

National Student Nurses' Association[®]
Guidelines for Planning

Community Health Projects



In 2010-2011 the NSNA's Community Health and Disaster Preparedness Committees were combined by the Board of Directors to facilitate coordination of the initiatives undertaken in both areas. Go to www.nсна.org/ProgramActivities/CommHealthDisasterPrep.aspx and click on...more on Community Health...for updated information.

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**Guidelines
for
Community Health**



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INTRODUCTION

Community health involvement by nursing students has become an important contribution to the health and well-being of the total community. Projects carried out at the local level by nursing students provide a service to the community while giving students an opportunity to utilize knowledge and skills. This booklet outlines activities, project ideas and resources available to help plan successful projects.

All NSNA constituents* conducting community health projects are eligible to apply for the NSNA Community Health Activity Award Program. Prizes are awarded for outstanding community health activities. Deadlines for these applications are printed in *NSNA News* and *Imprint* and on www.nsna.org. NSNA members serving as state community health chairpersons or directors should go to www.nsna.org and then member Services to update their membership profile and check the Community Health box to be placed on NSNA's Community Health Memo e-blast list so that they are informed routinely of NSNA's community health activities.

The following information provides guidelines for planning and implementing projects based on a community needs assessment and resources available. This booklet is a guide to get you started -- there are undoubtedly a variety of resources in your own community. Good luck with your projects!

*Refer to *Getting the Pieces to Fit* for constituency information and the Official Application for NSNA Constituency Status which must be submitted to NSNA annually.

PROJECT IDEAS

Many of NSNA's community health project ideas come from resolutions and positions adopted by the NSNA House of Delegates and the Board of Directors. They cover a wide range of health needs that nursing students are concerned with. Resolutions passed at state conventions will also provide direction for projects. The following is a list of ideas for possible activities:

School

- Blood pressure, scoliosis, anemia, glaucoma, vision, hearing screening
- Recycling of paper, metal, glass
- Education about occupational health hazards in the hospital or other health care settings
- Cancer screening and prevention i.e., breast self-exam, mammograms, sun safety
- Adopt a grandparent program
- Nutrition, weight management, exercise
- Domestic violence prevention
- Suicide prevention
- Health needs of college students, (i.e. flu immunization– go to www.flu.gov)
- Drug awareness and recovery services
- Sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS
- Parenting and child safety classes
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) education
- Birth defects information
- Immunization and well child clinics
- Adolescent and young adult education: harmful effect of steroids; acquaintance/date rape; teenage pregnancy; eating disorders; suicide prevention
- Assisting with Special Olympics
- Fundraising projects

- The homeless: food and clothing drives; drives for shelters
- Education related to environmental health issues i.e., lead, pesticides
- Participation in disaster drills

State

Other ideas that work well for state-wide projects are:

- Environmental health education programs; resource recovery projects; occupational safety training.
- Supporting a hospital in need of supplies
- Purchasing equipment for handicapped adults and children
- Organizing a statewide program for AIDS counseling
- Supporting missing children efforts
- Collecting food or clothing for a shelter for the homeless

Note: State conventions are a good collection spot.

Links to Resources for Community Health and Collaborative Project Ideas

Go to the Community Health web page (www.nсна.org/ProgramActivities/CommHealthDisasterPrep.aspx) for information that can direct you to materials and resources as you plan your Community Health project.

Getting Started

NSNA encourages state and school chapters to conduct community health projects which will provide beneficial community services.

Community Assessment

Once your school or state chapter has decided to conduct a community health activity, the selection of the activity is determined by assessing the community's health needs. A community can be:

- The students comprising the student body of your nursing program, another student population at your college or university, or may be open to all students (for example, a campus-wide health fair).
- People living in the community where the school of nursing or college/university is located. Segments of this population can be targeted for your project (i.e., elderly, children, high risk groups, women, men, homosexuals, drug abusers, etc.).
- Long-term care facilities, senior citizen centers, adult and child day care centers, rehabilitation centers, pediatric units in acute care settings, centers for homeless individuals and families, public and private schools, are all potential sites for community health projects.

A community assessment is a structured method for determining the health needs profile of a specific community. Students should seek the guidance of a faculty member, preferably one who teaches community health nursing, or from a local public health nursing service for assistance in conducting a community health assessment. In addition, several excellent community health nursing textbooks can provide specific steps for conducting the community assessment.

