

OBJECTIVES OF SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

The main objectives of this service is the prevention of illness as well as the promotion of health and well being of the students through:

- Early detection and care of students with health problems
- Development of healthy attitudes and healthy behaviors by students
- Ensure a healthy environment for children at school
- Prevention of communicable diseases at school

In School Health Services are occupied:

- Paediatricians and General Practitioners working in the Primary Health Care
- Health Visitors partially or fully occupied in this service

Main Activities of School Health Service

The main activities of the School Health Service are:

Screening Tests

- * Medical examination of all 1st and 4th grade students of the Elementary school and 1st and 4th grade students of Secondary school.
- * Screening Tests carried out by Health Visitors are:
 - Test for vision acuity (1st and 4th grade Elementary Students and 1st grade Secondary school students)
 - Hearing test (1st and 4th grade Elementary Students and 1st grade Secondary school students)
 - Follow up of students' normal growth. Measurement of weight and height. The Health Visitors mark these measurements on percentile charts to give an indication of how a child compares at one particular time with other children of the same age. Also to give a longitudinal representation of the children growth (It is done for 1st and 4th graders of Elementary School and 1st graders of Secondary School).
 - Color Vision Test (Students of 6th grade of Elementary school)
 - Scoliometres for early detection of deformities of the spinal cord, particularly scoliosis (5th and 6th grade students of Elementary

school, all students of Gymnasium and 1st grade students of Lyceum)

Prevention and investigation of Communicable Diseases

- Health education of the school personnel in order to be able to take the necessary measures to prevent viral meningitis.
- In case of an outbreak of a communicable disease the Health Visitors apply the necessary measures in order to prevent spreading of the disease.
- The Health Visitor co-operates with other health professionals for the investigation of certain communicable diseases such as viral meningitis and tuberculosis.

Vaccinations

The Health Visitors give to students the routine vaccinations according to the existing vaccination program of the Ministry of Health. The students as well as the parents are informed about a certain vaccine that will be given. In order to vaccinate a student at school it is necessary that the Health Visitor takes the parents or guardians written consent.

Health Education

Health education is provided by both Health Visitors and School Doctors. The main purpose of health education is to give students the knowledge but also the skills to develop and adapt a healthy behavior. According to the international literature health education programs which involve active participation of students in education, are more effective than lectures. Based on that, two educational programmed courses for students of the Secondary school, have been applied since several years now.

The main Health Education topics are:

<u>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</u>	<u>SECONDARY SCHOOL</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My body • Smoking • Passive smoking • Protection from sun • Dental Hygiene • Menstrual period • Prevention of accidents • Personal Hygiene • Nutrition and Healthy diet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B • Prevention of Accidents • Prevention of Drug abuse • Family and sex education • Nutrition and Healthy diet • Promotion of mental health • Adolescence

Educational programmed courses

For quite a few years now the Health Visitors have been applying two educational health programmed courses for the secondary school students.

One is the educational anti smoking programmed course for the students attending the first years of Secondary School (Gymnasium) and the educational programmed course for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and the sexually transmitted diseases for the students attending the last three years of Secondary School (Lyceum).

The main characteristics of these programmed courses is the training of some key students who in turn take over the training of their fellow students.

1. Anti- Smoking Educational Program

For quite a few years now a pioneering educational programmed course is being applied to many Gymnasiums all over Cyprus. The particularity of this program is based on the fact that the Health Visitor trains two students from each group. When the training is completed the two students undertake to present the lessons, in the presence of the Health Visitor, to their fellow students.

The aim of this program is:

- To offer some knowledge on the consequences of smoking on human health and generally to the human life (financial consequences, as well as social and environmental consequences).

- Through games and the acting roles the children develop a healthy attitude and behaviour. At the same time they acquire those abilities, which are necessary for a young person of their age to resist the challenge to smoke.

2. Anti HIV/AIDS educational Programmed Course for Lyceum students

For quite a few years now an anti-AIDS educational programmed course is being applied to Lyceum students.

The scope of this course which is carried out by means of dialogue, games and through acting roles is:

1. To offer the students some knowledge on AIDS and the sexually transmitted diseases so that:
 - They would be aware of the methods of contamination and protection and
 - They would learn about the methods by which the virus is not transmitted so that they do not have false phobias about HIV people who are HIV positive.
2. The development of a healthy attitude and behaviour and the acquisition of ways of resistance through various exercises, which are carried out.
3. To increase the children's sensitivity to the consequences of AIDS.

3. Organising Healthy Breakfasts

The Health Visitors in collaboration with the school management teams and the Parents Associations organize the serving of healthy breakfast in Primary Schools. An educational course regarding nutrition in general and the importance of breakfast in particular, always precedes the actual serving of the meal.

Other Activities

- The Health Visitors cover the School Sports Days and the Camping Areas belonging to the Ministry of Education and Culture.
- The Health Visitors co-operate with other departments in matters such as voluntary blood donation by Lyceum students.
- They organize various activities in regard with temporary subjects.