

Friday Beat

September 6, 2024, Edition

The newsletter that takes a [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child](#) approach: The *Friday Beat* is a free publication of the Texas Department of State Health Services. It is edited and compiled by the [School Health Program](#).

Announcements

National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

Did you know that September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month? The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) recently shared [information discussing 6 ways families can prevent child obesity at home](#). Tips include ways to model a healthy eating pattern, be more active as a family, set consistent sleep routines, and how to replace screen time with family time.

Survey: Current Practices for Over-the-Counter Medication in Schools

[Texas School Nurses Organization \(TSNO\)](#) is working closely with the [Texas Board of Nurses \(BON\)](#) and others to understand the current practices related to over-the-counter medication administration in schools. Your help is needed! Please take a few minutes to [complete the survey](#) and share basic information about your school, describe how you give medicine, and explain any challenges and ideas for getting standing orders. This survey will also allow you to provide input on which common symptoms you see that could be helped by a standing order. The survey is open until Tuesday, September 10. All responses will remain anonymous; please feel free share this link with other school nurses.

School Health Index Functional Updates

On July 17, 2024, the [CDC](#) released a set of [functional updates](#) to the online version of the [School Health Index \(SHI\)](#). This update provides SHI with a new look, fixes for reported bugs, and increased user functionality.

Back-to-School Toolkit: Support Schools, Empower Students

The [CDC](#) provided flyers with [tips for parents](#) and [tips for teens](#) to start the school year off strong. Establishing routines, building connections, ensuring healthy sleep and exercise habits, and managing stress are just some of the way parents, families, and kids can prepare for a healthy school year ahead. To support this transition, check out the [Back-to-School Toolkit](#)—with resources and social media tips to help promote student health and well-being. Don't miss the flyers on helping prepare for [an emotionally healthy school year!](#)

Professional Development

Every Day Counts: Community Conversations on School Attendance Webinars

[National Training & Technical Assistance Center for Child, Youth, and Family Mental Health \(NTTAC\)](#) will host [two webinars](#) on September 9 and September 16 from 12:00 – 1:00 pm. Experts from different communities and child-serving agencies will discuss ways to address chronic absenteeism and promote regular school attendance. They will also share strategies to help improve attendance and engagement among youth. [Register here.](#)

Helping New School Nurses Achieve Success

The [National Association of School Nurses \(NASN\)](#) published [Keys to Success in School Nursing: Community, Collegiality, and Continuous Learning](#). The article offers valuable insights into the multifaceted role of school nursing, highlighting the essential elements of success and what new school nurses need.

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America Special Offer: Asthma Management Education Online (AME-O) Available for Free in September

The [Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America \(AAFA\)](#) is offering their [Asthma Management Education Online \(AME-O\) training](#) for free during September. Respiratory Therapists and Nurses can earn 8.75 contact hours while learning information on assessment and monitoring, control of environmental factors, medicine management and patient education. Learn more and access the training on the [AAFA webpage](#).

Health Education

Texas Say What! Advocate! Training Module

[Students, Adults, and Youth Working Hard Against Tobacco \(Texas Say What!\)](#) launched its new [Don't Wait! Advocate! training module, which](#) equips youth and adults alike with essential advocacy skills, guiding them to harness their voice to support causes that matter. This training is geared towards tobacco and nicotine free generation. There are a variety of self-paced activities to explore strengths, start community engagement, and prepare to create meaningful change.

Talking with Teens About Underage Drinking

[Children's Mental Health Network](#) and [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) developed [After High School: Talking with Your Young Adult About Underage Drinking](#). This resource is for parents, teachers, and school professionals to talk with teens about the consequences of underage drinking as they are moving into young adulthood. Ways to start the conversation, important topics of discussion, and the importance of having trusted adults to talk to about underage drinking are included in the resource.

Nutrition Environment and Services

Q&A Panel Discussion - Strategies to Increase Attendance: School Meals and Food Security

[Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) is hosting an online [Q&A panel discussion](#) on how supporting students and families experiencing food insecurity can impact chronic absenteeism. Participants will explore how schools and districts can support nutrition security through school-based programs and additional food supports. Hear from students, community partners, and leaders from the United States Department of

Agriculture (USDA) on how schools can be vital centers for food resources. The webinar will be on September 18, 2024 at 12:00 pm CT. [Register on the Healthier Generation webpage.](#)

Reducing Added Sugars at School Breakfast: Training Guide

A new [training guide](#) for school nutrition professionals from the [USDA Food and Nutrition Service](#) identifies sources of added sugars and ways to reduce them in school breakfast. Please make sure to share this guide with school staff! *This resource meets the added sugars limits included in the Final Rule - [Child Nutrition Programs Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#).*

Health Services

2023 Texas School Nurse Workforce Survey Results

DSHS published the [2023 Texas School Nurse Workforce factsheet](#) from a survey conducted by the [Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies](#). For more information and other reports, visit the [Nursing Workforce Reports](#) webpage.

Community Involvement

2025 Texas Environmental Excellence Awards Application is Open

The [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](#) is accepting applications for the 2025 [Texas Environmental Excellence Awards](#). These awards celebrate accomplishments in environmental preservation and protection. Citizens, communities, and organizations can apply to receive the state's highest environmental honor. There are ten award categories, including Education, Youth, and Civic/Community. Applications are due Friday, September 13, 2024.

Quote to Note

"Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's the future, but today is a gift. That's why it's called the present." –Bil Keane

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