

## School Nurses: Focusing on Child-Centered Care

The Virginia Lee Lintott Summer Institute for Learning kicked off on Monday, August 10th at Gallaudet University. This year's theme, "School Nurses: Focusing on Child-Centered Care," highlighted pertinent trends and methods for improving the health and well-being of students in school. You may have noticed a change to the name of the annual three-day conference. Thanks to a generous gift from May Liang and Jim Lintott, the 2015 Summer Institute and future training programs will be enhanced this year and for years to come. Jim and his wife, May, created the Virginia Lee Lintott Endowment for Excellence in School Nursing and Community Health last year to honor Jim's mother, Virginia Lee Lintott.

Barbara S. Scott, MSN, NE-BC, RN-BC, Executive Director, Linda Talley, MS, BSN, RN, NE-BC, Vice President, Chief Nursing Officer, and Denice Cora-Bramble, MD, MBA, Chief Medical Officer and Executive Vice President, opened the program by acknowledging the hard work of the nurses and offering their best wishes for next school year. Nurses were reminded that no matter the circumstance, they are supported and appreciated.

Anjali Talwalker, MD, MPH, delivered the keynote address and explained the concept of population health and how it relates to school health. She also elaborated on health disparities in Washington, DC, and changes that need to be made. Dr. Talwalker is the Senior Director of the Community Health Administration at the DC Department of Health and manages programs aimed at improving health outcomes for underserved populations in the area. Shireen Atabaki, MD, MPH, is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Emergency Medicine at the George Washington University School of Medicine & Health Sciences, and was, therefore, the perfect person to discuss concussion care. The American Academy of Pediatrics has reported that emergency department visits for concussions in kids ages 8 to 13 has doubled, and concussions have risen 200 percent among teens ages 14-19 in the last decade. It is now more important than ever for nurses and staff to be able to recognize the signs of a concussion and how to properly perform a concussion evaluation.

Erin Maughan, PhD, was the first speaker of day two and also spoke on population health, sharing the most prevalent school population health issues, population based nursing care and the levels of prevention and intervention. Laura Hansen, MPH, RD, LD, a nutrition education specialist, spoke to the nurses about the city's various strategies for improving nutrition and wellness for District students. Hansen, a member of the Healthy Schools Act Initiatives Team, discussed in detail the importance of school health environments as most students consume at least two of their meals at school and do not have access to healthy foods once school is over. One in three children in Washington, DC, live in a household that struggles with hunger, one of the highest rates in the nation.

The conference concluded with an eight-hour H.A.N.D.S. Training (Helping Administer to the Needs of the Student with Diabetes in School) presented by Karen N. Harriman, FNP-BC, MSN, CDE, and Sarah Butler, RN, MS, CDE, NCSN, from the National Association of School Nurses. Some of the topics reviewed include diabetes management in school, potential school emergencies and developmental, social and emotional issues of students with diabetes. Nurses separated into groups to discuss case scenarios and consider the best options in the interest of the diabetic child. Overall the conference was a phenomenal success; nurses were able to fellowship and learn alongside their colleagues while preparing for the year ahead.



(L-R) Doretha Daniels, RN, BSN, Aminah Muhammad, RN, BSN, Khalilah Williams, RN, BSN



Jacklyn Savory, RN, BSN



Nurses working together to complete the case scenarios at the end of the H.A.N.D.S. training.



Cathy Raisher, RN, BS, NCSN, Nurse Manager, reviewing case scenarios on day three at the Virginia Lee Lintott Summer Institute for Learning.

## Back to School Health Tips: Exercise and Sleep

A minimum of one hour of physical activity a day helps students to:

- Feel better about themselves
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Sleep better at night
- Feel less stressed
- Build sturdy muscles, bones and joints

Parents are encouraged to monitor and limit television, video game and computer time. More time spent in front of the television means less time being active. Students will be more inclined to exercise if they see their parents exercising as well. There are a number of easy ways for kids to stay active including walking, jumping rope, biking, and participating in organized sports activities.

