

At least one full-time nurse per school, pediatric group recommends

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(HealthDay)—Every school should have at least one full-time registered

nurse, a new American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) policy statement says.

"School nursing is one of the most effective ways to keep children healthy and in school and to prevent chronic absenteeism," Dr. Breena Welch Holmes, a lead author of the [policy statement](#) and chair of the AAP Council on School Health, said in an AAP news release.

But school district policies about nurses may lack uniformity. And such policies often need updating, the AAP noted.

In the past, the AAP supported having one school [nurse](#) for every 750 healthy students and one nurse for every 225 students who needed professional nursing assistance. But these ratios aren't enough to meet the health needs of today's students, the new policy says.

"As student health needs became more complex, the school nursing role has expanded to include additional responsibilities," co-author Anne Sheetz said in the news release.

Sheetz explained that school nurses now work with pediatricians. They help manage chronic conditions and develop individualized health care plans for each student, she added.

In addition, more children need help with medical management or have special needs. Some of the conditions that require help from the [school nurse](#) include: asthma, diabetes, life-threatening allergies, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and seizures. Other duties a nurse might have include emergency preparedness and [health](#) education, the AAP said.

The new policy statement was published online May 23 and in the June print issue of *Pediatrics*.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [student health](#).

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