



The Texas

# School Health Bulletin

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Department of State Health Services (DSHS) - Child Health and Safety Group

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[www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth)

## Chemical Incidents in Schools: Are You Prepared for “Unplanned Experiments”?

Julie Borders, M.S., Epidemiologist

Keller A. Thormahlen, M.S., Senior Toxicologist  
Texas Hazardous Substances Emergency Events Surveillance System (HSEES) Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

It was first period on a Friday morning when a student intentionally tossed a jar containing hydrochloric acid and other chemicals onto the entryway floor of the science classroom. Irritating acid vapors were released and school and officials ordered the evacuation of over 100 and staff.

A high school science teacher found his students with drops of quicksilver (mercury metal), which had a cracked lab barometer, one ordinary Wednesday. The teacher notified the school nurse; the science lab adjacent classroom were promptly evacuated for about

At 8:30 a.m. on a Thursday morning, a school employee poured liquid chemicals into the school pool and failed to turn on the circulation pumps that chemicals. Chlorine gas was released into the pool injuring five people and triggering the pool closing the day.

A heated water pipe for the air conditioning and system in an elementary school suddenly burst just started on a Thursday morning. 1,600 gallons of glycol-based fluid soaked into the carpet of several and half of a hallway in minutes. The children and evacuated to another part of the school for two to the impacted area was restricted for weeks to further exposure and to repair the damage.

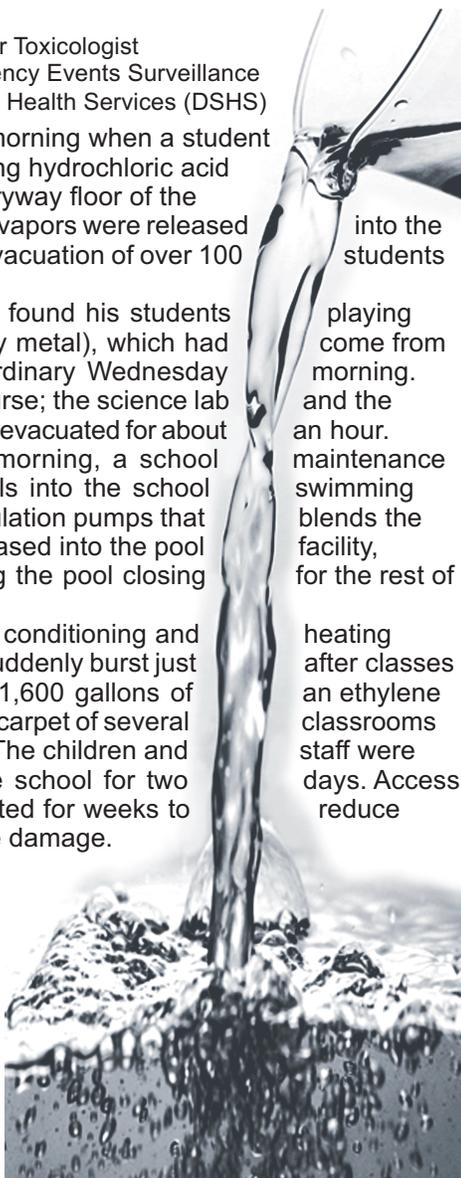
### Unexpected Chemical Accidents are Inconvenient and Costly

Unexpected chemical releases, whether in schools or elsewhere, rarely occur on a convenient day or time. From 1993 through 2004, the Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas Hazardous Substances Emergency Events Surveillance System (Texas HSEES) has documented thousands of hazardous chemical incidents that have affected the environments in and around industries, offices, roadways, homes, and schools. The consequences for these releases in schools can be great and may carry over to the home environment. Twenty-two documented school events, seven of which included mercury, have resulted in at least:

- twenty-seven people (15 children and 12 adults) being injured;
- more than 1,785 school occupants being evacuated; and
- over 137 hours of lost class time.

Additional monetary costs and time lost in careful cleanup of these unexpected chemical events cannot be properly accounted as these types of incidents in schools are probably under-reported. Failure to report may be due, in part, to the small quantities of chemicals involved (for example the small amount of mercury in a thermometer).

See **Chemical Incidents** on page 7



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## SCHOOL NURSE DAY May 10, 2006

The Wednesday within National Nurse Week has been established as National School Nurse Day. (*National Nurse Week is always May 6th through May 12th*).

School Nurse Day was first set aside to recognize school nurses in 1972.

This national day of recognition was established to foster better understanding of the role of school nurses in the educational setting.

See **School Nurse Day** on page 6

## Bangs ISD Awarded DSHS School Based Health Center Grant

The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is happy to announce that **Bangs ISD** was awarded a \$125,000.00 DSHS, School Health Program grant to open a school based health center.