Falling asleep in class is not the only outcome for otherwise healthy teens who do not get enough sleep. A study funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) revealed that poor sleep in teens aged 13 to 16 may result in higher blood pressure. If left untreated, high blood pressure may increase the risk of stroke and heart diseases in adulthood. School aged children and teenagers need a minimum of nine hours of sleep each night. Setting a sleep schedule and going to bed and waking up the same time every day is helpful. Other ways to ensure a good night's sleep include keeping a cool room temperature and removing electronics from the nightstand. The light from a cell phone can interfere with falling asleep.

NIH Medline Plus, a publication of the National Institutes of Health

## Performance Improvement

The Performance Improvement Committee, chaired by Chantel Skipper, PI Coordinator and Tanya Hankton, Nurse Manager for Ward 5, had their inaugural meeting in June and is now in full swing as the 2015-2016 school year approaches. Committee members are learning all about performance improvement processes and tools. Each ward has been challenged to implement a performance improvement project for the upcoming school year and they are now in the process of identifying topics for those projects so you should be hearing more from your PI Committee representative soon. We are very excited to see the results and outcomes of these projects as they improve the health of students in DC Public and Public Charter Schools. I would like to send a special thank you to the members of the committee for their enthusiasm, involvement and leadership as they begin this important work.

Chantel Skipper, MSN, CPNP-AC, CPN, RN-BC  
Performance Improvement Coordinator

## Bring Your Umbrella So It Won't Rain

As kids with asthma come back to school, numerous factors can exacerbate their asthma. Mingling with their classmates involves exposure to respiratory viruses that can trigger reactive airways. Changes in routines result in missed doses of controller medications. A variety of potential stressors—separation from family, realization that they have forgotten their math facts or their homework, concern about peer reactions to their new wardrobe (or lack thereof)—can also act as triggers. Exertion during PE class, recess, or soccer practice might affect some kids, especially those with allergies to grass or ragweed. Meanwhile, parents struggling with schedule changes, morning routines, and expectations of new teachers might not remember that they need to bring in the necessary medication and paperwork.

In the District, most pediatric healthcare providers routinely provide asthma patients with asthma action plans; most insurance plans will pay for a second inhaler so that children can have one inhaler at home and one at school. Still, as you told us in the recent survey, exacerbations still occur at school when there is no current physician's order or no inhaler available. Some of the resulting absences, ambulance rides, and emergency room visits might be prevented through your proactive efforts.

- Do not wait for a crisis. Before it happens, get in place everything you might need to treat an asthma exacerbation.
- Make a list of students in your school who have a diagnosis of asthma. Your nurse manager can help with this.
- Review records of these students to determine if they have an Asthma Action Plan and/or a medication authorization for a rescue inhaler.
- Use mailings and phone calls to remind parents that all students with asthma need to have an Asthma Action Plan and an inhaler available at school so that you will be able to provide appropriate treatment in the event of an exacerbation.
- If parents do not comply, your nurse manager, case manager, and school physician are available to help.
- Remind parents about the importance of using their controller medicines regularly, especially when exposure to triggers can be anticipated.
- Meet with students who self-carry their inhalers to review inhaler technique and remind them to come to the health suite if they are having trouble.
- Share tips about recognition and treatment of early symptoms with school personnel.

Many serious asthma exacerbations can be prevented by appropriate actions before a crisis occurs. Make it a priority to get what you need to provide the best possible treatment for your students with asthma. Free patient education materials are available from the NIH at <http://catalog.nlm.nih.gov/catalog/facet/Diseases-and-Conditions/term/Asthma>.

