



# The Principal and the School Nurse

Principal Michele Grimaldi

Nurse Nadine Miller

# Goals of the presentation

- Principal's Perspective
  - Insight into the Principal's perspective
- Nurse's Perspective
  - Insight into the Nurse's perspective



# Areas of Focus

1. Communication
2. Budget
3. Children with Chronic Conditions
4. Evaluation
5. Community Connection
6. Rules – Best Practice

# Communication: The Foundation

- Nurse's Perspective: "Non-judgmental, honest, sensitive, active listening, etc."
- "Principal's Perspective: "No one like surprises."
  - Prior to students returning
    - Process, Procedures, & Protocols
  - Regular/Ongoing Communication
    - Process Review and Calendar Preview
  - 'In the moment' or Irregular Communication
    - Emergencies, Hostile Parents, etc.
    - Impact of FERPA on communication



# Budget: Pencils vs Band-Aids



- It's the Law – No Immunizations – No School
  - Bodies in the seat vs Policy and Law
- Nurse's Perspective: "Here's what I need to do my job."
- Principal's Perspective: "We're broke. What are our kids not going to get this year?"
  - School Nurse Budget – Prioritize needs
  - Donations



# Children with Chronic Illness

- Nurse's perspective: "This is one of the primary focus areas of my time."
- Principal's perspective: "Insert yourself"
- Advocacy
- Be aware of legal implications of complaining about being out of compliance
- School nurse is part of the school organization
- Faculty Training
- The frequent fliers



# Evaluation

- Nurse's Perspective: "You are not qualified to evaluate my nursing."
- Principal's Perspective: "Let's make sure we're looking through the same lens."
  - What is best process within state's guidelines for determining if the nurse
  - meets the requirements of the job?
  - What is valued in your school?
  - What are your outcomes?

# Community Connections: Building Bridges

- Nurse's Perspective: "No time and I don't get paid."
- Principal's Perspective: "Be a part of the team."
  - You are a part of the larger school community – Family Nights, PTA, Orientations, etc. – You are a professional. Two-way street – help nurse-help student
  - Homelessness
  - Truancy
  - Food Insecurity
  - School Safety



# Rules – Best Practice

- Nurse's Perspective: "Evidenced based practice and student safety trumps all."
- Principal's Perspective: "I getting' hammered by the parents..."
- "Rules" vs. Culture
- Bake sales, Parties, Lice, Field Trips, etc. – Feeding students



"Too often we underestimate the power  
of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a  
listening ear, an honest compliment, or  
the smallest act of caring; all of which  
have the potential to turn a life around."

—Leo Buscaglia



## The School Nurse and the Principal

### Recommended Agenda Items for Admin & Nurse Communication

- All policies/laws that impact on the school nurse (e.g., screenings, immunizations, exclusions)
- Accessibility Schedule
- Budget/finances
- Children with Chronic Conditions - 504/IEP/Behavior Plans/Chronic Illness/ Homebound
- School Nurse participation on teams/committees, “frequent fliers” and those with behavioral challenges who are NOT identified as having a chronic conditions.
- Common practice around information streams
- Communication with Administration, Community - PTA, student orientations
- Communication with parents/guardians (caregivers) and hostile parent calls
- Coverage and substitute policy
- Emergency Protocols - 9-1-1, Child Protective Services, Safety- Lockdown/Evacuation/Fire/Disaster etc.
- Evaluation (of the school nurse) Process
- Goals: mine (and how can I help you achieve yours?)
- Homeless/ Truancy
- I shouldn't have to do that! ---- When you have no choice
- Language clarification – jargon, building codes, etc.
- NASN Standards of Practice, State Nurse Practice Act, Emergency Guidelines
- Regular communication vs. prn communication
- School traditions/ rules
- Threat Assessments & Communication – Suicide, Cutting, Violence, Overdose, Cyberbullying, etc.
- When to send children to the school nurse