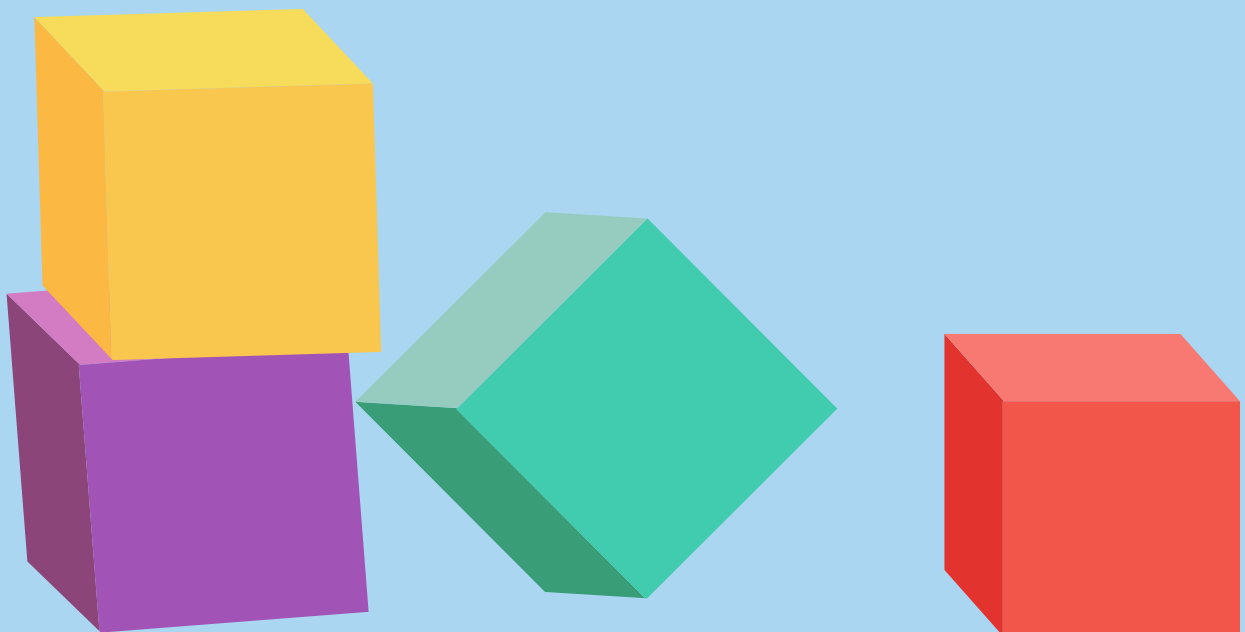


GOOD LIVING HABITS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A path to health, learning
and development

