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## About the Comprehensive School Health Manual

Dear Manual Reader,

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) is proud to present this updated and revised edition of the Comprehensive School Health Manual.

The manual has been prepared in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Education and with input from experts in many aspects of child and adolescent health, including Massachusetts school nurses and nurse leaders. At the time of publication, this second edition incorporates the most complete and up-to-date information on the policy and practice of school health in the Commonwealth.

Each week, the School Health Unit of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health receives numerous telephone requests for information and consultation. The organization and content of the first edition of the Comprehensive School Health Manual — published in 1995 — was largely based on the content areas of the many requests received prior to its development and publication. This second edition follows the same approach, aiming to address a range of newly emerging issues in health care as well as providing timely revisions to information set forth in the original manual.

We encourage you to search the manual as a first step in obtaining any information you may need. Such explorations of the manual may also facilitate your comfort level in using it. On the other hand, should you require assistance, the School Health Unit continues to be available, whenever necessary.

For this second edition, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health opted to create and distribute — to all schools in the Commonwealth — this searchable CD version of the manual. The decision to employ this medium was based on a number of considerations:

- the fact that computer technology is present in most schools and school health facilities;

- the likelihood that the greatly expanded content of this edition, which includes many new topics and considerably more extensive resources and references, would prove cumbersome for many users in hard-copy format; and
- the ability to combine rapid search capability on a CD with clickable links.

The Comprehensive School Health Manual is also available online:  
<http://www.maclearinghouse.com/schoolhealthmanual.htm>.

For detailed information about the purpose of the manual, who should use it, and how it can be used, see the [Introduction](#).

### **Suggestions for Using the Manual**

While the manual is most versatile when used either in the CD format or online via the website, it may also be useful to print out a hard copy — including the detailed index — for easy reference. We recommend printing a copy of the entire manual and housing it in a place in the school that permits easy access by any member of the school staff. Two large 3-ring binders will be needed if one is printing it in its entirety. Commercial copying of the manual is recommended, however it will also print out well on a high quality printer.

The CD of the manual may be introduced to nursing staff at an in-service session designed to train them about the new manual. The Department recommends that the school nurses share the manual with the many school personnel who may find it useful: administrators, school physician, behavioral health professionals, teachers, athletic directors, food service personnel, facilities managers, etc. These staff members should be encouraged to familiarize themselves with the contents by perusing it in its entirety at least once either by using the CD or the online version.

Massachusetts schools and boards of health are welcome to make additional copies of the CD to share with staff. **Please note:** *The Massachusetts Department of Public Health gives permission to make copies of the Comprehensive School Health Manual or portions thereof for noncommercial educational purposes only, provided credit is given to the MDPH. Copies of the original CD may not be sold.*

We sincerely hope that this manual will support your ongoing efforts to provide high quality, coordinated health care to students throughout the Commonwealth.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Anne H. Sheetz  
Director of School Health Services