Under the guidance of Debbie Quick, R.N., Bangs ISD's twenty-three year veteran School Nurse, this health center will serve the primary, dental and mental health needs of the students in the three Bangs ISD schools. In this first year of a three year funding opportunity, Bangs ISD will be focusing on setting up a clinic on the high school campus in a stand alone facility. The center will include one or two physical exam rooms, a dental exam room, a waiting room, and a business office. ★

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## Letter From the Editor

By Anita Wheeler, R.N., B.S.N., C.P.N., School Nurse Consultant, Manager, School Health Program, Child Health and Safety Group

### Texas Pandemic Flu Plan

Another school year is almost complete and it seems like yesterday that school started. The school year began with much flurry related to hurricane Katrina and Rita, and the implementation of the Diabetes Care bill (HB984). Schools faced the challenges by developing plans, implementing them and making adjustments along the way.

With the news of a possible "pandemic flu", schools once again face the challenge of developing plans and thinking about the "what ifs?" In addressing the public health issue, DSHS conducted the Texas Pandemic Influenza Summit and has updated the state plan for utilization by local health departments and communities. For valuable information on how to assist local communities in developing their plans and to view the state plan, go to: [www.dshs.state.tx.us](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us).

As stated in the briefing document on the website, Texas began developing its current Pandemic Flu Plan in 2002. Major revisions to the plan, which complements the World Health Organization's plan and the U.S. plan, will incorporate stakeholder input.

#### The Texas plan includes:

- Guidance to local health departments for working with community leaders;
- Considerations surrounding allocation and distribution of vaccines and anti-virals;
- Updated designs for mass vaccination clinics based on real-time, full scale exercises;
- Development of information toolkits for health care providers and the public.

Schools might be involved in the community plan in a number of ways, including serving as vaccine clinic sites. Working with both community leaders, local and state health officials, and other resources, schools can once again have a great impact on delivery and implementation of public health initiatives. Contact your local or regional health department for more information about local plans and to find out what is currently being planned in your community. To find out which Regional Health Department serves your community, go to: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/regions/default.shtm#lhd](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/regions/default.shtm#lhd). With summer around the corner, reviewing resources and preparing for such an event could help get schools ready to respond. ★

#### "Do you have The Beat?"

Each week, the DSHS, School Health Program compiles a comprehensive e-newsletter to update stakeholders interested in receiving the latest information on school health education and services. The *Friday Beat* combines national and state notices and postings, timely alerts, up-coming conferences, available grants, new websites and e-newsletters; and, articles on new initiatives and resources covering nutrition, physical activity, research, statistics, parent and community, safety, tobacco, congressional and state news and much more. Information is selected to appeal to school staff and administrators, nurses, coalitions, parents and other interested stakeholders. It's an ideal way to keep up with emerging issues and information not addressed by the *School Health Bulletin*. If you would like to be added to the *Friday Beat* data base, contact the School Health Program at (512) 458-7111, Ext. 7279; or [www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/program.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/program.shtm). ★

## Introducing...

#### Gay Dunn, M.Ed.

Gay joined Region VII Education Service Center on January 2, 2006, as the Title IV and School Health Specialist; serving 105 school districts in 17 counties. Gay holds a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville and a Master's Degree in Education from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches.

She was the founder and principal of the Presbyterian Children's Center in Longview, Texas for fifteen years. Most recently Gay has been writing and monitoring grants for juvenile justice and homeland security at the county level. She has worked with the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Red Cross, the State and Local Community Resource Coordination Group, the State Children's Mental Health Network and many school districts, parent and teacher organizations. Gay is delighted to be working with the school districts on children's health and safety issues. Please join us in welcoming Gay to the School Health Network.

#### Mary Chapman McIntosh, M.Ed.

Mary joined the School Health Program staff at DSHS on January 20, 2006 as the Program Specialist for School Based Health Centers. Mary has significant experience in mental health, education and public health. She has worked as both a counselor and an educator with adolescents and adults in Arizona, California and Texas.

Mary has been with DSHS for more than 10 years; working with family planning, child health and maternal and child health programs. She has experience with projects related to the prevention of teen pregnancy, child abuse, suicide and violence. In that capacity, Mary offered training and technical assistance, developed policy and assisted with research. As a strong proponent of youth development, Mary believes that connections among school, community and family are protective factors that can be fostered by school based health services. Mary's background and strong belief in the benefits of the school based health center program make her a welcome addition to the School Health Program for the DSHS.

#### Mike Hill, M.F.A.

It is our pleasure to welcome Mike Hill to the DSHS, School Health Program of the Child Health and Safety Group as the Texas School Health Network Project Coordinator. Mike has over 30 years experience in school health and cancer control through the American Cancer Society from which he recently retired. Not wishing to relinquish his involvement in school health, he has joined our team as Project Coordinator for the Texas School Health Network.

