

## California school-based health centers increase

There are now 200 school-based health centers (SBHCs) in California, up from 183 just one year ago. As a result of this growth, 13,500 more children now have access to health care at school. With another 45 sites in the works, these numbers are expected to continue to grow. This growth is a credit to school districts, health care providers and other school health advocates who know that supporting healthy children is a smart investment. There is still much more to do, but this significant milestone is worth celebrating.

### Impact on Academic Performance

- Research shows that SBHCs have a positive impact on absences, dropout rates, disciplinary problems and other academic outcomes
- Using SBHC services is associated reduces the dropping out of high school
- Students receiving SBHC mental health services improve their grades more quickly than their peers



### Impact on Health Care

- SBHCs increase access to health care
- SBHC users are likely to use primary care — both medical and behavioral health — more consistently
- SBHC users are more likely to have yearly dental and medical check-ups
- SBHC users are less likely to go to the emergency room or be hospitalized

### Impact on Health Care Costs

- Research shows that investments in SBHCs generate savings through reduced use of high cost services, thereby increasing access without increasing overall Medicaid expenditures
- Studies have also found that SBHCs reduce inappropriate emergency room use, inpatient, drug and emergency department use, and hospitalization among children with asthma
- School-based immunization initiatives prevent disease and can also save money for society

SBHCs are most effective when they actively engage families and communities in their efforts to support student health and success. Visit the School Based Health Centers Association website at [www.schoolhealthcenters.org](http://www.schoolhealthcenters.org) to learn more about the benefits of school based health centers. The website includes proven examples, toolkits, print and electronic resources on information from asthma to family engagement, to teen dating violence, and contact information for effective programs.