



# Central Valley School Health Services Coalition

July 17, 2020

- Heather Berg MA, Central Valley Coalition Coordinator
- Anne Kelsey Lamb MPH, Director Regional Asthma Management & Prevention (RAMP)



# AGENDA

- **Introductions**
- **Keeping Kids in School! SBHCs as Leaders in Addressing Environmental Asthma Triggers**
- **Announcements and Closing**

# Putting Health Care in Schools

The California School-Based Health Alliance is the statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to **improving the health & academic success** of children & youth by **advancing health services in schools**.

Learn more:  
[schoolhealthcenters.org](http://schoolhealthcenters.org)





# Keeping Kids in School! SBHCs as Leaders in Addressing Environmental Asthma Triggers

Anne Kelsey Lamb, MPH, Director  
Regional Asthma Management & Prevention (RAMP)

## Presentation Objectives

**Describe** the role of SBHCs in reducing asthma disparities and chronic absenteeism among children and adolescents.

**Identify** best practices for reducing environmental asthma triggers in schools and communities that are replicable to the field.

**Practice** identifying environmental asthma triggers and communicating with key stakeholders about actions to reduce those triggers.



RAMP's mission is to reduce the burden of asthma with a focus on health equity. Emphasizing both prevention and management, we build capacity, create linkages, and mobilize networks to advocate for policy and systems changes targeting the root causes of asthma disparities.

## Asthma in children

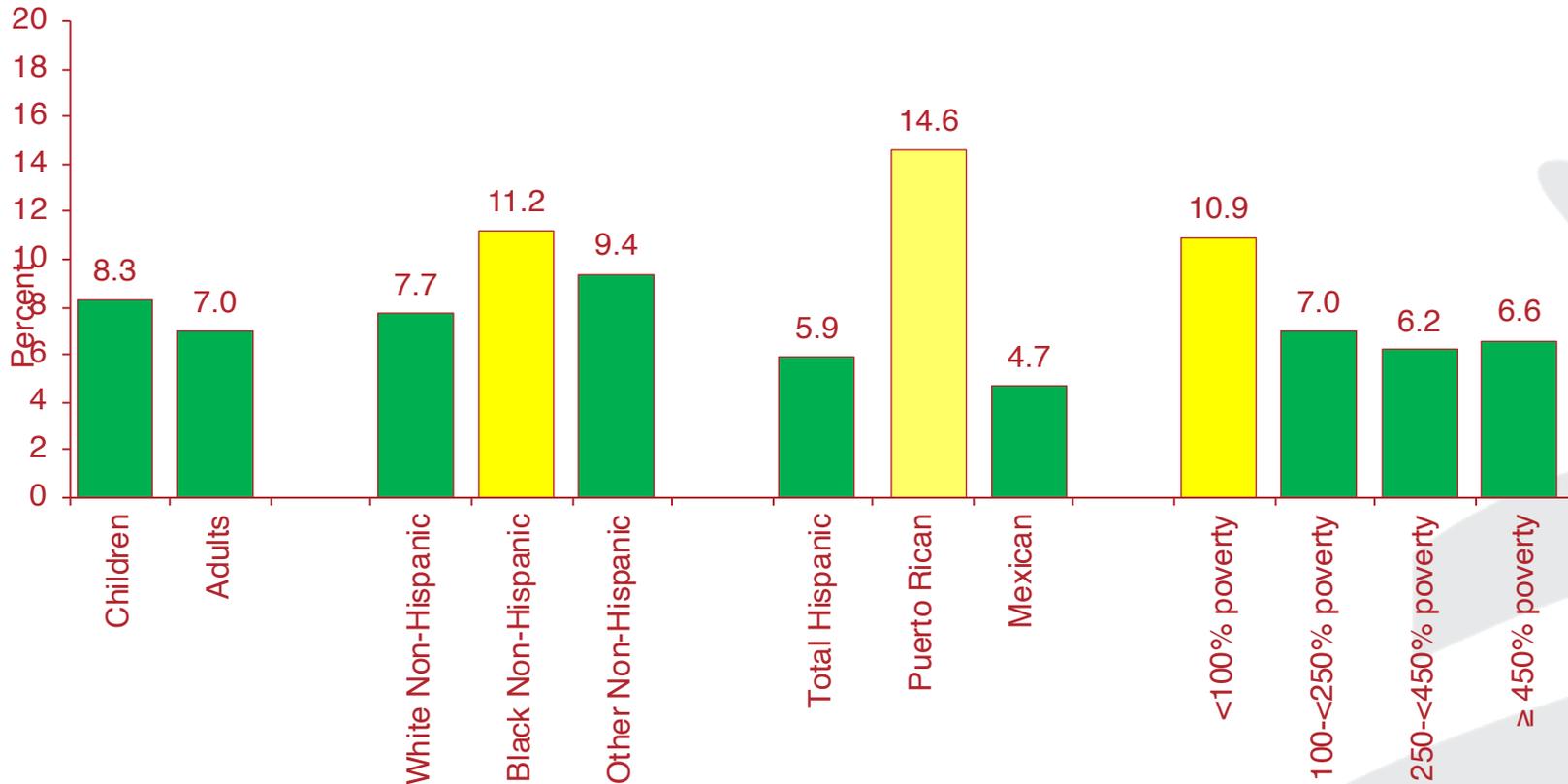
7 million children under the age of 18 in the U.S. have asthma