Mike Hill is a recognized leader for school health both nationally and within Texas. He has received numerous awards and recognition, and has held many important offices. Recently he served as the Chair of the Texas Action For Healthy Kids Alliance and continues to serve on their steering committee. He has been the President of the Texas School Health Association and is currently on the Board of Directors. He was involved in the original design and establishment of the Texas School Health Network almost 20 years ago.

Mike Hill brings years of comprehensive experience in development and implementation of school health programs, grassroots advocacy, legislation and policy development. He understands the importance of linking communities and schools as partners in supporting the health of all students. ★

# 2005 Awards for Excellence in Texas School Health Winners Honored at Texas School Health Conference

## AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEXAS SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM

recognizes and promotes effective school health programs and initiatives that strive to continually improve the lifelong health of students, staff and the greater school community. Awards for Excellence Program offers two different awards, each funded by a different sponsor:

### TEXAS HEALTH FOUNDATION



This multi-level awards program supports effective school, multi-campus or district-wide programs, initiatives or activities designed to address the health needs of school students, staff and/or the community.

On January 27, 2006 the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), the Texas Health Foundation and the Pediatric Society Foundation honored seven Texas school districts for excellence in school health programming. Cash awards totaling \$10,000; media recognition; and registration, travel and lodging to the Texas School Health Association (TSHA) Conference were just part of the prize. Winners were also honored with a special award ceremony attended by family, colleagues and other special guests to receive their district's award recognition plaque.

The ceremony took place during the Awards Banquet at the annual TSHA Conference at the Airport Hilton Hotel in Austin. Guest speakers included Dr. Eduardo J. Sanchez, Commissioner of Health, DSHS; Dr. Shirley Neeley, Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency (TEA); Dr. Charlotte Scott, Board Member, Texas Health Foundation and Dr. Cliff Price, Board Member, Texas Pediatric Society Foundation. The Awards for Excellence program is managed by the DSHS, School Health Program, and sponsored by the Texas Health Foundation. The Texas Pediatric Society Foundation provides additional award support.

More than two hundred TSHA members and other conference participants from throughout the state attended the banquet. The TSHA conference offered presentations from state and national leaders who presented current topics related to school health education and services, trends for professional development, and legislative updates. Participants attended workshops on school health programs offered in schools, learned about new resources, and networked with others from around the state interested in increasing the impact of health promotion in Texas schools.



Dr. Shirley Neeley, Education Commissioner, TEA;  
Dr. Eduardo Sanchez, Health Commissioner, DSHS; and award winner  
Sharon Earls, R.N. from Plemons-Stinnet-Phillips CISD.

### TEXAS PEDIATRIC SOCIETY FOUNDATION

Awards are given for a school, multi-campus, or district-wide program, initiative or activity demonstrating success in reducing obesity by promoting nutrition and physical activity among adolescents.



Award-winning programs and their coordinators honored during the TSHA Conference Banquet.

- Little Cypress Mauriceville C.I.S.D., Susan Bayliss, R.N., MSN – **Hit a Home Run for Health**
- Cedar Ridge Charter School, Tammye Shipp, R.N. – **Eagle Wellness Center**
- Hawkins I.S.D., Tina Duke – **Laying the Foundation**
- Jacksonville I.S.D., Jamie Maddox, R.N. – **Family Walk Night**
- Hallsburg I.S.D., JoLeen Eiklenborg – **CATCH The Progress**
- Midland I.S.D., Brenda Ratliff – **Junior High Health**
- Plemons-Stinnet-Phillips C.I.S.D., Sharon Earls, R.N. – **Employee Wellness**

To read about each of the winning programs and find out how to contact the program coordinators, visit the Awards for Excellence website at: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/awards.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/awards.shtm).

Any school or district (public, private or charter) in Texas with a health program or initiative currently and actively in place is encouraged to apply for an Award for Excellence. At this time in our award program cycle, the deadline for submitting 2006 Awards for Excellence application has passed and the selection process is now underway. Judges have been instructed to select up to eight deserving programs for cash awards totaling \$9,900 funded by the Texas Health Foundation; and, three cash awards at \$1,000 each, funded by the Texas Pediatric Society Foundation. Winners will be notified later this month. Presentation of the 2006 awards will be held in Austin at the TSHA Conference on January 26, 2007 ★

Applications for the 2007 Awards for Excellence program will be available in February 2007. Watch for the notice in the winter issue of the School Health Bulletin or check our website [www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/default.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/default.shtm) for the most up to date information. For details on the Awards for Excellence program, applications and abstracts from past winners, go to [www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/awards.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/awards.shtm). For any questions call the DSHS School Health Program at (512) 458-7279, or email [schoohealth@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:schoohealth@dshs.state.tx.us).

