

# School Nurse Bulletin

## MARCH EDITION

Although the cold and snow are still here, subtle signs of Spring are starting to show: the clocks sprung forward, the birds are starting to sing, and the air has the faintest scent of rebirth. Dare I say, I am looking forward to muddy boots and paws as the land starts to thaw.

With the soon-to-come warm weather comes a renewing sense of hope. The Omicron surge has passed and our case numbers are equivalent to those we saw at the start of the school year. Vermont has one of the highest rates of fully-vaccinated individuals in the nation and our hospitalization rates continue to decrease. With this, comes updated guidance and a return to some sense of normalcy.

The Vermont Department of Health isolation and quarantine guidance has been updated to reflect the decrease of COVID-19 in our communities and the pressure on our healthcare systems. Some students and staff may feel uncomfortable with this shifting guidance. Additionally, there have been recent events in Texas, Florida, and the Ukraine that may cause unease and distress. As nurses, we must do our best to support our communities through changing landscapes and challenges locally, nationally, and globally. Please be kind to yourself and remember how you positively impact all of the lives that you touch with your kindness and compassion.

Respectfully,

Kaitlyn

## VERMONT COVID-19 INFORMATION

**From Secretary French Memo March 10, 2022:** Effective March 14, 2022, the Vermont Department of Health will update its isolation and quarantine guidance to modify the recommendations for Vermonters who have tested positive for COVID-19 and those who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This new guidance reduces the number of scenarios where testing is recommended, particularly for Vermonters who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations.

This update will allow schools to significantly simplify their testing programs as conditions continue to improve in Vermont. Additional guidance updates are pending from the Department of Health in the coming days around staying home when sick and management of symptomatic students in school.

### Diagnostic Testing and Staff Assurance Testing are Unaffected

The March 14, 2022, guidance change does not affect diagnostic testing, where school nurses use LAMP or rapid antigen tests to test symptomatic individuals in school. It also will not affect Staff Assurance Testing, where two antigen tests per week will continue to be available to school staff who would like to use them.

### Test at Home Program Update

The Test at Home program as it presently exists is not consistent with the new Department of Health quarantine and isolation recommendations. Schools should modify their testing programs by making take-home antigen tests available to students, staff and their households on an as-needed basis or at the clinical discretion of the school nurse consistent with the updated Health Department guidance.

Under both current and updated Health Department guidance, testing is not required to return to school. Students and staff should continue to stay home when sick regardless of whether they have COVID-19. Students who test positive for COVID-19 may attend school after day 5 post-infection if they have been fever free for more than 24 hours and any other symptoms have improved



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- AOE Testing Update ..... 1
- Quarantine and Isolation ..... 2
- Transportation Updates..... 2
- Vermont COVID-19 Resources.. 2
- Sample School Illness Policy ..... 3
- CDC, NASN, NASSNC Survey.... 4
- UVM Sexual Harm Resources ... 4
- Asthma Friendly Schools ..... 5

## KAITLYN'S CORNER

- What I'm Eating: [My Mother-in-Law's Irish Whiskey Cake](#)
- What I'm Reading: [This Tender Land by William Kent Krueger](#)
- What I'm listening to: [NASN Podcast March 2022: Long COVID](#)
- What I'm doing: [Vermont Brewers Festival Killington](#)



## Quarantine and Isolation Updates

As of March 14, 2022 the State of Vermont **Isolation** and **Quarantine** guidance has been simplified. The State has shifted away from being solely focused on case counts and places a greater emphasis on serious outcomes. The CDC's Community Levels incorporates new hospital admissions and hospital capacity, along with case rates, to determine risk. Vermont's statewide hospitalization rate is low, and Vermont hospitals are no longer facing the COVID-related strains of the recent surge.

The decision to wear a mask will be up to each person, based on their own circumstances, personal risk assessment, and

health needs. If an individual tests positive, they will need to stay home and isolate for five days. If an individual is a close contact and is not up-to-date on their vaccines, they do not need to quarantine, but it is recommended that they get tested. Testing is recommended if an individual is symptomatic or has been exposed to COVID-19.