Most common cause of disability among children in the U.S.

Leading cause of school absences due to chronic disease.

# Disparities

## Prevalence by Age Group, Race, and Poverty Status (2013)



# How do we reduce the burden of asthma?

Utilize a broad and comprehensive approach that aligns with National Guidelines

Assessment of disease severity and control

Comprehensive pharmacologic therapy

Patient education

Environmental control measures to avoid or eliminate factors that contribute to asthma onset and severity

# The important role of SBHCs

SBHC users are:

Less likely to go to the ED or be hospitalized for asthma

Less likely to have asthma-related restricted activity days

Less likely to miss school as a result of their asthma

## Underlying premise of the project:

SBHCs provide an ideal setting in which to incorporate environmental components into chronic disease management programs, leveraging their role as a strong link between the student, school, and home.

# Environmental asthma triggers

Two categories: allergens and irritants

Difference between exacerbation and causation

Asthma triggers vary from one person to the next

## Allergens



mold



dust mites

# Allergens



cockroaches



rodents

# Allergens



pets



pollen

## Irritants/ pollutants



environmental tobacco smoke



chemical irritants from  
personal products

## Irritants/ pollutants



cleaning products



pesticides

## Irritants/ pollutants



gas stoves and space heaters



wood smoke

## Irritants/ pollutants



outdoor air pollution

## Irritants/ pollutants



outdoor air pollution

[http://www.rampasthma.org/uploads/asthma\\_guide\\_sbhc.pdf](http://www.rampasthma.org/uploads/asthma_guide_sbhc.pdf)

**Asthma Environmental  
Intervention Guide**  
for School-Based Health  
Centers

**ramp**  
REGIONAL ASTHMA  
MANAGEMENT & PREVENTION

**CALIFORNIA**  
SCHOOL-BASED  
HEALTH ALLIANCE  
Putting Health Care Where Kids Are

Developed by Regional Asthma Management & Prevention (RAMP), a project of the Public Health Institute, in partnership with the California School-Based Health Alliance

## Managing Asthma Triggers from School to the Home: How One School-Based Health Center is Educating a School Community

Located in Milwaukee County in Southeast Wisconsin, Frances Starns Discovery Learning School serves a predominantly African American community (96% of students are Black, non-Hispanic) and has one of the highest rates of asthma in the state, at 22%. Contributing to these high rates of asthma are a variety of environmental factors.



Many schools in Milwaukee County are over 100 and have limited resources to address issues such as excess dust, and pests. Many homes in this county are also old, non-owner occupied, and in various states of disrepair, further contributing to asthma trigger. Additionally, nearly one in four (24%) adults in Milwaukee County are smokers, according to the 2010 Behavioral Factor Surveillance Survey.