A community assessment is important since it can help to alleviate health problems by providing needed services that are not being adequately provided through other channels. Here are some general considerations when conducting a community assessment:

- Community Demographics: This information is available from statistics collected by the U.S. Census and is available at the library or on the internet.

- General demographics can include: sex, race, age, and birth rates. Specific demographics can include: number of homeless people in the community; incidence rates for various communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and AIDS; cancer incidence; and teenage pregnancies. These statistics are available in the library, at the local health department, and on the internet.

Once you have determined what the health problems in your community are, do some research to find out which health problems are being addressed and which are not. Contact local health groups, watch newspapers, and ask community leaders for information about services and projects currently provided. By the process of elimination, you can determine where the needs are and how resources can best be utilized. Once the focus of your project has been determined, plan your project.

Planning and Implementing

After completing the community assessment, use the data collected to plan the project. Form a project team to identify goals, the number of nursing students involved, where and when the project will take place, community organizations that might help with the project, and how many people you think might participate. Ask faculty to guide you--especially those faculty who teach community or public health.

Implement the project. Be sure to publicize the activities to the target population. Keep copies of any publicity, photos, flyers, press releases. Remember to thank cooperating community organizations and sponsors for their participation. Recognize those involved in the project by highlighting their participation in newsletters and college newspapers.

Evaluate the project. How was it conducted? What was learned that would be beneficial to others?

NSNA Community Health Awards Program

The NSNA 2011-2012 Community Health / Disaster Preparedness Committee will award the following Community Health awards at the NSNA 60th Anniversary Convention & Alumni Reunion in Pittsburgh, PA, April 11 – 15, 2012:

- Most Successful Statewide Community Health Project, Certificate and \$100
- Most Successful School Community Health Projects, Certificate and \$100

Please refer to the 2012 NSNA Awards and Honors Booklet on the committee web pages (go to www.nсна.org/ProgramActivities/CommHealthDisasterPrep.aspx for more information and the application.

Mark Your Calendars Now!

Completed 2012 Community Health Award applications with supporting materials must be received at NSNA Headquarters by March 16, 5:00 pm EST to be eligible for consideration.

A Word about the Image of Nursing...

Participating in community activities not only provides an important community service, it also increases visibility for the nursing profession. Every contact we make with the public has a lasting impression. The way we speak, our appearance, and the way we dress and act convey our individual and collective image. We all have a responsibility to enhance and foster a positive image of the profession. Conducting community health projects is one way to let the public know that we care enough about their health and well-being to do something about it.

Community Health Projects School Chapter Committee Responsibilities*

If you do not yet have a community health committee at your school, use the following list of responsibilities to help form one:

1. Evaluate effectiveness of community health activities conducted in the past.
2. Review resolutions relevant to community health that were passed at school, at your state convention and at NSNA's Annual Convention.
3. Identify two or three goals and a theme for the year.
4. Become familiar with NSNA and state community health contests and applications.
5. Read NSNA's Community Health Project Guidelines.
6. Conduct a community health needs assessment.
7. Plan and implement a community health project based on community health needs assessment.
8. Publicize community health activities.
9. Initiate and facilitate appropriate partnerships with community health organizations.

*See your chapter bylaws for the Community Health role and responsibilities specific to your school or state chapter.



Earn credit when you **Participating in Community Health Projects**

As a student leader, you'll learn and practice important leadership skills by participating in community health projects sponsored by your NSNA school chapter or state association. NSNA members may earn formal credit for the leadership service learning that is inherent in community health activities. Consider approaching faculty to explore the possibility of having your start-a-chapter experience counted toward course requirements or independent study elective credit. Use your course syllabus to see if you can meet the objectives with the following leadership activities.

Community Health Project Activities

- Establish a Community Health committee, or;
- Participate in a committee already established.

By participating in this activity, you will be able to:

- Identify and list your personal leadership attributes;
- Evaluate your personal capacity for leadership;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complex role organizations play to serve the community health needs.

Please visit the Community Health/Disaster Preparedness web page at www.nсна.org/ProgramActivities/CommHealthDisasterPrep.aspx for more information on how you can earn academic credit and recognition for participating in NSNA's Community Health Projects Program.