It is best public health practice that individuals with COVID-19 inform their close contacts of their COVID-19 diagnosis so they can seek testing if they desire.

---

*World Water Day is March 22. Here are some [short videos for schools.](#)*

---

### TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Effective February 25, 2022, the CDC does not require wearing masks on buses or vans operated by public or private school systems, including early care and education/childcare programs. School systems can determine policies and procedures based on federal, state and local control. Students using public transportation to and from school will need to continue to wear a mask in compliance with the **Federal Mask Mandate for Transit** through March 18, 2022.

### Vermont COVID-19 Resources

- [\*\*Agency of Education COVID Information for Schools\*\*](#)
- [\*\*COVID-19 Vaccines for Children | Vermont Department of Health\*\*](#)
- [\*\*PreK-12 Schools Vermont Department of Health\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Vermont COVID-19 Self-Test Result Reporting Form\*\*](#)
- [\*\*What to Do if You Test Positive for COVID-19 | Vermont Department of Health\*\*](#)
- [\*\*What to Do if You Are a Close Contact | Vermont Department of Health\*\*](#)
- [\*\*FAQs | Vermont Department of Health\*\*](#)
- [\*\*VCHIP / CHAMP / VDH COVID-19 Updates\*\*](#)
- [\*\*VSSNA Townhalls\*\*](#)

### CDC Updates

- [\*\*Transcript for CDC Media Telebriefing: Update on COVID-19 | CDC Online Newsroom | CDC\*\*](#)
- [\*\*COVID-19 Community Levels | CDC\*\*](#)
- [\*\*People with Certain Medical Conditions | CDC\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Requirement for Face Masks on Public Transportation Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs | CDC\*\*](#)

## SAMPLE SCHOOL ILLNESS POLICY

The [Sample School Illness Policy for Possible COVID-19 Illness](#) is available on the VDH [PreK-12 Schools](#) page. The information is copied below for your awareness.

- School nurses may use LAMP or antigen tests to test symptomatic individuals in school. Schools will require consent from families to do in-school testing
  - If a student does not have written consent to do in-school testing, the school nurse may call the parent or guardian to obtain verbal consent to perform in-school testing.
  - If the parent does not consent to in-school testing, the symptomatic student will need to be sent home. It is recommended that symptomatic students undergo COVID-19 testing. If COVID-19 testing is not done, the student may return to school if their symptoms have improved, and they have been fever-free for 24+ hours without the use of medication.
- If the LAMP or antigen test is positive for COVID-19, the student or staff will be required to be sent home. The student should be placed in an isolation room and wear a mask until they are picked up by a parent or guardian. VDH guidance for isolation should be followed.
- If the LAMP or antigen test is negative, but the clinical symptoms are indicative of another potential illness and they are not well enough to learn or participate, the student or staff should be sent home from school. A student may be required to wear a mask while awaiting pick up from school to prevent spread of illness to others. This decision should be made by the school nurse based upon clinical decision-making.
- If the LAMP or antigen test is negative, and the student or staff is presenting with mild symptoms (i.e., runny nose or headache) that may be attributable to another diagnosis (i.e., allergies) the student or staff may return to class. This decision should be made by the school nurse based upon clinical decision-making.
- If antigen tests are used as a diagnostic tool on a symptomatic student or staff in school, a second test should be sent home with the student or staff so it may be repeated before the start of school the next day by the parent or guardian, or the staff member. However, testing is not required to attend school.
- In general, COVID re-infection within 90 days of original infection is rare. LAMP tests should not be used on people who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 90 days. Newly symptomatic students or staff who have had COVID-19 in the past 90 days may use an antigen test
- Return to school post COVID-19 infection
  - A student or staff member may return to school after their 5 days of isolation if their symptoms have improved and they have been fever-free for 24+ hours without the use of medication
- Return to school after a non-COVID-19 related illness
  - A student or staff member may return to school if their symptoms have improved, and they have met school criteria for that illness (e.g., it has been more than 24 hours without fever, diarrhea, or vomiting).
- If a student does not attend school due to illness, their parent/guardian may access LAMP or rapid antigen tests by picking them up at school. The parent/guardian can perform 1 LAMP test or 2 antigen tests on the symptomatic student. Antigen tests should be taken as close to 24 hours apart as possible. These tests can also be used for testing symptomatic individuals, or close contacts in the home who may not be fully up to date with their vaccinations. Parents/guardians may contact a Primary Care Provider or state testing site to access PCR testing.