Rita Higgins, the Asthma Management Program Coordinator with the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin School Nurse Program understands how environmental factors contribute to asthma and impact student. She explains that, "asthma can result in unproductive missed classroom time for students and missed for parents." Rita and her team at Frances Starns Learning School recognized the need to integrate environmental asthma trigger education into existing Asthma Care Program, and through a school hospital partnership, they worked to update curriculum change how asthma education was delivered.

The revised, comprehensive approach to reduce environmental asthma triggers targeted the entire community, including students and staff. Community education, empowerment, and advocacy activities:

- 1 A survey to help students identify triggers at school
- 2 Education classes to help students identify what could make changes to the environment
- 3 Role playing scenarios and tools to help students respectfully advocate for changes at home that would reduce asthma triggers

"A vibrant community begins with vibrant and healthy families, so helping reduce the burden of asthma helps the student, family, and community reach their maximum potential."

## Leveraging Medicaid Delivery System Reform to Improve Asthma Management: The story of a network of 20 School-Based Health Centers in Texas

The 20 school-based health centers (SBHCs) run by the John Peter Smith Health Network serve over 40,000 children each year. There is great diversity in race, ethnicity, and English language ability and the majority of children seen are uninsured or underinsured. Tarrant County has asthma prevalence and emergency department visit rates that are higher than state or national averages. To address this, the School-Based Health Center Network leveraged their unique relationship with schools, students, and families along with the funding opportunity provided through DSRIP to launch a comprehensive asthma program.



DSRIP, the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment, provides states with significant funding that can be used to support hospitals and other providers in changing how they provide care to Medicaid beneficiaries. Texas was one of the first three states in the country to implement DSRIP initiatives, under which funds to providers are tied to meeting performance metrics. The John Peter Smith Health Network has a DSRIP agreement with the state to improve asthma management for children, which led to the creation of a comprehensive asthma program that reaches 2,000 children with asthma each year.

As a first step in the program, each SBHC identifies either existing or new patients between the ages of 2 and 26 with a diagnosis of persistent asthma. During the first visit, the providers focus on assessing asthma control, understanding history and symptoms, conducting allergy tests, and providing medications. They conduct one-on-one education and schedule a group asthma educational follow-up visit.

The providers know, however, that asthma management and prevention cannot be achieved solely through clinical care. Beverly Ewing, School-Based Clinic DSRIP Nurse Practitioner, explains, "We all know that prevention starts in the home and in the environment." The program was able to utilize four bilingual Community Health Workers from the Community Health Department to conduct a home visit during which they educate the family about environmental asthma triggers and conduct a home assessment to identify

"We all know that prevention starts in the home and in the environment."

—Beverly Ewing, School-Based Clinic DSRIP Nurse Practitioner

## Addressing Asthma and Air Pollution: How one School-Based Health Center in Los Angeles County partnered with bus drivers to reduce air pollution

Asthma is a significant concern in Carson, CA, just 14 miles south of downtown Los Angeles. The Carson Wellness Center, which provides services to students from three schools that share a common campus, as well as individuals and families in the surrounding community, has 1,400 patients with a documented diagnosis of asthma.



The clinic staff know that a common environmental asthma trigger—outdoor air pollution—isn't something that patients and their families can fully control, yet it's a significant problem in their community. The Center is on the corner of a busy intersection and the bus pick-up location for the schools is directly behind the center. Staff in the clinic reported a smell of exhaust fumes, mostly in the mornings and afternoons on really hot or really cold days. They realized that the smell was coming from the school buses idling outside of the clinic, right next to the air intake vent. They augmented this anecdotal data with data collected from an assessment they conducted with patients to increase their understanding of which asthma environmental triggers are most common. The data from the student assessments pointed to idling buses and trucks as the most concerning asthma environmental trigger in their school community.

In response, the Wellness Center staff undertook efforts to reduce bus idling. They began by conducting a survey of bus drivers to gain a better understanding of their knowledge and behaviors. What they learned is that the bus drivers were idling in order to keep their air conditioners or heaters on. They knew that there was a district policy against idling, but they didn't know about the health effects of idling.

So, the Wellness Center staff invited the drivers into the center for an educational session. They identified a champion and she made sure that all of her colleagues attended the session. She motivated the other drivers to attend and texted them reminders. The center staff provided snacks for the bus drivers during the training.

