

WHO School Health Services Guidelines for COVID-19

Introduction

1. Schools are not only places of learning but institutions that provide social protection, nutrition, opportunities for physical activity, health and emotional support.
2. Schools, other education and training institutions closed in more than 190 countries, affecting 1.57 billion children and youth - 90% of the world's student population.
3. Given the context of COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that the activities proposed are inclusive of COVID-19 related issues, for example, the safe reopening of schools among other pertinent topics.

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Roles and responsibilities

1. In the face of new health threats, public health crises and outbreaks, WHO's role and responsibilities are to develop and disseminate evidence-based guidance and guidelines.
2. This aims at supporting member states to better prepare, response and mitigate the impact of health crisis.
3. WHO has also the crucial role to mobilize partners to support member states.
4. In the context of COVID-19 pandemic, some key documents were developed or are still under development.

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Documents released

1. Guidance on considerations in adjusting school-related public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19.
2. Q & A on Schools and COVID-19: A range of questions and answers pertaining to schools reopening.
3. COVID-19 School Framework: This is currently under development by several UN agencies. It is a practical tool to support schools to better prepare and respond to COVID-19 pandemic.

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Under development

1. WHO Guidelines on School Health Services: it aims to provide national governments and other stakeholders with detailed guidance on the effectiveness, acceptability, and content of comprehensive school health services involving a health worker.
2. The primary target audience: (i) Policy makers; (ii) Programme managers; (iii) Private and stakeholders in the health and education sectors.
3. This will be published on October or November 2020.

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Under development

1. Guidelines on Mental Health Promotive and Preventive Interventions for Adolescents: Helping Adolescents to thrive.
2. These guidelines provide evidence-informed recommendations on promotive and preventive psychosocial interventions for mental health in adolescents.
3. The primary target audience for this guideline is national policy makers, planners and managers of governmental and nongovernmental health care programmes, and people working in international health and development agencies.
4. Will be published in September or October 2020 linked to the World Mental Health Day.

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Next Steps

1. Dissemination across all regions.
2. Country capacity strengthening on the use of guidance and guidelines.
3. Technical support to countries if needs of adaptation.
4. Mobilization of partners to support member states in using, adapting and implementing guidance and guidelines.