### INFECTION CONTROL

School nurses should follow Center for Disease Control's [Infection Control](#) recommendations for healthcare providers while in the school health office.

### ISOLATION SPACE

Schools should continue to have access to isolation spaces if a student needs to isolate due to illness.

### PEANUT FOODS IN SCHOOLS

To help answer common questions about managing peanut foods in schools, a free resource is available at [PeanutsinSchools.org](#) that includes videos, links to external resources, and FAQs that you can use and share in your district.

### NURSE WELLBEING

A new resource from the National Academy of Medicine aims to advance the critical need of supporting nurse well-being and leading the Future of Nursing into 2030. By harnessing the potential of nurse practitioners and utilizing their skills, knowledge, and dedication, we can make strides in improving patient-focused equitable care, affordably. To achieve this goal, we must bolster the systems, structures, and policies that affect the health and well-being of nurses. Learn more about how we can ensure nurse well-being for the health of our nation [link](#).

## MASKING RESOURCES

With the shift to optional masking, there may be a tendency among students to bully those who still wear masks, since they will be “different.” This could include immunocompromised students or staff, or those living with immunocompromised family members. In anticipation of the issue, Champlain Valley School District prepared a great presentation, [link](#), to address this. Thank you to Jocelyn Bouyea for sharing this great resource.

## NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK

National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW) is the third full week in March each year. It's a week dedicated to raising awareness to poison control centers and the Poison Help Hotline (1-800-222-1222). NPPW 2022 is March 20-26, 2022. School nurses can post and share [resources](#) in their schools. All events will be available to view on AAPCC's Facebook page [here](#).

## NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

CDC Healthy Schools [partner toolkit](#) can help you communicate to families about the availability of free, nutritious school meals for all children until June 30, 2022. Use this [mini toolkit](#) to encourage participation in school meal programs and educate families on ways they can support healthier eating habits at home.

[At-Home Activities and Recipes for Parents and Kids](#) from New England Dairy.

## CDC, NASN, NASSNC SURVEY

“We invite you to participate in this [survey](#) conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in collaboration with the National Association of School Nurses and the National Association of State School Nurse Consultants.

The goal of this project is to evaluate experiences and protective factors during the pandemic and their impact on school nurses' mental health. All school nurses who currently work or worked in schools during the 2021/2022 school year (since August 2021) are eligible to participate. In order to participate, you either

- 1) are currently employed as a school nurse, or
- 2) Were employed as a school nurse at any time during the Fall 2021 and/or Spring 2022 school terms.

Your participation in this timely and important project will help provide insight into experiences, stressors, and protective factors among school nurses during the

COVID-19 pandemic. By providing information on your experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic, you will help inform key stakeholders so they can take appropriate actions.

Information collected in this survey is anonymous and cannot be traced back to you. Your responses will be presented at the group level only. Completing this survey is voluntary and should take about 15 minutes to complete.

- If you have questions regarding the project, please contact the survey team at [eocevent335@cdc.gov](mailto:eocevent335@cdc.gov)

## RESOURCES FROM UVM STUDENTS

The following information and attached resources were created by UVM School of Nursing students for their public health clinical rotation while working in conjunction with the Vermont Forensic Nursing Program, formerly SANE. Several groups of students will be working throughout the spring to create and identify resources for school nurses to assist in addressing sexual harm in youth, as well as create and execute a study investigating the needs of Vermont school nurses surrounding this topic. Please see the below information from UVM students:

Due to recent Vermont legislation, there has been a new conversation surrounding school nursing and the need for more support and guidance when it comes to responding to students experiencing sexual harm. We are a group of senior University of Vermont Nursing students that have been working on researching this topic and finding ways we can help. We are in the process of making an inquiry into the strengths and needs of Vermont school nurses in participating in youth sexual harm prevention efforts in middle and high schools. We will have a survey coming this spring and your participation in the survey would be greatly appreciated as your feedback will result in better support for all Vermont school nurses with this topic. Please be on the lookout for another email.

