



Bringing Access to Affordable, Quality Care for York City Students



Who We Are



Family First Health is a community health center founded in 1970 in York. Today, we provide primary health services across 8 sites located in Adams, Lancaster, Lebanon, and York Counties. With an integrated approach to health, we provide primary medical and dental services, behavioral health, substance use services, optometry, and a wide range of community health programs.

Family First Health provides care to more than 25,000 patients annually, for all ages, and in any language, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. We believe that access to high quality, comprehensive health care is a right of everyone in our community, and our programs and services support anyone seeking care while also improving the health of the entire community.

School-Based Health Concept

School-based health centers provide care where students already spend most of their time: in school. According to the national School-Based Health Alliance, children face many obstacles to optimal health including family income, lack of insurance, systemic inequities, and lack of access to quality health care. School-based health centers are partnerships between community health organizations, like Family First Health, and schools to offer care that can include primary health care, dental care and mental health services.

School-based health centers promote improved health outcomes and health literacy for students and staff who use them. They also correlate with positive educational outcomes; students learn better, the attendance rate of students is increased, graduation rates improve, and drop-out rates decrease.

Our Impact at Hannah Penn K-8 School

Family First Health's Hannah Penn Center opened in 1997 with support from WellSpan Health, the City of York, and the School District of the City of York to make access to health care services easier for students. To this day, it is the only school-based health center in York County. The health center provides pediatric care, routine health exams, preventive care, referrals, integrated behavioral health services, and more to 40% of the students at the school.

"Having the School-Based Health Center gives me the chance to take ownership of my health. My dad doesn't have to leave work to pick me up from school and take me to the doctor. I can see the doctor during my school day by myself. This gives me the confidence to talk about what I need to be healthy."

Nicole, Hannah Penn K-8 Eighth Grade Student




Why We Plan to Establish a School-Based Health Center at William Penn Senior High School

Based on our strong historical partnership, the School District of the City of York and Family First Health are working together to expand the Hannah Penn Center model to the high school. In addition to better addressing the important health needs of adolescents, many of the District's students will have a seamless health support system from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

During the most recent school year, the school nurses' office received more than 10,000 visits - an average of about seven visits per student.

While some of the reasons for visits are easily handled by the nursing staff, many of them are complex and students would benefit from primary medical or behavioral health care from the staff housed at the school-based health center. Students report a number of chronic health conditions, like diabetes, asthma, ADHD, sickle cell disorder, seizure disorders, and psychiatric diagnoses, all conditions that our staff will be able to treat.



Each year a student averages about 7 visits to the nurses' office.

55% of the district's students experience acute poverty. The district reported a 28% transiency rate in 2018. Only 12% of students are proficient in math; 23% are proficient in reading.

Many students at the school face challenges in their everyday lives, inside and outside of school. York City School District students struggle with poverty, socioeconomic challenges that translate into a high transiency rate, and learning issues affecting academic achievement.

That's why a center like ours at the school is so necessary—to ensure that students get the support and care that they need so that health is not one of their barriers to engaging in education. Our center will offer the comprehensive, culturally competent, quality health care that students deserve, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay.

Establishing a School-Based Health Center at the William Penn Senior High School will benefit students, their families, and staff at the school.



Patient visits to the center will reduce the amount of time that students are outside of the classroom, and provide much-needed support for the school nursing staff. Students will not have to leave school for a half or full day to see a doctor. Challenges related to transportation will be eliminated as students will be able to walk down the hall to get the care that they need.

"The School District of the City of York is excited to build upon our decades long partnership with Family First Health to extend to our high school students. Having a health center inside William Penn Senior High School will allow our students to access the health care they need, during the school day, so they can focus on learning."
- Dr. Andrea J. Berry, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

Scan here to watch a video about the values of a Student-Based Health Center