# School Health Announcements

## Effective Workplace Spanish for School Healthcare Providers

June 19 - 20, 2006, ESC 12, Waco.

Designed for all school health care providers, participants will learn to more effectively communicate with Spanish-speaking students and their parents. The class is an inexpensive, fun and quick way to learn Spanish and it's grammar-free. It will not make you bilingual. But, you will be able to:

- Greet students, parents and introduce yourself
- Use basic phrases to clarify and converse
- Obtain patient information and vital signs
- Calm and reassure patient;
- Notify patient's family of health issues and more.

A manual with audio CD is included. Contact Marilyn Booth, Health and Wellness Specialist, ESC Region 12, (254) 297-1135; or, [mbooth@esc12.net](mailto:mbooth@esc12.net) for additional details.

## Flu Shots for Children to Age Five

On Feb. 23, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that influenza vaccination be routine and all children up to five years of age and for anyone who cares for children of that age, either at home or out of home. Read more at [www.healthinschools.org](http://www.healthinschools.org).

## 2006 National Health Promotion Conference,

September 12-14, 2006, Hilton Atlanta-Atlanta, Georgia. The 2006 National Health Promotion Conference is presented by CDC's Coordinating Center for Health Promotion and its constituent groups. The conference; "Innovations in Health Promotion: New Avenues for Collaboration", will provide an unprecedented opportunity to create new partnerships and strengthen

existing ones to move forward a national health promotion and wellness agenda.

## Teaming Up with TEKS and TAKS through Physical Education K-12

June 28, 2006, Harris Education Center-Hillsboro Center, Hillsboro, TX Sponsored by ESC Region 12. Participants will experience activities that introduce problem solving and cooperation among the team members. The process will take elements of the TEKS and integrate various TAKS objectives. Each participant will receive handouts that include all of the activities. Teachers will leave with activities they can use immediately with their classes in the fall. For additional details contact Marilyn Booth, Health and Wellness Specialist, ESC Region 12, (254) 297-1135; or, [mbooth@esc12.net](mailto:mbooth@esc12.net). ★

## Resources

### Growing Healthy Youth, Parents and Communities Newsletter

The National Center for Health Education (NCHE) publishes Growing Healthy® Youth, Parents and Communities (YPC), a free quarterly newsletter that covers activities for students, current health research, health resources, funding opportunities, upcoming events. The March/April 2006 Issue features back-to-school information, activities and resources. The newsletter can be viewed at: <http://nche.org/March-April2006.pdf>. If you would like to receive the YPC newsletter and other updates from NCHE, please email a request to Karen Heppeler, Growing Healthy Program Associate, at [karen@nche.org](mailto:karen@nche.org).

### Building Partnerships for Youth

The National 4-H Council recently released a Community Collaboration customizable PowerPoint Tool focused on the health, education and well-being of young people. The tool, which provides examples of how communities, family, and schools can be strengthened through non-school-hour youth development programs, consists of a PowerPoint presentation and instruction manual that can be adapted to apply to your state or community. Learn more by visiting Building Partnerships for Youth at: <http://bpy.n4h.org>.

### Focus on Families

"How to Build and Support Family-Centered Practices in After School" is a resource for after school providers for the

creation and/or expansion of an existing family engagement program. The guide provides a research base for why family engagement matters, program strategies for engaging families, case studies of promising family engagement efforts, and an evaluation tool. Go to: [www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/families](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/families) to download this free tool.

### EPA HealthySEAT® Software

The Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool is now available to download at [www.epa.gov/schools/healthyseat](http://www.epa.gov/schools/healthyseat). HealthySEAT combines all EPA's regulatory and voluntary programs for schools that public, private, and tribal school systems can use to access, implement, and manage comprehensive school facility assessment programs. The software also allows schools to track the status of facility conditions across all of their schools. HealthySEAT is free and can be customized to fit your state and school systems. Resources are available at the Department of State Health Services Indoor Air Quality and Mold website at [www.tdh.state.tx.us/beh/iaq/default/htm](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/beh/iaq/default/htm).

### Confidentiality Issues: How To Develop School District Policies and Procedures

The American School Health Association (ASHA) has developed this helpful tool to assist all school officials with practical guidance in developing and implementing policies and administrative procedures that will enable them to confidently

protect, use and handle sensitive information. Requirements of the HIPAA laws and other federal regulations and policies are addressed. To order, contact the ASHA National Office at (800) 445-2742 or visit the ASHA online bookstore at: [www.ashaweb.org](http://www.ashaweb.org).

### Safe Routes to School

U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration developed the Safe Routes to School Program that integrates health, fitness, traffic relief, environmental awareness, and safety into one program. A comprehensive toolkit that encourages partnerships with schools, communities, and local government can be customized to the needs of your community. The program is available to download online at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/Safe-Routes-2002](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/Safe-Routes-2002).