In addition to the student document, here are some additional resources from Emily Fredette, the MCH Program Manager in Injury and Violence Prevention, that may be useful for school nurses in addressing sexual harm in youth

[Full Spectrum- Educators' Guide to Implementing LGBTQ+ Inclusive Sex Ed \(vermont.gov\)](#)

[Teen Dating Violence SV Protection Orders Booklet Revised 2022-corrected.pdf \(vtnetwork.org\)](#)

[Home - Outright Vermont \(outrightvt.org\)](#)

Some ideas for schools who want to engage in dating/sexual violence prevention are to create dating/sexual violence policies, implement faculty and staff training, provide comprehensive sex education.

## DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES MONTH

Each March, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities ([NACDD](#)) and their partners work together to create a social media campaign that highlights the many ways in which people with and without disabilities come together to form strong, diverse communities.

The campaign seeks to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life, as well as awareness of the barriers that people with disabilities still sometimes face in connecting to the communities in which they live.

NASN Supports IDEA and Section 504 Teams - The School Nurse as an Essential Team Member. It is the position of NASN that the school nurse is an essential member of multidisciplinary educational teams participating in the identification, evaluation, and monitoring of students who may be eligible for services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) (2004) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended through the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act (ADAA) in 2008. [View position statement here.](#)

## REPORT ON CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH HIGHLIGHT CONCERNS PRE-PANDEMIC

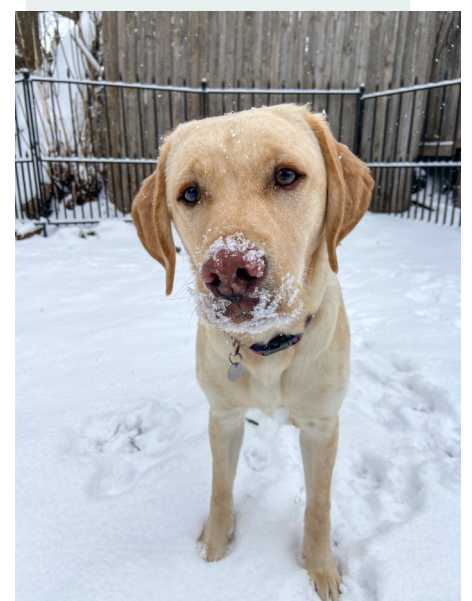
This federal report found that poor mental health among children was a substantial public health concern even before the pandemic. Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety among children of all ages, and symptoms related to depression among adolescents - are the most common concerns. The report also aimed to summarize positive indicators of children's mental health, such as emotional well-being and resilience.

Read the report [here](#).

## ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOLS NOMINATIONS

Students, parents, staff and friends can now nominate their school to be recognized as an asthma-friendly school at bronze, silver and gold levels through the Vermont Department of Health's [Asthma Friendly Schools Program](#). Asthma-friendly strategies are simple to implement, low cost, and help students and staff with asthma avoid triggers, manage their symptoms, successfully learn, and avoid missed school days and asthma-related emergencies. Indeed, many of the actions schools are taking to satisfy policy requirements and address COVID-19 challenges may already make their school eligible. With Vermont among the top five states in the country in asthma rates, it is all the more important for schools to be as asthma-friendly as possible. The deadline for [nominating your school](#) is May 31, 2022, with recognition announced in June.