Janet Gingold, MD, MPH  
School Physician

## Healthy Recipe of the Month—Vegetable Lasagna

### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. zucchini
- 1 lb. squash
- 1/4 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 2 cups tomato pasta sauce
- 16 oz. low-fat cottage cheese
- 2 egg yolks
- 1/3 cup parmesan cheese
- 1/3 cup seasoned bread crumbs
- 2 cups mozzarella, part-skim
- 3 cups spinach
- 1 cup fresh basil
- Nonstick cooking spray

### Directions:

1. Heat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit
2. Coat two small baking pans with nonstick cooking spray
3. Cut all squash and zucchini lengthwise in half. Cut each half lengthwise into slice about 1/4 inch thick
4. Spread squash and zucchini on pans in single layer and season with Italian seasoning.
5. Bake for 25 minutes, turning over once halfway through baking
6. Remove from oven and set aside. Reduce oven to 375 degrees
7. In a large skillet, heat pasta sauce over medium high heat. Mix in spinach.
8. In a food processor, combine cottage cheese, basil, egg yolks and 2 tbs. of parmesan cheese. Blend until smooth
9. Sprinkle 2 tbs. of bread crumbs over the bottom of a 13x9 inch baking pan. Cover the bottom of the dish with half of the zucchini and squash slices. Spread cottage cheese mixture over the squash and zucchini slices. Sprinkle with 3 tbs. of bread crumbs. Top with remaining zucchini slices. Sprinkle with the remaining 3 tbs. of bread crumbs. Pour pasta sauce evenly over the top. Sprinkle mozzarella over the top. Add the rest of the parmesan cheese
10. Bake for approximately 35 minutes. Let stand for 10 to 15 minutes.

## Foods That Double As Medicine

Rather than prescribing pills and tablets, more and more physicians are recommending certain foods for weight management and treatment of chronic diseases. CNN interviewed medical nutrition experts to uncover the specific foods they recommend. Here are 5 you may want to fill your kitchen with before heading to the drug store:

**Buckwheat honey for a cough.** Buckwheat honey comes from the bee nectar of flowers of the buckwheat grain. It is much better than cough syrup for nocturnal cough in children and is also useful for those under age 6 but older than 1, who are not advised to take over the counter cough medicines.

**Pickled foods for diarrhea.** Fermented foods such as yogurt, pickled vegetables, miso and kefir contain living bacteria that help sustain the health of the digestive tract. These bacteria filled foods may also be used to avert and treat antibiotic-associated diarrhea, irritable bowel syndrome, infantile diarrhea, eczema and allergies.

**Ginger for menstrual cramps.** Gerard Mulin, associate professor at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and author of "The Gut Balance Revolution," suggests that ginger works just as well as ibuprofen for menstrual cramps when taken as a ginger capsule or chewed. "As a digestive disease specialist, I frequently recommend ginger in the form of tea for nausea and abdominal discomfort.

**Peppermint for Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).** Peppermint is more than just breath mints and candy canes. It is also found in supplement, essential oil and tea forms. When used medicinally, it is effective in soothing abdominal cramping and bloating associated with IBS.

**Beans for high blood sugar levels.** Beans are helpful in lowering blood sugar levels and managing high cholesterol. Because of their high fiber content, beans can help induce that "full" feeling to help with weight loss. I have certainly seen improvements in blood sugar with encouraging more fiber-rich foods like beans that are also rich in magnesium, but it is harder to isolate that effect alone.

Ben Smart, Special to CNN

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/23/health/foods-that-double-as-medicine/>

## Upcoming Health Events in the DC Area

Youth Mental Health First Aid Training in Washington: Wednesday, September 9th. Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge. Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders. The training is from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Participants will receive 8 Personal Learning Units.

2nd Annual "Make Your Health Happen" Health and Wellness Festival: Friday, September 11th. (4pm to 8pm) This event will give community members the opportunity to connect to the best health and wellness providers in our referral network. Each festival attendee will be given the opportunity to "Make Their Health Happen" by personally vetting each of the many talented partners and in doing so, they will be taking a proactive role in assembling the best Health and Wellness Team to fit their lifestyles and interests. Its free! Event website: <http://sparkphysio.com/home/make-your-health-happen-health-and-fitness-festival/>

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