"Healthy America: Wellness Where We Live, Work and Learn" the National Governors Association (NGA) recently sponsored a wellness forum for governors. Participants shared ideas and learned strategies to overcome challenges associated with promoting wellness in communities, worksites, and schools. The governors received a supporting toolkit to help create healthier states. The tool kit includes items such as a series of issue briefs focused on building healthy communities, worksites, and schools. The toolkit materials are available to you at no charge and can be downloaded at: [www.nga.org/portal/](http://www.nga.org/portal/). ★



## Schooled in Asthma Web Site

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) has developed, implemented, and evaluated a training program that encourages pediatricians to incorporate evidence-based asthma management guidelines with school health concepts and practices. Find tools/resources at: [www.aap.org/schooledinasthma](http://www.aap.org/schooledinasthma).

## USDA Releases Spanish-Language Food Pyramid

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a Spanish translation of the food pyramid. "MiPiramide: Pasos Hacia Una Mejor Salud" is the counterpart to the USDA's "MyPyramid: Steps to a Healthier You." Among other things, "grains" have become "granos," and "meat and beans" are "carnes y frijoles" on the diagram of the major food groups. Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/7qvol>.

## Scenarios USA

Scenarios USA is a nonprofit organization whose films deal with modern day sensitive issues facing teens daily. These award-winning films, written and acted by teens, cover topics such as peer pressure, body image, pregnancy scares, self-esteem,

friendship and commitment. Films come with discussion guides. Scenarios films, produced by professional filmmakers, are viewed nationally in schools, the internet, film festivals and cable stations. For more, go to: [www.scenariosusa.org](http://www.scenariosusa.org).

## America On The Move!

America On the Move (AOM) is a national initiative dedicated to helping individuals and communities across our nation make positive changes to improve health and quality of life. By focusing on individuals and communities, AOM strives to support healthy eating and active living habits in our society. Find out more at: [www.americaonthemove.org](http://www.americaonthemove.org).

## The Council for Corporate and School Partnerships

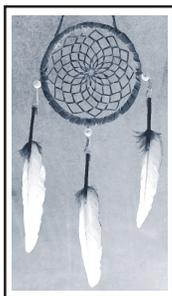
The Council for Corporate and School Partnerships serves as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas to ensure that partnerships between businesses and schools achieve their full potential for meeting key educational objectives. The Council works to identify, create, recognize and support exemplary school/business partnerships that improve the student experience for all children in the K-12 system of education in the United States. To find out how your school can benefit go to: [www.Corpschoolpartners.org](http://www.Corpschoolpartners.org).

## Emergency Planning Web Site

To prepare and develop plans for responding to potential emergency situations, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools has unveiled this new web resource to help. It is designed to be a one-stop shop that provides school leaders with information they need to plan for any emergency, including natural disasters, violent incidents and terrorist acts. The site will be regularly updated. For more information about what families, schools and communities can do to be ready for an emergency, please visit <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/index.html>.

## Funding Information Center

The Funding Information Center (FIC) helps organizations in Texas pursue funding opportunities by disseminating funding sources and information. The Center serves as a statewide clearinghouse for HIV/AIDS-related programs support. The FIC has secured approximately \$180.7 million in public and private funding for Texas organizations since 1990 as a result of an expansion in scope and service. Public health and social service issues and interests are now available. Contact them at: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/tic](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/tic). ★



## IDEA CATCHER CORNER

Information & Updates from your Education Service Center School Health Specialists

By Mike Hill, Texas School Health Network Project Coordinator, School Health Program, Child Health & Safety Group, DSHS

## Your School Health Support Network

In a time when support services seem to be in short supply, we are

fortunate in Texas to have a network of 20 Regional School Health Specialists (SHS) as an excellent resource on school health programs and services. Funded by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Texas Cancer Council, each SHS is housed at a Region Education Service Center within the area that they serve. Their role is to provide health information, training and resources to school districts; and, act as catalyst for collaboration between schools, families and the community in support of coordinated school health. Students will be healthier and perform better academically as a result of this unified effort.

By providing schools the community connections to implement health education programs; your SHS can guide and support school systems in the improvement of coordinated school health programming and services. SHS's also provide in-depth information and trainings for school district School Health Advisory Councils.