Contact: Karen Casper at [Karen.Casper@vermont.gov](mailto:Karen.Casper@vermont.gov)



### Dental Careers in Vermont

Dentistry (including dental assisting and dental hygiene) can be a great choice for students who are interested in health and science and looking for a career path that has a great growth forecast. With the growing recognition that oral health is an important component of overall health, dental health care professionals play an important role in keeping people healthy. The multiple career options in dentistry with varying educational requirements offer something for everyone. Whether students are interested in becoming dental assistants, dental hygienists or dentists, this [dental health workforce brochure](#) can serve as a starting point to explore these well-paying, portable positions. Please help us grow the dental workforce in Vermont by making students and adult learners in your community aware of these great career options. If you have any questions or would like copies of the brochure, please contact Jenny Pitz, the Vermont State Dental Society Recruitment Manager, at [jenny.pitz@vsds.org](mailto:jenny.pitz@vsds.org)

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

- Free 8-hour Behavioral Threat Assessment training from the Vermont School Safety Center. March 16. [Sign up on the event page.](#)
- [Teaching Essential Topics in Sexual Health Education, VT-HEC. March 17](#)
- SHAPE Conference: March 23– March 24 in person, and “on Demand” video recording package available March 26-April 24 [link](#)
- New England School Nurse Conference: April 30th - May 1, 2022 at Sheraton Portsmouth Harborside Hotel [link](#)
- Vermont Public Health Association Annual Spring Conference, May 11, 5:30-8:30. “Vermont’s Mental Health Crisis: Opportunities and solutions for creating a better system of care”. Capitol Plaza Hotel, Montpelier. Registration opens 4/4.
- [UMATTER: Schools, Mental Health, and Suicide Prevention Registration](#)
- [Prevent Child Abuse Vermont Events](#)
- [Project SCOPE: Supporting Children of the Opioid Epidemic - Center on Disability and Community Inclusion, The University of Vermont](#)
- [Foundational Health Equity Training — Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc. \(vpqhc.org\)](#)
- NEPHTC recently hosted a Transgender Introductory Primer webinar and the recording is now available [here](#)
- [Boston Children’s Hospital Online Lecture Series](#)
  - March 17, 2022:** Childhood Hearing Loss- A Guide for School Nurses.
  - April 5, 2022:** Caring for Children with Hematological Disorders including Sickle Cell Disease, Anemia & ITP
  - April 12, 2022:** Child Abuse and Neglect: An Overview for School Nurses
- [NAMI National Convention](#) Virtual. June 14-16.
- NASN Conference: In-Person June 28-30 and Virtual July 11-13 [link](#)
- [Annual Conference - Adolescent Health Initiative August 11-12](#)
- [Mindfulness in the Age of Anxiety - Helping Kids, Teens and Families \(The 2022 Annual Cape Cod Symposia\) | BUSM CME. July 11-15, 2022](#)
- [Assessing Substance Abuse Risk in Students: Using the CRAFT Screening Tool | NASN Learning Center](#)
- [The Emerging School Nurse Leader Role in Decreasing School Absenteeism in Children with Migraine Headache | NASN Learning Center](#)
- [A Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Program: Recognition and Prevention Strategies for School Nurses](#)

## PUBLICATIONS

- [Mental Health Surveillance Among Children — United States, 2013–2019](#)
- [The Effects of Armed Conflict on Children | Pediatrics | American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Pediatric Emergency Department Visits Associated with Mental Health Conditions Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, January 2019–January 2022](#)
- [Pediatric Emergency Department Visits Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, January 2019–January 2022](#)
- [SARS-CoV-2 Incidence in K–12 School Districts with Mask-Required Versus Mask-Optional Policies — Arkansas, August–October 2021](#)
- [Long COVID—The New “Invisible” Illness: How School Nurses Can Support the Nursing and Educational Teams for Student Success](#)

## SCHOOL NURSES IN THE NEWS

- [The best medicine: How Franklin County school nurses overcame in the time of COVID](#)
- [School Nurses Highlighted in President Biden’s National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan](#)
- [NASN Responds to President Biden’s Call for More School-Based Mental Health Professionals](#)
- [NASN Announces Champions for School Health Project in Partnership With IEL](#)