

BEST PRACTICES FOR INCREASING SCHOOL HEALTH FORM RETURN RATES

You are an essential advocate that believes in the importance of health in all your students. You distribute school health forms because you know how important it is for children to receive the care and services they need during the school day, so that they can be healthy and ready to learn! The following are best practices that can be helpful in increasing your school health form return rates.

Issuing School Forms

For Known Health Conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, and allergies:

- Attach a letter to the school health forms explaining the reason(s) for issuing the forms and important instructions for each form.
- Develop a schedule when you are going to send school health forms to parents (i.e: monthly, quarterly, yearly)
 - For example: sending MAFs in June for the next school year, during parent teacher conference days, before school breaks (some parents schedule doctor visits for their children during breaks)
- Issuing school health forms in person whenever possible, for example at arrival, dismissal during parent meetings (i.e. school enrollment, workshops, PA meetings)

Undiagnosed/unknown Health Conditions:

- Connect with school staff that engage most with parents, such as parent coordinators, guidance counselors, teachers and school attendance team
- Issue forms such as: CH205 and MAF forms, with a letter explaining reason for referral and instructions to filling out school health forms
- These key staff members may have valuable information on children's health and ways to engage with families.
- Follow suggested [Referral Protocol](#)

When talking with parent

- Remember parents love their children and sometimes find it difficult to know how to help their children with their health issues, which can bring up feelings of fear or guilt. Choose non-judgmental words at all times. Approaching parents with kindness can help parents hear your good intentions for their child.
- Pay attention to your body language: Making sure that your body language sends a message to the parent that you are a professional who cares for their child.
- Send a thank you letter or call to parent for following up with referral especially if returning referrals have been difficult for a parent.

Offer incentives to students/families for returning school health forms

- Possible incentives: Stickers, pencils, raffle/movie ticket