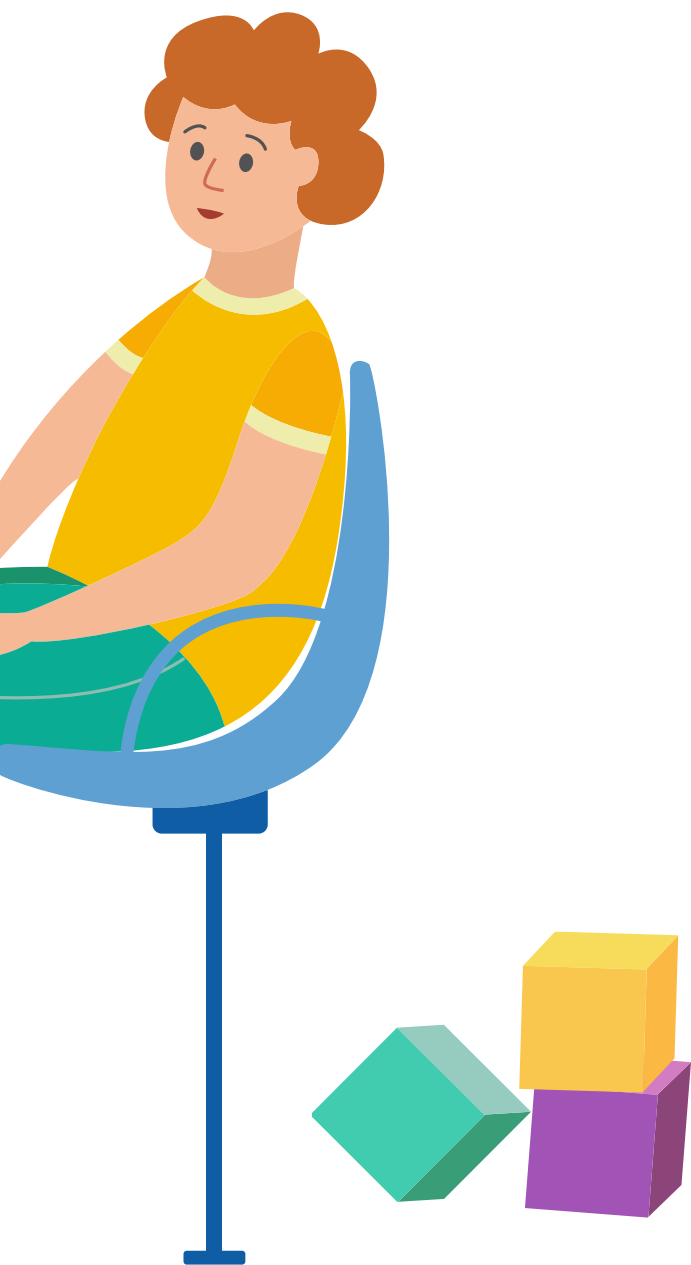




THE SCHOOL NURSE'S TASK

– remove barriers from learning and development

What is included in a health visit? Why do we weigh and measure children?
What does lifestyle mean for mood and school performance?



THE SCHOOL NURSE is part of the student health team at the school and together with the school doctor they form the student health medical initiative, EMI. The student health team also includes a counselor, psychologist and special educator. The principal is involved and leads the student health team's work.

The school nurse's work is based on the children's convention. The assignment is governed by the Education Law. This publication is intended to provide information about the school nurse's assignment with health visits and health talks that are offered to all students.

An important part of EMI is to work together with the student health team and to participate in promotion and prevention work at individual, group and organizational

levels. The student health team's work is not described in more detail here, it is the specific parts for the school nurse that are described.

The student health medical initiative offers health visits that contain various surveys for all students. The health visits also include health talks where the student is given the opportunity to talk about lifestyle-related issues and the school situation. The health visits have different content in different year groups. The purpose of the health visits is to strengthen the student's health and to detect students at an early stage, who may need adaptations and special support to achieve the educational goals.

In addition to what is governed by the Education Law, the school nurse's assignment includes offering vaccinations following the Swedish vaccination program for which the Swedish Public Health Agency is responsible. Children/students who have not followed the child vaccination program are offered supplementary vaccinations up to the age of 18. If you have previously refused vaccination for your child but have changed your mind or have questions, you are welcome to contact the school nurse.

The school nurse is not only subject to the Education Law but also to the Health and Medical Services Law, which provides a clear mandate to work to prevent bad health. The Patient Law states that the patient, in this case, a student and guardian, has the right to receive information about methods for preventing illness or injury. This preventive work takes place, among other things, through health visits and by providing information during individual visits during health education at group level and at parent meetings.

