

MODULE 2 TOPIC 2 :

Explain how you described your role as a professional school nurse and the explanation how they described their role.

The person I chose to interview for this second topic was Scott, our daytime custodian at Tremont Elementary. I wanted to interview him because he works in the shadows of our school but is an integral part of our school community and plays a huge role in the lives of our students and staff everyday. Scott has been with the district for 23 years and has spent 19 of those years at Tremont. He knows every nook and cranny of our building. He said that of course, his main role is to clean the building each day but he also does a lot more than that. He is the first person that is called when a toilet is overflowing, a sink is clogged, someone is out of paper towels in their room or a child has vomited in the building- he is the one to clean it up. He also moves furniture and takes supplies that are received (Staples, Office Max, bathroom supplies, etc) to the correct location, makes sure that the sidewalks, playground areas and parking lots are safe for students and staff to be on when there is winter weather. But I think Scott's most important role is played during lunch time. He ensures that the 'Nut Free' tables are wiped down and then sanitized again so no student with a food allergy will have cross-contamination. He said he is always checking and cleaning the cafeteria floors of spilled food/drinks so that no one will slip and fall. Scott is very easy to talk to but does not like having the spotlight shone on him. He says that everything he does is "just part of my job," but to me, the students and staff, we could not be luckier than to have him as our custodian. Scott says he truly loves what he does and is still excited to come to work everyday after all of these years. I then went on to explain my role as the clinic nurse. I informed him that not only do I care for each student, staff and visitor that comes into the clinic, I also do hearing and vision screenings on all 1st, 3rd, 5th grades and all new students, verify immunizations are UTD, educate students and staff on medication administration (epi-pen, seizure meds, etc.)/CPR/AED use/choking/maturation/nutrition/dental care/first aid, monitor students/staff with communicable diseases, make sure that emergency medical forms, medications and supplies are prepared for field trips, make sure the emergency bag is prepared and ready at a moments notice for a fire (drill), evacuation, etc., among many other roles.

Discuss how your two professional roles can partner and collaborate in relation to one of the following meetings/plans (IEP, 504, IHP, EAP) that might be developed for children in your school.

Scott and I discussed how both of our professional roles could come together in relation to an IEP/504/IHP/EAP. First, I briefly explained to him what each of these meetings were about. "In the education setting, the nursing care plan is referred to as an IHP. Students whose healthcare needs affect or have the potential to affect safe and optimal school attendance and academic performance. An IEP, just like its name implies, is a unique

education plan specifically designed to meet the needs of an individual student with a disability, similar to how an IHP is designed to meet the health needs of an individual student with a health condition. 504 plan for a student with a disability is to provide the accommodations necessary for the student to attend, participate in, and be successful at school. A Section 504 plan speaks to the accommodations needed by the student. It is helpful to think of accommodations as actions to “level the playing field” for the student” (Galemore, 2015). I tried not to go into too much detail with each of these plans as I did not want to overwhelm or bore him ;)

We determined that our roles really come together when we have a student with a food allergy. Again, one of his main roles as day-time custodian is to make sure the cafeteria tables are cleaned thoroughly after each grade level is dismissed from lunch. Scott completely understands how detrimental it can be if residue is left from a specific food that a student has a food allergy to. His own son has a life-threatening shrimp allergy and has had to have epinephrine administered in the past. When it is determined that a student has a life-threatening food allergy, Scott is made aware of who the student is. Most students sit at the 'Peanut Free' table but some prefer not to. Scott knows who each food allergy student is and where they sit each day (which is very impressive when we have over 750 students in the building). Scott is trained each year on epi-pen administration (as well as CPR/AED/choking) by the nurse. By partnering together when it comes to students with food allergies, we can help to ensure the health and safety of each one.

Describe anything that either you or your colleague was surprised by during this role sharing experience.

I was very surprised to learn that Scott has taken a vested interest in knowing where each student with a life-threatening food allergy sits in the cafeteria each day. He pays very close attention to those particular students but also is constantly checking the cafeteria for signs of anyone choking. I know that he loves each student that goes to Tremont Elementary but I honestly did not know that he pays such close attention to our food allergy children and is also keeping a watchful eye on any signs of distress or danger while they eat lunch. Scott was surprised to learn of what all is involved with a class going on a field trip. He said he does not know about having Emergency Medical Forms for each student, or checking to see who has medication that must be taken with them (not just life-threatening allergy or asthma meds but also daily meds, diabetic and seizure medications). He was surprised when I told him what all is sent with the teacher in the medical bag on a field trip...he actually thought it was kind of funny when I said one of the items was a tooth necklace. I told him you just never know what a teacher might need when away from the building and the nurse :)

REFERENCES:

Galemore, C.A., & Sheetz, A. H. (2015). IEP, IHP, and Section 504 Primer for New School Nurses. *NASN School Nurse*, 30(2), 85-88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1942602X14565462>

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