"These changes could not have occurred without our partnership with the bus drivers. Sometimes the best health champions come from unexpected places."

<http://www.rampasthma.org/uploads/casestudies.pdf>

# Lessons Learned

SBHCs are uniquely positioned  
to do this work!

Passionate, knowledgeable staff.

Focus on low-income  
communities/communities of  
color.

Link between child, school, family,  
clinical systems.

Have more flexibility in working  
with schools.

Adept at doing more with less.



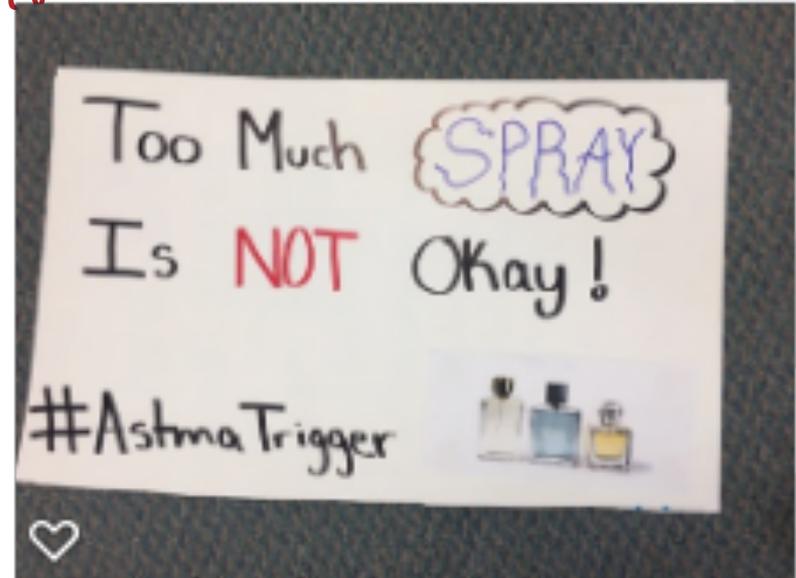
# Lessons Learned



## TIP #1

# Assess the Problem

- You'll want to select an intervention that addresses the greatest needs in your community



## TIP #2

# Select an Intervention

Start with the At-A-Glance tool on page 54 that lists all of the interventions you might consider.

Then flip to the corresponding chapter for details on any intervention that looks like a good fit.



## TIP #3

# Build Relationships and Get Buy-In

- Your ability to build and maintain relationships is key to any work you do, particularly for interventions that require people to make changes to their behaviors or other environments.



## TIP #4

# Achieve Success with Your Community

- Your target audience may be school staff, students, parents/ caregivers, or all of the above.
- Meet them where they are at— *literally and figuratively*



**TIP #5**

# Develop a Plan of Action & Implement the Work

**Asthma Environmental Intervention Work Plan**

Selected intervention or goal: \_\_\_\_\_

| Activity | Who is responsible/ who needs to be involved | Timeline | Outcome/ impact |
|----------|----------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|
|          |                                              |          |                 |
|          |                                              |          |                 |
|          |                                              |          |                 |
|          |                                              |          |                 |

## TIP #6

# Connect with Others Doing Similar Work & Expand Your Impact

- You're already connecting with others doing similar work!
- Find ways to sustain your work.
- Go ahead and brag!



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## News and Updates

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🕒 January 12, 2020

## Combating Asthma & Allergy Triggers at Konewaena Elementary



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Activity Time!



# Activity Time!

## Communicating about Asthma Triggers

In your groups, list:

What are some environmental asthma triggers that you would expect to find in a student's home, specifically their bedroom?

What are some environmental asthma triggers that are likely present at your school?

