



SCHOOL NURSES POSITION STATEMENT

The **International Association of School Nurses Health Promotion (ISNA)** is an organisation representing school nurses, associations and institutions related to nursing and school health. It **works at a global level to unite, coordinate, make visible and promote the figure of the school nurse** in all countries to ensure care, education and health promotion from childhood to the end of adolescence in schools.

ISNA declares that:

1. Scientific evidence demonstrates the benefits of starting health literacy early in the school environment, promoting the acquisition of tools that enable the development of self-care and resilience skills to self-manage their health from childhood to adulthood through information, education and the adoption of healthy habits and lifestyles.
2. The international organisations WHO and UNESCO, declaring that education and health are fundamental and interdependent rights and that a school that does not promote health is no longer acceptable, call for a global commitment to make every school a health-promoting school and issue guidelines for School Health Services.
3. Numerous studies show the close links between health and education; academic success is closely linked to good student health.
4. International children's rights, UN values, the guidelines of the 5th European Conference on School Health Education, promoted by WHO in November 2019, highlight health care in schools. The International Council of Nurses (ICN) publishes the guidelines of the initiative and the Principles for Early Parenting (CEPPs) to be followed by member states to build healthier, just and peaceful societies from early childhood onwards.
5. The recommendations of the global Nursing Now campaign; ICN's International Nurses Day 2023 report, which highlights the precariousness of the nursing profession and the importance of considering investment in nursing as a priority for the prosperity of a healthy society; the World Bank report: [Collapse and Recovery: How COVID-19 Eroded Human Capital and What to Do About it](#), which presents global data on the impact of the pandemic from zero to 24 years of age, showing the damage to human capital and the importance of reversing it by creating agile, resilient and adaptable health, education and social protection systems to prevent this and other lost generations.



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6. The holistic orientation, which is the basis of all nursing professional training and education, qualifies nurses as the most appropriate health professionals to manage the health and well-being of school communities by advocating for the rights of children and adolescents, diagnosing the health of school communities, implementing preventive health programmes with a focus on human rights and gender, in consultation with all members of the school community, and providing timely and quality health care, all within the context of the social determinants of health, towards achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
7. The competent and multidimensional role of the school nurse constitutes Advanced Practice Nursing (APN), which strengthens accessible, inclusive, comprehensive, cost-effective and preventive health care, framed by high quality standards, for all members of the school community, **promoting the link: FAMILY-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY-HEALTH**.
8. School nurses highlight the comparative and unfair inequalities in care and health services that children and young people receive depending on the country, community and area where the school is located.
9. The **Massachusetts Essential School Health Services (ESHS) case study**, demonstrated the cost-benefit of school health services provided by full-time registered school nurses. Findings: for every dollar invested in the programme, society gains \$2.20. The **2017 World Bank report** on the cost per life averted: For curative services, between \$500 and \$50,000; for direct preventive services to patients, such as vaccination or screening programmes, between \$100 and \$600. At the level of community interventions that promote changes in attitudes or behaviours: \$250. Investments in adolescent health and education generate economic and social benefits, with a return on investment of 6 to 12 times (WHO: Health Promoting Schools). **All this shows that investing in school nursing is one of the most profitable investments available.**
10. **School Nurses** are an important pillar of school-based health prevention, promotion and education. They are trained to participate effectively in the development of health policies at international, national and local levels, and **should be considered and taken into account in all decision-making related to the health education of schoolchildren.**



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*This **Position Statement** expresses the need for the incorporation of school nurses in all educational settings, as they are the most appropriate health professionals to make health care a reality in schools and their surrounding communities, to respond to pre- and post-pandemic challenges, including school drop-outs, absenteeism, low vaccination rates, re-emerging diseases, the inclusion of children and adolescents with chronic and orphan pathologies, multi-pathologies and/or with some type of deficiency or disability, sexual diversity, teenage pregnancy, mental pathologies, eating disorders, the increase in oral and dental pathologies, STDs, bullying, gender-based violence, suicide, social exclusion and inequality, etc.*

We emphasize the valuable support of WHO and PAHO for the presence of school nursing in all Member States, so that it becomes a global and equitable reality, facilitating equity in school health for all peoples of the world.

Scientific Evidence Links

- https://www.icn.ch/sites/default/files/2023-07/ICN_IND_2023_Report_EN.pdf
- https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA75/A75_10Add8-en.pdf
- https://www.schoolsforhealth.org/sites/default/files/editor/health-promoting-school/she_school_manual_2.0.pdf
- <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/6fb17cf5-1fad-4147-b7bb-691f63c29541/content>