants can prescribe most medications and are specially trained to address the comprehensive health of their patients.

[What is the difference between SBHC staff and school clinical staff \(nurse, social worker, and psychologist?\)](#)

Both the SBHC and the school clinical staff have distinct roles and one does not replace the other. Each contributes to student health, academic outcomes, lifelong achievement, and overall student well-being. It is important to have clear written policies and procedures regarding role clarification, referral, and sharing of information between the SBHC and the school.

[Do students need to have parental permission to visit the health center? YES!](#)

Parents or legal guardians must sign consent forms for their children to receive care. Under NY State law, all students can seek emergency medical care and examination for physical or sexual abuse without parental consent. Children 12 and older can receive diagnosis and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, family planning, and counseling for mental health and substance abuse without parental consent. Students receiving these services are provided guidance in discussing health concerns with parents whenever appropriate.

Can students make appointments during class time? YES!

SBHCs are focused on helping students stay in school and learn. Every effort is made in SBHCs to schedule appointments so that students do not miss core classes.

Does a student need to be enrolled in the SBHC to use the services? YES!

Only students who are already enrolled in the SBHC can be seen by the HHC SBHC provider. If your child is not yet enrolled in the program, please ask for an enrollment form.

How is a student enrolled in the SBHC?

To enroll in the SBHC, parents or legal guardians must complete and return a Parental Consent Form.

If my child is sick at home, can they be brought to the SBHC to be seen?

We would encourage a child that is sick at home be seen at either their primary care physician or at the main Hometown Health Centers location in Schenectady.

Does a student need to have health insurance to be seen at the SBHC? NO!

SBHCs provide care to students whether or not they have insurance. SBHCs do bill private insurance and Medicaid for the services they provide when appropriate. Staff is available to assist with insurance enrollment upon request.

What if the student already has a doctor?

If a student already has a Primary Care Provider (PCP), then the SBHC staff will supplement the care that he or she provides. If necessary, the SBHC staff will communicate with the PCP to make sure that the student receives the best care possible both in and out of school.

Do SBHCs see members of the community? NO!

According to the NYS Department of Health, only students enrolled in the program are allowed to receive services.

Will the SBHC provide prescription medication on site? NO!

All prescription medications will be sent to the pharmacy identified on the student's SBHC enrollment form.

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