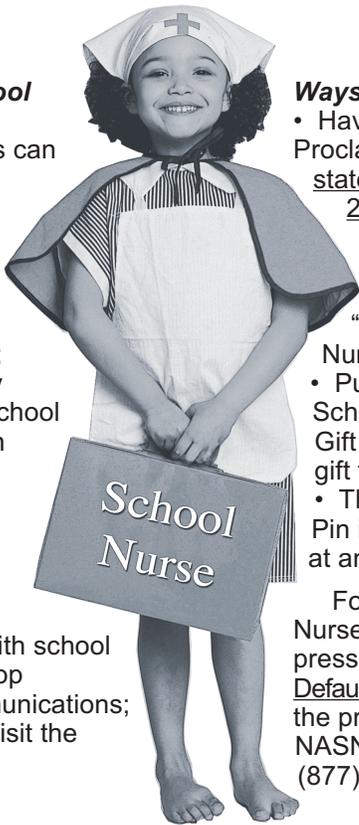
By working together, students will have access to services, skills, and knowledge needed to lower risks of premature death. This will help them perform better academically and improve their chances for a healthy and successful life.

Contact your Region Education Service Center to reach your SHS; or, go to the DSHS School Health Program website at [www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/netlist.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/netlist.shtm). Your SHS has the resources and expertise to support school nurses, teachers, school administrators, food service providers, parents and even community leaders; and, they are waiting for your call. ★



**Celebrate School Nurse Day . . .**

- School nurses can be proactive in planning the celebration and promoting activities associated with this special day;
- School faculty members and school children can join with the school nurse for the celebration;
- Community resource agencies can communicate with school nurses to develop improved communications;
- Parents can visit the school nurse.



**Ways to promote School Nurse Day.**

- Have your state issue a Proclamation. Go to [www.governor.state.nd.us/proc/docs/2004/05/20040512.pdf](http://www.governor.state.nd.us/proc/docs/2004/05/20040512.pdf) to view North Dakota's 2004 Proclamation by their Governor.
- Order and distribute the "Celebrating National School Nurse Day," brochure.
- Purchase National Association of School Nurses (NASN) Book Store Gift Certificates. They make a great gift for your school nurse.
- The 100 Years of School Nursing Pin is available to order and distribute at an honor ceremony or other event.

For more information about School Nurse Day and to view last year's press release, go to [www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=70](http://www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=70). To order any of the promotion items above, contact NASN at [nasn@nasn.org](mailto:nasn@nasn.org) or call (877) 627-6476. ★

**TEA TRACKS - Information and Updates from the Texas Education Agency**



By Marissa Rathbone, Director of Health & Physical Education, TEA

On February 9th, the Committee of Instruction (5 of the 15 State Board Of Education [SBOE] members) met to look at their options for adopting a rule that could require physical activity at the middle or junior high school level. During their meeting, twelve people gave testimony on the issue. There was a strong message of support toward adopting rule for physical activity from most of the speakers who comprised of PE Coordinators, teachers, parents, and representatives from Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (TAHPERD) and Texas Action for Healthy Kids Association (TAHKA).

The Committee of Instruction members decided to bring the issue back to the April 27th SBOE meeting to the Committee of the Whole and asked that language be drafted through the Division of Curriculum at TEA to show both prescriptive and flexible rules. No changes have been made to the law

regarding middle or junior high school physical activity requirements at this time.

In other news, I have set up a new Listserv for **Health and Physical Education**. To subscribe please take the following steps:

- Go to [www.tea.state.tx.us/list](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/list)
- Click on "Select a List" for a pop-up menu of listserv names
- Scroll down and select "Health and Physical Education," and click on "Join the List"
- Enter your name and e-mail address
- A confirmation e-mail will be sent to the e-mail address you listed
- Respond to the confirmation e-mail with "OK"

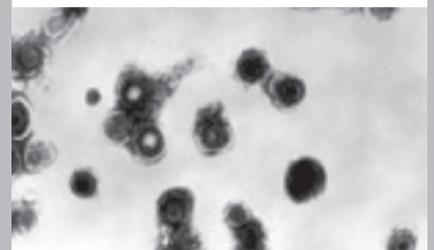
If you have any questions for me or information you would like to see from TEA in future issues of the Bulletin, please feel free to contact me directly at (512) 463-9581 or by email at [Marissa.Rathbone@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:Marissa.Rathbone@tea.state.tx.us). ★

**Breakthrough Varicella Infections**

Breakthrough Varicella infections are defined as those that occur more than 42 days after vaccination. The current estimate for breakthrough Varicella cases in Texas is 25% of those vaccinated; much higher than national reports by the CDC. Several breakthrough Varicella cases were seen at a school in Public Health Region 9 in the Fall (2005). As evident in Region 9, administration of the Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine is no guarantee that the recipient will not experience a Varicella infection. Vaccinated individuals may indeed contract Varicella as Varicella is very contagious for 1 or 2 days before the rash develops. However, these infections may be mild and not recognized by the health care provider, resulting in a failure to take appropriate precautions to prevent spread of the disease.

