



National Association of School Nurses

## Equipping the School Nurse to Be an Immunization Champion

Nichole Bobo, RN, MSN & Jaime Murphy Dawson, BS  
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School nurses are trusted health care professionals present in 75% of U.S. schools. School nurses are in a key position within their communities to educate students, families, school personnel and the broader school community about the importance of immunizations.

NASN is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support the health and educational success of children and youth by developing and providing leadership to advance school nursing practice by specialized registered nurses.

NASN strives to equip school nurses to be immunization champions in their communities. Through this poster presentation, NASN demonstrates that there are several steps along the path to increased immunization coverage in schools:

- 1. School Nurse Gains Personal Knowledge:** NASN, an accredited provider of continuing nursing education (CNE) by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation, develops online CNE programs for school nurses. The programs are hosted in the NASN Online Continuing Education Learning Center (available at <http://www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=111>). Currently available programs include:
  - a. *Championing School-Located Influenza Immunization (Journal of School Nursing supplement 2/09)*
  - b. *How School Nurses Can Help Prevent Meningococcal Disease through Education and Immunization*
  - c. *Managing a Pertussis Outbreak in the High School Setting*
  - d. *Adolescent Vaccines: What School Nurses Need to Know*
  
- 2. School Nurses Promote Community Awareness:** NASN has developed a variety of educational campaigns containing materials for school nurses, students, families and members of the school community (available at <http://www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=475>). Currently available toolkits include:
  - a. *Give Your Kids a Boost!* (Whooping Cough Prevention Education Program)
  - b. *Don't Get Sidelined by the Flu*
  - c. *Tools for Schools* (Pertussis, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Polio and Influenza)
  - d. *Voices of Meningitis* (Meningococcal Meningitis Prevention)
  - e. *Get S.M.A.R.T About Meningitis*
  
- 3. NASN Supports the School Nurse:** NASN strives to support its membership by providing resources in a convenient and easy to access format. Resources include:
  - a. **NASN Radio:** NASN interviews subject matter experts on a wide array of topics. The interviews are broadcasted as streaming audio through the NASN web site and available on iTunes. In May of 2009, NASN aired a roundtable discussion titled "Talking to Kids about H1N1." To listen to NASN Radio segments visit: <http://www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=597>.
  - b. **Immunization Position Statement:** NASN's position statements are often used to influence policies in schools. The position statement on immunizations describes the history of immunizations in schools and discusses the critical role of the school nurse (available at <http://www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=225>).
  - c. **Seasonal Influenza Web Page:** This page was created to provide school nurses with a comprehensive list of seasonal influenza resources. The web page includes links to NASN's educational materials, resources developed by other organizations and CDC's influenza resources (available at <http://www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=366>).
  - d. **NASN Weekly Digest:** This weekly electronic newsletter is sent to 13,500 NASN members. It includes a standing section on influenza, a link to CDC's *Immunization Works* and highlights timely immunization messages.
  - e. **NASN's Journal of School Nursing:** This scholarly peer-reviewed journal includes immunization articles.

- f. *NASN School Nurse*: This bi-monthly newsletter provides NASN members with practice-related articles including articles on immunizations.
  - g. **Email Blasts**: An email database is used to send important messaging about immunizations at a moment's notice.
- 4. NASN Immunization Networking:** NASN is an active participant with several immunization coalitions and initiatives, providing a conduit of up-to-date information to our members and sharing the importance of school nurses in immunization efforts with these partners. Partner organizations include:
- a. National Foundation of Infectious Diseases (Childhood Influenza Immunization Coalition; *Adolescent Vaccination*; *S.T.O.P. Meningitis!*)
  - b. CDC, National Center for Immunization & Respiratory Diseases (H1N1 School-located Vaccination Workgroup; Pandemic Influenza Working Group on Vulnerable Populations; *Pediatric Healthcare Responses to H1N1 Influenza*; *Pre-Teen Vaccines Campaign*, National Influenza Vaccine Summit)
  - c. Parent Teachers Association
  - d. American School Health Association
  - e. National Association of County & City Health Officials
  - f. Various Advisory Boards
- 5. School Nurse Facilitates Delivery of Immunizations:** The ultimate goal of these steps along the path is to provide school nurses with information, tools and resources to increase immunization coverage and reduce the burden of vaccine-preventable disease. The following is also an important effort to this end:
- a. *Improving Immunization Coverage: Clarifying Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs of School Nurses* (CDC Cooperative Agreement 1U66IP000392). Year 1 goals include:
    - Assessment of school nurse KAB (focus groups & survey)
    - Catalog available resources
    - Plan for development of new resources
    - Convene Stakeholders
    - Develop school-based seasonal influenza campaign
  - b. *School Located Vaccination Clinics – Lessons Learned from Fall 2009* (*Journal of School Nursing* supplement 8/10)

#### **QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?**

Please contact Nichole Bobo at [nbobo@nasn.org](mailto:nbobo@nasn.org) or Jaime Murphy Dawson at [jdawson@nasn.org](mailto:jdawson@nasn.org).  
For more information about NASN, visit [www.nasn.org](http://www.nasn.org).