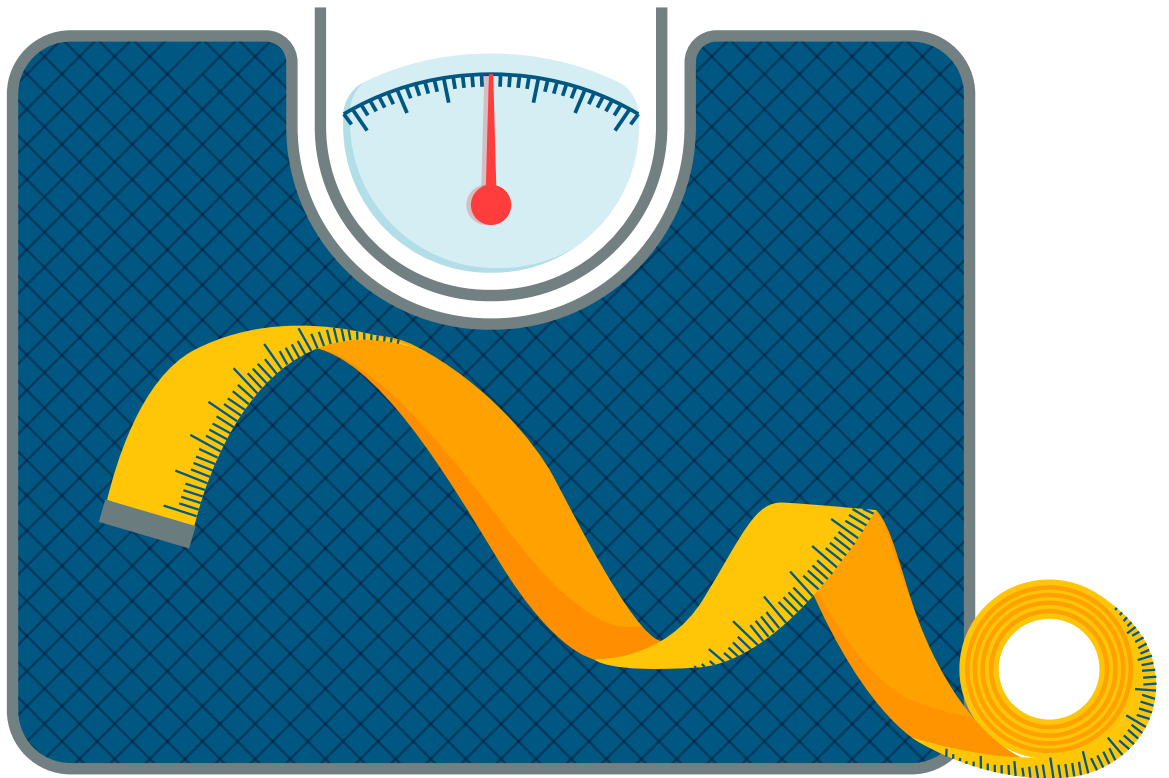
The health visit

The health visit aims to promote good health and good lifestyle choices, to motivate people to maintain their good habits and to identify problems or symptoms in students at an early stage that may mean that they need special support or other interventions.

The school nurse becomes in charge of the child when BVC (The child care center) ends and conducts health visits and other tasks according to a basic program. Different health checks are performed in different year groups and may differ between different municipalities and independent schools. The health visit can include growth control, sight test, hearing test, back control and health talks.

Health talks

All students are offered health talks in preschool class (with guardians), in year 4, in year 7 or 8 and the first year of high school. Prior to the health talks, the student is ►



often asked to answer a survey with questions in different areas that affect health. It can be about the school environment, security at school, leisure time, eating habits, if you move and how you sleep. Questions about health problems such as stress, headaches, pain, etc are also included. For the older students, there are also questions about tobacco, alcohol, drugs, sexuality and violence.

The health conversation is then conducted in such a way that the student himself can control the conversation and be able to address the things that feel important. Risk behaviors can be noticed and the school nurse can motivate to improve habits. If the student or guardian so wishes, the school nurse can provide support and advice and, if necessary refer on for more help. All question areas in the survey are things that research has shown are important for health and that health can be improved in the short or long term by changing habits for the better.

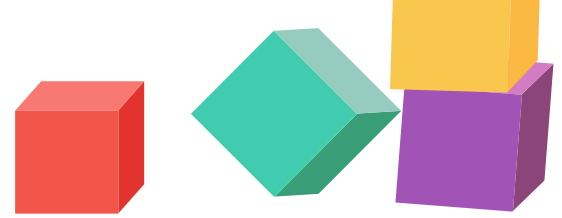
Growth

The students' height and weight are checked every other year to every three years. The height and weight are dotted into the student's growth curve and the Body mass index (BMI) is calculated. Most children have found their channel in the growth curve at the age of two and then follow it. Comparisons between different children should not be made. What is important is to see how the individual child grows over time and whether height and weight are followed.

The school nurse is used to interpreting the growth curves and can read a lot from them. The weight should not decrease on a growing child, the height growth should continue normally and in relation to where in puberty development the child is. Signs of early or late puberty are noticed. Various diseases that can affect growth are sometimes noticed during health visits. In connection with the school nurse measuring and weighing the pupil, they can see the whole pupil and can, for example,

PREVENTIVE WORK (or measures) means to prevent the occurrence of or influence the course of diseases, injuries, physical, mental or social problems, i.e. measures to reduce the risk of bad health. It is about reducing the risk of a problem occurring or recurring. Knowledge of factors associated with increased risk and early warning signs (such as risk behaviors or early symptoms) is often the starting point for preventive measures.

HEALTH PROMOTION WORK (or measures) means to strengthen or maintain people's physical, mental and social well-being. It is about encouraging and strengthening things that make us feel good. Promotional efforts can also increase resilience in the event of difficulties and challenges.



