



Adolescent Health

Question: What health program in Benton Harbor has been continuously open for over 20 years and provides preventive and treatment health services to young people without regard to ability to pay?

Answer: The Benton Harbor High School Adolescent Health Clinic.

The school based health center, located next to Benton Harbor High School at 870 Colfax Avenue, provides services to youth in Berrien County between the ages of 10-21 years old.

Opened in 1987, the mutual goal of the Berrien County Health Department and the Benton Harbor Area Schools through the Clinic is to promote good health and prevent disease, disabilities and other health barriers that could interfere with school attendance and interrupt the student's education.

The health clinic is staffed with a nurse practitioner, health assistant and an office assistant - all employed by the Berrien County Health Department. A holistic model of health is used at the Clinic with equal emphasis

placed on the treatment of the mind, body and soul.

Services provided at the school clinic are tailored to specifically address the needs of adolescents and their parents.



Some services provided by the school based clinic include:

- Physical exams and health risk assessment
- acute (sick) visits
- immunizations
- behavioral health referral
- Help with MI Child/Healthy Kids insurance application and enrollment
- health education
- sexually transmitted disease and Human Immunovirus (STD/HIV)
- pregnancy testing.

"Healthy adolescents should receive health assessments every 2 years, which includes both a physical exam and a risk assessment," according to Robin Henry, Nurse Practitioner at the Clinic. "The physical exam includes a complete and thorough health history and a review of the immunization history. The risk assessment helps identify additional needs the teen may have." Adolescent health has changed over the years to focus on the belief that decision making and avoiding risky behaviors are equally important in the teens overall health.

Insurance for Adolescents

Access to health care for the adolescent population, in particular, is lacking. Barriers to access include the lack of adequate health insurance. All youth who are currently uninsured are eligible and encouraged to apply for MI Child/Healthy Kids insurance. Applications are completed online in the clinic and eligibility is determined immediately.

Every Adolescent Physical Exam Should Include...

1 A complete and comprehensive health history which includes assessments of high risk behaviors and physical and mental health development.



2 A complete physical assessment, measure of body mass index (BMI) to check for obesity, and a blood sugar screen for persons with a BMI greater than the 95th percentile. Screening for sickle cell disease, hemoglobin, vision and dental needs should all be included.

3 Age appropriate health education with anticipatory guidance related to safety, nutrition, exercise and physical activity and information on healthy lifestyles and accident and disease prevention.

Berrien County Health

Department:
Preventing Disease,
Prolonging Life and
Protecting the
Health of the
Community.



September Health: Focus on the Family

September is "Be Prepared... Protect Your Family" Month. The Berrien County Health Department wants to make sure that your family is safe and healthy as the kids go back to school and the weather gets cooler! This month we will provide you with information on Adolescent Health, Opportunities for the Uninsured, Substance Abuse and Mental Health, and Influenza and Pneumonia. For more information about any of these topics, **please call the health department at 926-7121.**

Immunizations for Adolescents



Assuring up-to-date immunizations are very important for adolescents' health. In addition to the standard vaccinations, the latest immunization recommendations for adolescents include Gardasil and Menactra.

Gardasil provides protection to young women against specific virus's that have been shown to cause cervical cancer. Parents are encouraged to have their teens immunized before they become sexually active. Menactra provides protection against Meningococcal disease, a serious illness that affects both the brain and spinal cord. High school seniors are encouraged to get this vaccine before going to college.

School Based Clinic Hours

The health clinic is open daily, Monday through Friday, from 9:00 am until 3:30 pm. The clinic is open year round including school holidays.

For additional information about the school-based clinic, call

269-925-4500

The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor

769 Pipestone
P.O. Box 706
926-7121

M-139 Office
2106 S. M-139
927-5623

School Based
870 Colfax Ave
925-4500

Niles

1205 N. Front St.
684-2800

Three Oaks

21 N. Elm
756-2008

Or visit us on the web at www.berriencohlthdept.org

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