Calendar of National Health Observances

January

- Cervical Health Awareness Month
- Glaucoma Awareness Month
- National Birth Defects Prevention Month
- National Radon Action Month
- Thyroid Awareness Month
- National Folic Acid Awareness Week (January 4-10)
- National Nurse Anesthetist Week (January 23-29)
- National Intravenous Nurses Day (January 25)

February

- AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month
- American Heart Month
- International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month
- National Children's Dental Health Month
- National Wise Health Consumer Month
- PeriAnesthesia Nurse Awareness Week (February 1-7)
- World Salt Awareness Week (February 1-7)
- Give Kids A Smile Day (American Dental Association, February 5)
- National Wear Red Day Women's Heart Disease Awareness, February 5)
- Burn Awareness Week (February 7-13)
- National Donor Day (February 14)
- Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week (February 7-14)
- Cardiovascular Professional Week (February 14-21)
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March

- National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
- National Endometriosis Awareness Month
- National Nutrition Month®
- National Social Work Month
- Save Your Vision Month
- Registered Dietitian Day (Mar 10)
- World Kidney Day (March 11)
- National Patient Safety Awareness Week (March 6-12)
- Dental Assistant Recognition Week (March 7-13)
- National Sleep Awareness Week® (March 7-13)
- National Problem Gambling Awareness Week (March 7-13)
- National Pulmonary Rehabilitation Week (March 14-21)
- Brain Awareness Week (March 15-18)
- National Poison Prevention Week (March 20-26)
- Gastrointestinal Nurses Day (March 24)
- World Tuberculosis Day (March 24)
- National Doctor's Day (March 30)

April

- Alcohol Awareness Month
- Foot Health Awareness Month
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome Awareness Month
- National Autism Awareness Month
- National Cancer Control Month
- National Child Abuse Prevention Month
- National Donate Life Month
- National Facial Protection Month
- National Minority Health Awareness Month

- National Occupational Therapy Month
- National Sarcoidosis Awareness Month
- National Youth Sports Safety Month
- Occupational Therapy Month
- Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month
- Women's Eye Health and Safety Month
- Root Canal Awareness Week (March 28-April 3)
- World Health Day (April 7)
- National Public Health Week (April 7-13)
- Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurse Week (April 18-24)
- National Radiology Nurses Day (April 19)
- National Occupational Health Nursing Week (April 19-25)
- Sexual Assault Awareness Month Day of Action (April 20)
- World Meningitis Day (April 24)

May

- American Stroke Month
- Better Hearing and Speech Month
- Healthy Vision Month
- Hepatitis Awareness Month
- Lupus Awareness Month
- Lyme Disease Awareness Month
- Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month
- Mental Health Month
- Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month
- National Arthritis Awareness Month
- National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month
- National Bike Month
- National Celiac Disease Awareness Month

- National High Blood Pressure Education Month
- National Neurofibromatosis Month
- National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month
- National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
- National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month
- National Toxic Encephalopathy and Chemical Injury Awareness Month
- Sturge-Weber Awareness Month
- Tuberous Sclerosis Awareness Month
- Ultraviolet Awareness Month
- National Infant Immunization Week (April 24-May 1)
- National Physical Education and Sport Week (May 1-7)
- Children's Mental Health Awareness Week (May 2-8)
- North American Occupational Safety and Health Week (May 2-8)
- Melanoma Monday (May 3)
- National Mental Health Counseling Week (May 3-9)
- National Nurses Day (May 6)
- **National Student Nurses Day (May 8)**
- National Nurses Week (May 6-12)
- Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Awareness Day (May 8)
- Food Allergy Awareness Week (May 9-15)
- National Alcohol- and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Week (May 9-15)
- National Hospital and Healthcare Week (May 10-16)
- National Stuttering Awareness Week (May 10-16)
- Fibromyalgia Awareness Day (May 12)
- Florence Nightingale's Birthday (May 12)
- International Nurses Day (May 12)

- National School Nurse Day (May 12)
- National Nursing Home Week (May 14-20)
- National EMS Week (May 17-23)
- HIV Vaccine Awareness Day (May 18)
- World Hepatitis Day (May 19)
- World No Tobacco Day (May 31)