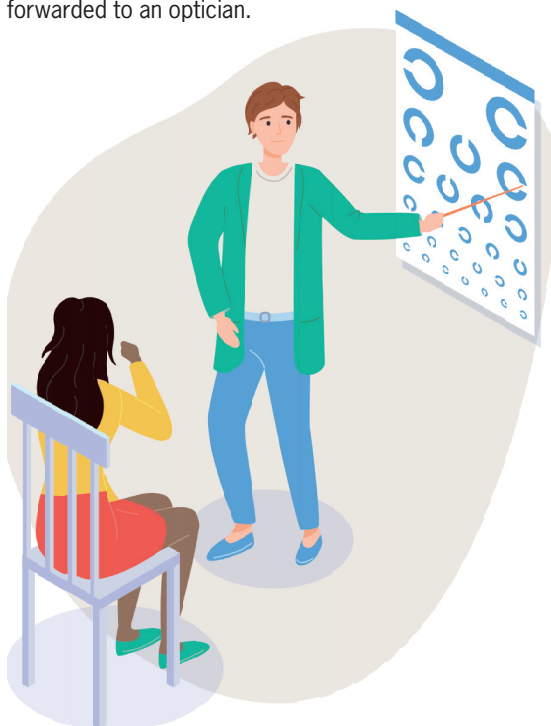
draw attention to whether the pupil has any deviation in movement patterns, is unusually pale or has other skin conditions. Questions about how the student is feeling are usually asked at the same time.

The most common deviation in growth concerns weight gain. As a school nurse, you want to work against everything that has to do with appearance fixation and the like. The reason behind paying attention to overweight and obesity is entirely based on how health can be negatively affected by being overweight and has nothing to do with appearance. Read more in the information sheet about overweight and obesity.

Sight

Methodical sight tests are offered to all students. The screening is done in connection with the student's health visits in the preschool class and can be performed if necessary in later driving courses. The aim is to detect early on any student with low visual acuity, amblyopia. In addition to what is included in the basic program, the school nurse can check vision if necessary, for example in reading and writing investigations, difficulty concentrating and on newly arrived students.

Vision is tested using a syllabus with letters and an eye patch to cover one eye. "Pektavla" (pointingboard) is helpful for the youngest students who don't know the letters yet. Vision is important for being able to read and therefore needs to be checked before the child starts year one. If the student does not pass the expected result on the sight test, it is done again after a few weeks. In case of suspicion of visual impairment, children younger than eight years are forwarded to an ophthalmologist and older children are forwarded to an optician.



Hearing

Hearing tests are offered to all students in the preschool class. (sometimes in year one) to detect hearing impairments that affect the ability to perceive speech. Health examinations can also be done if necessary later during school hours. Newly arrived students are offered a hearing examination regardless of age.

A hearing impairment can mean perceiving sound faintly, distorted or not at all. Hearing impairments are often affected by disturbing sounds in the environment and can make it more difficult to perceive speech.

The school environment places high demands on students' hearing and therefore it is important to pay early attention to hearing impairments. Students with hearing impairments may find it difficult to concentrate in the classroom. For example, it can be more difficult to learn to spell if you do not perceive all sounds.

Back Control

Back control is offered on a few occasions during school hours in connection with students' health visits, often in year 4 and in year 7 or 8.

The aim is to early detect students with scoliosis who may need to be followed up and sometimes treated. So-called idiopathic scoliosis is the most common cause of skew in the back. It is common and usually does not require any treatment, but students with skewed backs should be offered recurring examinations as long as they grow.

You can read more in the attached sheets about diet, physical activity, sleep, balance in life and being overweight.

The school nurse wants to protect the children so that they feel as good as possible both physically and mentally. The knowledge of what we feel good about comes from research results..

References

The National Board of Health and Welfare and the National Agency for Education (2016) Guidance for student health

Regulations

School law (2010:800) Ministry of Education.

Health care law (2017:30)

Ministry of Social Affairs Patient Safety Law (2010:659) Ministry of Social Affairs Public Access and Secrecy Law (2009:400)

Ministry of Justice

The school nurse in municipal activities has secrecy in accordance with the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Law. For independent schools, the duty of confidentiality is instead regulated by the Patient Safety Law.

This publication has been produced by the Swedish Nurses' Association and the National Association of School Nurses with the aim of providing support to school nurses to convey the task and content of students' health visits to guardians. The book is supplemented with information sheets about *healthy food, sleep, physical activity, balance in life and overweight and obesity in children*.

The material has been produced within the framework of a sub-project on *Health Promotion Work – early initiatives to stimulate and establish good lifestyles* funded by government grants from the National Board of Health and Welfare for initiatives that promote prevention and treatment of unhealthy lifestyles.



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Production facts

Publisher: Svensk sjuksköterskeförening 2020

Graphic design: Losita Design AB, www.lositadesign.se

Illustrations: Colourbox **ISBN:** 978-91-85060-65-8