



**Department of Health  
& Mental Hygiene**

Ashwin Vasan, MD, PhD  
*Commissioner*

**Department of  
Education**

David C. Banks  
*Chancellor*

**What is a School Based Health Center (SBHC)?**

A School-based health center (SBHC) is a facility inside a NYC school building that provides primary care services to the students who attend the schools on that campus. Most SBHCs provide a combination of primary care, mental health care, substance abuse counseling, case management, dental health, nutrition education, health education and health promotion. SBHC staff may include a physician, nurse practitioner/physician assistant, mental health professional, social worker, medical assistant, and health educator.

**What institutions run SBHC's?**

School-based health centers are run by medical institutions; usually local hospitals, medical centers, or community-based health organizations. The SBHC medical staff are not department of education (DOE) employees; however, they go through the same security checks and fingerprinting as DOE employees.

**Is it mandatory for me to enroll my child in the School Based Health Center (SBHC)?**

Enrolling your child in the SBHC is not mandatory, however it is strongly encouraged so that your child will have access to quality comprehensive health care such as: vaccinations, comprehensive physical examinations, treatment of illnesses/injuries, receive medications, and provide other services similar to your doctor. The health center is conveniently located in the school building to minimize your child's absence and to limit your time away from work.

If your child is not enrolled, the only care that the SBHC can provide is emergency care, first aid care and those services for which minors may consent to their own treatment.

**How do I enroll my child in the SBHC?**

To enroll your child in the SBHC program, parents or legal guardians complete a SBHC Parental Consent Form which is available to you at the school main office or in the health center.

**What kind of care can my child receive at an SBHC?**

If your child is enrolled in the School-Based Health Center, they will receive the same care that they would get at the doctor's office. The SBHC can manage your child's illness(es) at school and decrease the times they miss school. For a complete list of services at the health center, please contact the SBHC at your child's school or read the consent form which lists all the health services your child can receive.

**What is the cost?**

At the SBHC, your child can receive services that are provided at NO COST to you, regardless of insurance status. The SBHC is allowed to bill insurances for services, however, there are NO COPAYS for you and you do not receive a bill for services from the SBHC.

**Does my child need to have health insurance to be seen at the SBHC?**

No, the SBHC will treat your child regardless of insurance status. Every child in New York State is eligible for health insurance, even undocumented immigrants. If your child is not insured, the SBHC at their school can connect you to an Insurance Enroller. Insurance is also important in case your child is referred to specialty care. If your child has Medicaid or other insurance, it is important to provide this information to the SBHC.

**What if my child already has a doctor?**

If your child already has a primary doctor, then the SBHC provider will complement the care that he or she provides. If necessary, the SBHC medical provider will communicate with your child's primary doctor to make sure that your child receives the best care possible, both in and out of school. If your child does not have a doctor, the medical provider at the SBHC can be the person who provides the care a doctor would provide to your child.

**Will going to the SBHC count against my child's assigned number of doctor visits?**

No. Medicaid managed care plans allow children to be seen at School-Based Health Centers without impacting the care they receive from their primary doctor. If you have private insurance, please call and check with your insurance carrier.

**If my child is an undocumented immigrant, can he or she be seen at the SBHC?**

Yes. Immigration status does not stop your child from being seen at the SBHC. The SBHC staff does not ask about immigration status.

**If my child does not have a Social Security Number, can he or she be seen at the SBHC?**

Yes, your child can be seen without a social security number. The SBHC might ask for a social security number to check whether he or she has Medicaid or other insurance. However, this is not necessary to receive services at the SBHC.

**Can my children from other schools receive care form this SBHC?**

In most cases, the answer is no. School-Based Health Centers provide care to students registered at the school/campus where they are located. However, the sponsoring agency can frequently direct other family members to their central hospital location or to other clinics in the area for care.