June

- Fireworks Safety Month
- Home Safety Month
- National Aphasia Awareness Month
- National Congenital Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Awareness Month
- National Scleroderma Awareness Month
- National Scoliosis Awareness Month
- Sun Safety Week (June 1-7)
- National Cancer Survivors Day (June 6)
- National Headache Awareness Week (June 6-12)
- National Vascular Nursing Week (June 7-13)
- National Nurse Assistant Week (June 10-17)
- National Men's Health Week (June 14-20)
- World Sickle Cell Day (June 19)
- Lightning Safety Week (June 20-26)
- National HIV Testing Day (June 27)
- Eye Safety Awareness Week (June 27-July 5)

July

- Cord Blood Awareness Month
- International Group B Strep Awareness Month
- Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month
- UV Safety Month

August

- Cataract Awareness Month
- Children's Eye Health and Safety Month
- National Immunization Awareness Month
- Psoriasis Awareness Month
- Spinal Muscular Atrophy Awareness Month
- National Minority Donor Awareness Day (August 1)
- National Health Center Week (August 8-14)

September

- Childhood Cancer Month
- Fruit and Veggies - More Matters Month
- Leukemia & Lymphoma Awareness Month
- National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month
- National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month
- National Cholesterol Education Month
- National Infant Mortality Awareness Month
- National Pediculosis Prevention Month/Head Lice Prevention Month
- National Sickle Cell Month
- Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
- Prostate Cancer Awareness Month
- Reye's Syndrome Awareness Month
- Whole Grains Month
- National Suicide Prevention Week (September 5-11)
- National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day (September 18)
- National Farm Safety & Health Week (September 19-25)
- National Rehabilitation Awareness Celebration (September 19-25)
- World Alzheimer's Day (September 21)
- Family Health & Fitness Day

- USA (September 25)
- National Mesothelioma Awareness Day (September 26)
- World Heart Day (September 26)
- World Rabies Day (September 28)
- Healthcare Housekeepers Week (September 13-19)
- Nephrology Nurses Week (September 13-19)
- Neonatal Nurses Day (September 15)
- National Surgical Technologists Week (September 20-26)

October

- Eye Injury Prevention Month
- Halloween Safety Month
- National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- National Celiac Disease Awareness Month
- National Dental Hygienist/
- National Dental Hygiene Month
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month
- National Domestic (*and Workplace*) Violence Awareness Month
- National Down Syndrome Awareness Month
- National Medical Librarians Month
- National Physical Therapy Month
- National Spina Bifida Awareness Month
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month
- Talk About Prescriptions Month
- National Sarcoidosis Awareness Week (October 1-7)
- National Gerontological Nurses Week (October 1-8)
- National Fire Prevention Week (October 3-9)
- Mental Illness Awareness Week (October 3-9)

- Hearing Aid Awareness Week (October 3-10)
- National Child Health Day (October 5)
- National Nurse-Midwifery Week (October 4-10)
- National Physician Assistants Week (October 6-12)
- World Mental Health Day (October 10)
- Emergency Nurses Week (October 10-16)
- National Depression Screening Day® (October 11)
- Bone and Joint Decade National Action Week (October 12-20)
- Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day (October 13)
- World Food Day (October 16)
- National Drug-Free Work Week (October 19-25)
- World Osteoporosis Day (October 20)
- Red Ribbon Week (Drug-Free America Week, October 23-31)
- Respiratory Care Week (October 24-30)
- Lung Health Day (October 27)
- International Orthopedic Nurses Day (October 30)

November

- American Diabetes Month
- COPD Awareness Month
- Diabetic Eye Disease Month
- Foot Health Issues Related to Diabetes Awareness Month
- Lung Cancer Awareness Month
- National Family Caregivers Month
- National Healthy Skin Month
- National Hospice Palliative Care Month
- Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month
- Prematurity Awareness Month
- Pulmonary Hypertension Awareness Month
- Medical Surgical Nurses Week (November 1-7)

- Drowsy Driving Prevention Week (November 2-8)
- Forensic Nurses Week (November 8-12)
- National Nurse Practitioner Week (November 8-15)
- Prematurity Awareness Day (November 17)
- Great American Smoke-out (November 18)
- Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease Awareness Week (November 18-24)
- National Survivors of Suicide Day (November 20)

December

- Safe Toys and Gifts Month
- National Aplastic Anemia and MDS Awareness Week (December 1-7)
- World AIDS Day (December 1)
- National Handwashing Awareness Week (December 5-11)