The Varicella vaccine is 95% effective in preventing moderate or severe disease, but it is only 70% to 85% effective in preventing mild disease. Children with breakthrough Varicella infections should be excluded from schools and day care centers until guidelines recommend re-admittance. In Texas, all cases of Varicella (including breakthrough infections) should be reported to your DSHS Regional Health Department. To find out what region you belong to, go to: [www.dshs.tx.us/regions/default.shtm#/hd](http://www.dshs.tx.us/regions/default.shtm#/hd).

For more information on Breakthrough Varicella, contact Troy W. Bradshaw, RN, MS, Epidemiology Response Team, DSHS, Region 9/10 at (432) 571-4115 or by email at [Troy.Bradshaw@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:Troy.Bradshaw@dshs.state.tx.us)★



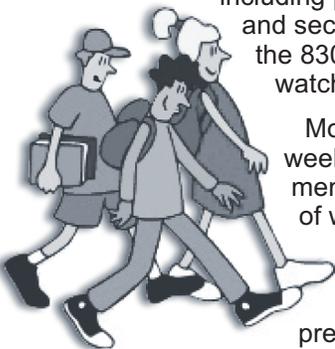
TEA Tracks is a regular feature of the Texas School Health Bulletin. Comments or suggestions can be directed to [www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth) or call (512) 458-7111, Ext. 7279. Please refer to this article by name when communicating.

# EXTENSION EXCHANGE

Information and Updates from the Texas Cooperative Extension  
By Courtney Schoessow, MPH, Program Specialist, TCE

## Let's Walk Across Texas!

Texas Cooperative Extension (TCE) created the free *Walk Across Texas* program in 1996 to help Texans establish the habit of regular physical activity. Individuals, teams of eight, including public and private elementary and secondary school classes, can walk the 830 miles across the state and watch their progress on a Texas map.



Most participants start the eight-week program by walking as a member of a team from work, place of worship, or elsewhere. Team members do not have to walk together, and they can walk whenever and wherever they prefer. After the program ends,

many participants choose to transfer their mileage to the *By Yourself* option to continue walking across the state on their own.



## Walk<sup>®</sup> Across Texas!

School classes may also participate, which is a great way to help children get excited about being more physically active. Our website has TEKS curriculum plans for teachers to use in the classroom as they *Walk Across Texas*.

For more information about *Walk Across Texas*, log onto <http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu> or contact: Courtney Schoessow (c-schoessow@tamu.edu) or Alice Kirk (AKirk@ag.tamu.edu) at (979) 845-3850. TCE is part of the Texas A&M University System. ★

The Extension Exchange is a regular feature of the Texas School Health Bulletin. Comments or suggestions can be directed to [www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth) or call (512) 458-7111, Ext. 7279. Please refer to this article by name when communicating.

## Chemical Incidents - continued

The examples mentioned in this article illustrate common factors that are often the underlying causes of chemical incidents and injuries in schools:

- Improper chemical storage
- Unsafe handling practices
- Improper application of standard workplace procedures
- Equipment failure (i.e., broken containers, hoses, or pipes).

### Prepare Ahead to Prevent Chemical Incidents and Exposures

These four strategies and prevention practices may be considered and adopted by school administrators, safety specialists, and nurses to control many preventable chemical events.

1. Identify places where chemical health and safety incidents might occur on your school's campus such as:

- Store rooms
- Custodial closets
- Kitchens
- Nurses' offices
- Swimming pools
- Science and art classrooms
- Motor pools (bus barns)
- Vocational and agricultural shops
- Lawn care and maintenance buildings

2. Develop and follow appropriate health and safety training and worksite practices for staff/students who use chemicals:

- Store hazardous chemicals securely, in well-ventilated and lit areas; and, in tightly closed, properly labeled containers.
- Avoid the combination of incompatible chemicals.
- Avoid the use of flammable chemicals near open ignition sources (i.e. furnaces and space heaters) or damaged electrical outlets and wiring.
- Perform periodic maintenance checks on vessels and equipment that contain hazardous chemicals.

3. Develop and distribute campus-specific contingency plans; then, train staff and students on emergency practices and procedures for chemical events, you can:

- Practice evacuation and "shelter-in-place" drills with faculty and students.

- Compile chemical event notebooks with emergency checklists and phone contacts, chemical inventories and material safety data sheets (MSDS).
- Designate lead staff to serve as monitors who would be responsible for making sure everyone under their charge follows the appropriate evacuation procedures.

4. Develop, communicate and implement preventative policies and practices with chemicals on school grounds to:

- Ensure that proper timing and ventilation practices are considered when chemicals like pesticides, paints, and floor strippers are applied.
- Identify and properly dispose of waste or derelict chemicals that have been in storage for an unknown period of time.
- Enforce policies on improper possession or use of chemicals when observed on school grounds; common items may include liquid mercury, pepper spray, or cans of spray paint.
- Substitute equipment that does not use mercury when replacement purchases are made, like thermometers, blood pressure cuffs, or electrical equipment.