# Activity Time!

## Communicating about Asthma Triggers

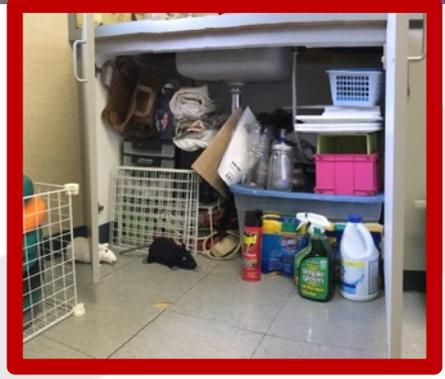
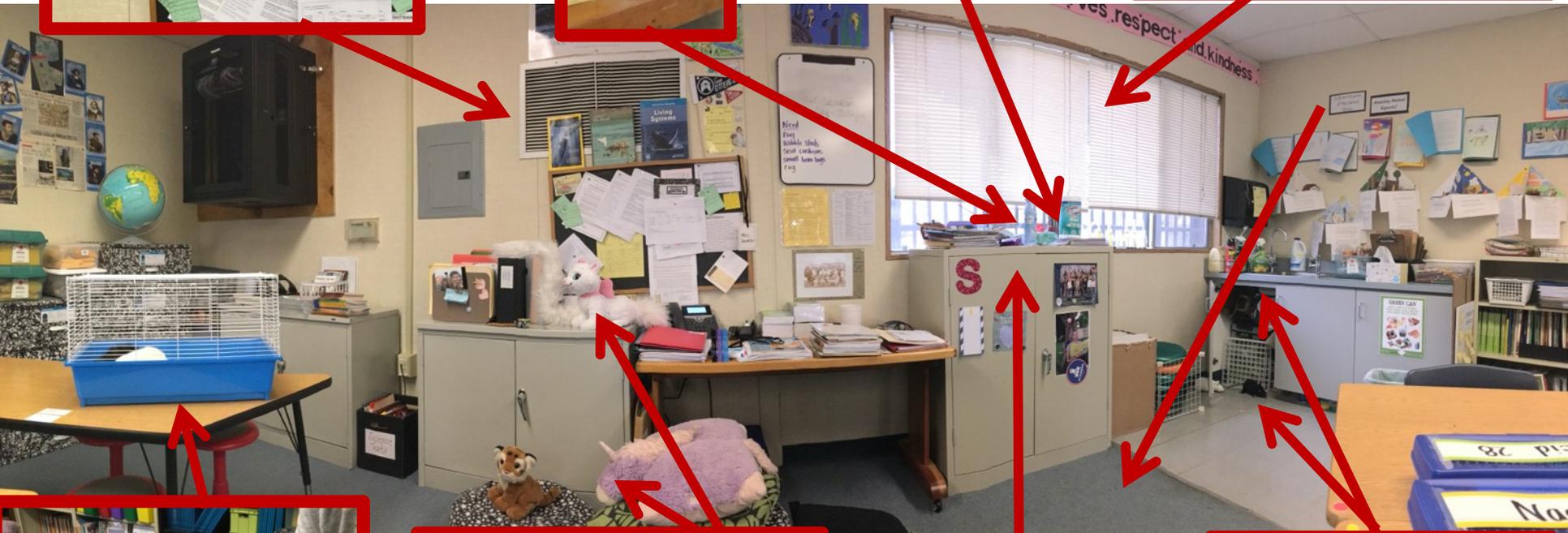
Let's assume that your lists of triggers were actually developed through an environmental assessment.

In your groups, answer:

How would you communicate this to the teenager/their parent/their guardian/their family member, etc. about the triggers in the bedroom? Choose one person.

How would you communicate this to the teacher, principal, maintenance staff, etc. about the classroom triggers? Choose one person.





# Discussion

- Who has some examples of how they would communicate that they would like to share?
- What challenges do you anticipate in discussing asthma triggers?
- What needs to be in place for a successful discussion?



## Things We've Learned: Communication Tips

Don't be judgmental. These are really common asthmas triggers.

Educate about the impact of the triggers on asthma (see guide for scientific data).

Talk about easy steps for reducing those triggers.

Ask which triggers they feel like they can reduce.

Ask them to commit to one or more changes.



