



What can I as a parent, guardian or caregiver do?

- You can **raise awareness** among members of the community about the importance of the school health screening day at your child's school.
- **Offer your help** to the principal to assist the school health team on the day of screening.
- All parents (regardless of their children's age) are asked by the school to **sign and return the consent form** to the school, giving permission for your child to be checked. Adding to the parental consent, learners who are 12 years and older must also sign an assent form to access the school health services.
- **Explain to your child** about what will happen on the day and **put them at ease**.
- If your child is 14 years and younger, send your child's **original Road to Health Card** to the school so that the team can ensure that he/she receives the correct immunisation and it is recorded.
- **Accompany your child**, where possible, on the day of the screening to provide his/her medical history and to take note of the findings of the screening. Parents/guardians/caregivers who want to participate during learner's assessment should arrange with the school principal or the child's class teacher.
- If the school nurse identifies any health problems, you will receive a letter that you need to take with **your child to the clinic or hospital** for further assessment and treatment. Once you have taken your child to the local clinic, the health professional will give you a letter to take back to the school.
- **Inform the school** of the outcome of further assessment and treatment received at the clinic or hospital.

If you have any concerns about your child, you can ask the school health nurse to see your child at any time during a routine school visit. Your child can also ask to see the school nurse if he or she is concerned about his / her own health but still needs your consent to access the service.

What do I do if I have any questions about school health services?

For more information on the ISHP, contact the school principal, the school health nurse or your nearest health clinic, or call the toll-free lines of the Department of Basic Education (0800 202 933) or Department of Health (012 395 8000).

Integrated School Health Programme

Information for parents, guardians and caregivers



Basic Education
Health
Social Development

Taking responsibility for our childrens' health and wellbeing

What is the Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP)?

Government is developing school health services in the country in support of children's health throughout their school years, from the moment they start school to their last year in Grade 12. School health services will comprise health education, health screening and some on-site health services. This is called the ISHP, which is a joint programme of the departments of basic education, health and social development. The aim of the ISHP is to improve children's health, reduce health barriers to learning, and assist learners to stay in school and perform to the best of their abilities.

Government wants each and every learner to benefit from the ISHP. During 2012/13, the programme will target learners in grades 1, 4, 8 and 10. Learners in other grades who are experiencing health or learning problems will also be targeted. Over time, all learners will be involved in the programme.

Who will implement the ISHP?

School health teams will be responsible for providing most school health services, visiting schools on selected dates. Each team will comprise a professional nurse and an enrolled nurse or a nursing assistant. Health promotion and education will be provided by health promoters, who are members of the ward-based primary healthcare (PHC) teams, as part of the re-engineering of PHC services of the Department of Health.

There are also plans to introduce specialised school health mobile units, staffed by a professional nurse, an enrolled nurse, a dentist, a dental hygienist and an optometrist.

About the school health team

School health nurses will provide health screening, health education and treatment for minor ailments. They will also provide catch-up immunisation and deworming where needed. Grade 8 and 10 learners will receive information, counselling and an offer of services on their sexual and reproductive health.

The health promoter will provide age-appropriate health education to all learners in grades 1, 4, 8 and 10.

What does the school nurse do?

The school nurse will perform individual health screening, health education, providing basic treatment, immunisation and deworming. He/she will also be responsible to ensure that the learner goes to a health facility for further assessment or treatment if needed. A letter will be given to the learner to be passed on to the parent/guardian/caregiver for this purpose. In addition, the school nurse will follow up to ensure that additional healthcare is being provided by the local health facility.

What services will the ISHP provide?

Learners in Grades 1, 4, 8, and 10 will receive health screenings for the following:

- oral health conditions (teeth and mouth)
- eyesight
- hearing
- speech
- height and weight measurements to check nutritional status
- walking and hand coordination
- tuberculosis and chronic illnesses
- mental health
- minor ailments
- psychosocial wellbeing.

Grades 1 and 4 learners will receive the following additional services:

- deworming (where indicated)
- immunisation (tetanus and diphtheria vaccines for children aged six) (where indicated)
- Grade 4 only: education and counselling about "knowing your body" e.g. menstruation for girls and male medical circumcision for boys.

Grades 8 and 10 learners will receive the following additional services:

- immunisation (tetanus and diphtheria for children 12 years and older)
- screening for anaemia
- education, counselling and offer of services as required about sexual and reproductive health e.g. menstruation, abstinence from sex, contraception, avoiding and testing for pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT).