Resources:

1. For more information regarding Texas HSEES contact the DSHS Environmental and Injury Epidemiology and Toxicology Branch at (512) 458-7269 or go to: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/epitox/hsees.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/epitox/hsees.shtm).
2. For specific information on how to develop an Emergency Response Plan for schools, visit the DSHS School Health Program website, Texas Guide to School Health Programs at: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/pgtoc.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/pgtoc.shtm).
3. Additional information and resource materials for schools are available from the federal government's Environmental Protection Agency, such as the Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Kit [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/tools4s2.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/tools4s2.html) or the Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool [www.epa.gov/schools/healthyseat](http://www.epa.gov/schools/healthyseat). ★

# 2006 Health Observances and Recognition Days



## THE TEXAS SCHOOL HEALTH BULLETIN

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The July 2005, 79th legislative session passed into  
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1, 2005, in addition to its' availability in physical  
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codified in House Bill 423. If you would prefer to  
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your name from our mailing list for the School Health  
Bulletin, notify you electronically when each issue  
is published, and provide you with a link to the  
publication.

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The National Wellness Institute publishes this  
helpful calendar on their web site at [www.nationalwellness.org](http://www.nationalwellness.org)  
as a service to its membership and the  
general public. Use this information to create themes  
with your lesson plans, bulletin boards, staff  
wellness activities and all-school family/community  
events as you plan for health-related events and  
activities throughout the year. To help support your  
plans, many of the sponsoring organizations offer  
free or low cost materials to complement their  
special day or month. Visit their web sites for the  
latest information.

The *Health Observances and Recognition Days*  
calendar is a regular feature of the Texas School Health  
Bulletin. If you have found a creative way to use this  
resource or, held a successful event or activity using one  
of the observances as your theme and would like to share  
it with our membership through the Bulletin, please  
contact me at [ellen.kelsey@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:ellen.kelsey@dshs.state.tx.us).

Information appearing in this newsletter does not represent an endorsement by the Department of State Health Services. For information, contact the sponsoring organization directly.

## May - August, 2006 Calendar

### May

#### Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

Allergy and Asthma Network  
[www.aanma.org](http://www.aanma.org)

#### Clean Air Month

American Lung Association  
Communications Department  
[www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

#### National High Blood Pressure Education Month

National Heart, Lung and Blood  
Institute Information Center  
[www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

#### National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

President's Council on  
Physical Fitness and Sports  
[www.fitness.gov/home\\_about.htm](http://www.fitness.gov/home_about.htm)

#### National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month

Advocates for Youth  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

#### Women's Health Week

May 14-20  
Office on Women's Health  
Department of Health and  
Human Services  
[www.4woman.gov/owh](http://www.4woman.gov/owh)

#### Project ACES Day

All Children Exercise  
Simultaneously - May 3  
Youth Fitness Coalition, Inc.  
[www.projectaces.com](http://www.projectaces.com)

### Buckle Up America! Week

May 22-29  
National Traffic Safety  
Administration  
[www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)

### World No Tobacco Day

May 31  
World for No Tobacco Day  
[www.wntd.org](http://www.wntd.org)

### National Employee Health and Fitness Day - May 17

National Association for  
Health and Fitness  
[www.physicalfitness.org](http://www.physicalfitness.org)

### School Nurse Day

May 10  
National Association of  
School Nurses  
[www.nasn.org](http://www.nasn.org)

**National Mental Health Month**  
National Mental Health Association  
[www.nmha.org](http://www.nmha.org)

### National SAFE KIDS Week

May 6-13  
National SAFE KIDS Campaign  
[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

### National Physical Education and Sports Week

May 1-7  
National Association for Sports  
and Physical Education  
(American Alliance for Health, Physical  
Education, Recreation and Dance)  
[www.aahperd.org](http://www.aahperd.org)

### June

**Home Safety Month**  
Home Safety Council  
[www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org)

**National Safety Month**  
National Safety Council  
[www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)

**National Men's Health Week**  
June 12-18  
National Men's Health Network  
[www.menshealthweek.org](http://www.menshealthweek.org)

### July

**Fireworks Safety Month**  
Prevent Blindness America  
[www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)

**31st Annual National Wellness Conference**  
July 15-20  
"The Power of Supportive  
Relationships"  
UW-Stevens Point Campus -  
National Wellness Institute  
[www.nationalwellness.org](http://www.nationalwellness.org)

### August

**National Immunization Awareness Month**  
National Partnership for  
Immunization  
[www.partnersforimmunization.org](http://www.partnersforimmunization.org)

**World Breastfeeding Week**  
La Leche League International  
[www.lalecheleague.org](http://www.lalecheleague.org)

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Health Promotion Unit  
Child Health and Safety Group  
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