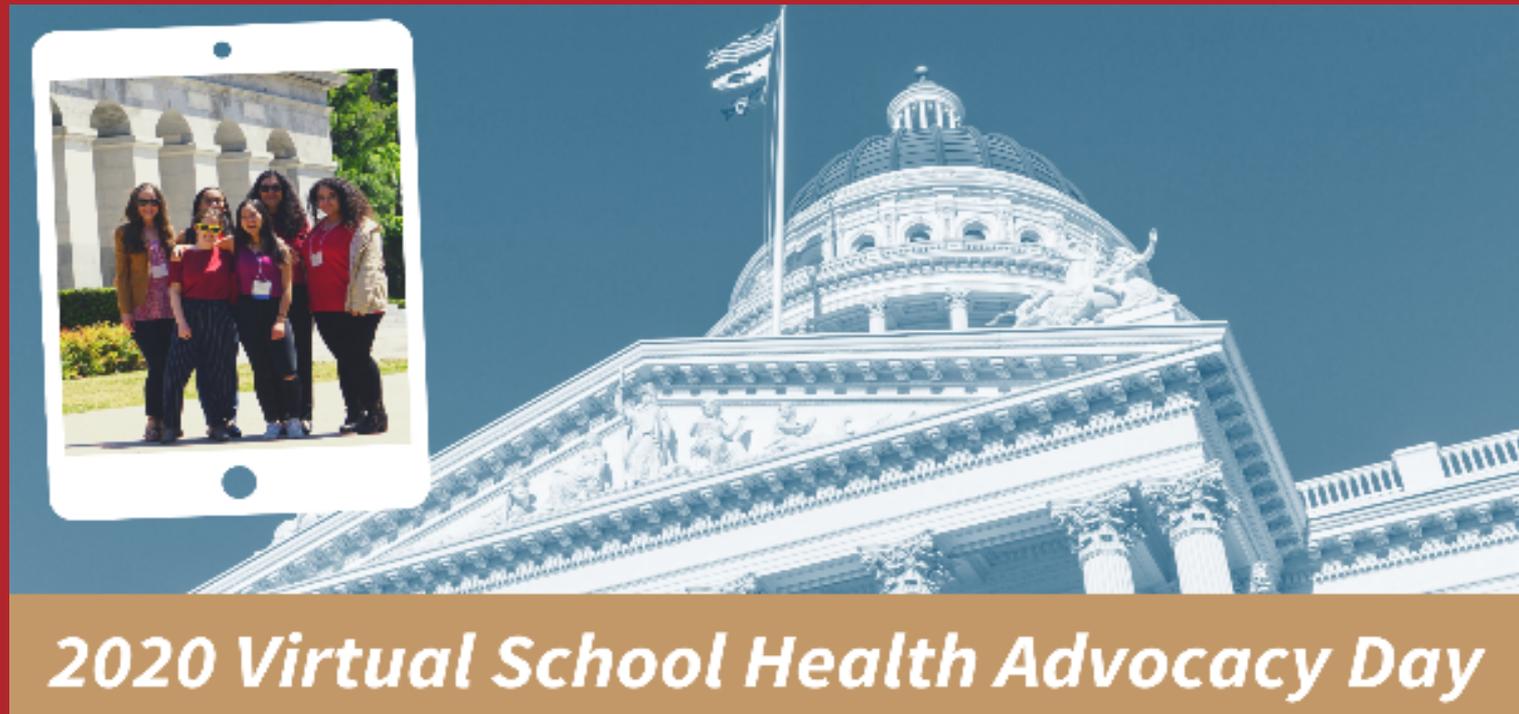


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*2020 Virtual School Health Advocacy Day*

## **Your Voice Matters! Advocate for School Health**

**Wednesday, August 5, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm PT**

**Please sign up today. We need you!**

Join school health providers and youth as we tell state legislators and policymakers *via Zoom* about the important work you do to support healthy students and what your communities are facing as schools prepare for the fall.



# School Health on the Frontlines

## *Navigating Pandemics & Building Equity*

Virtual Statewide School Health Conference  
October 6-8, 2020

We are holding our first *virtual* statewide conference – ***School Health on the Frontlines: Navigating Pandemics & Building Equity*** – October 6-8. Stay tuned for registration information!



# Announcements?

**Upcoming Meetings: Mental Health Sessions, Site Tour**

**Annual Convening: Feb 23, 2021 (tentative)**

**Past Convening and Other Resources:**

<https://www.schoolhealthcenters.org>

**Feedback/ideas to Heather:**

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