



**SALUTE** to  
Unsung Heroes

# School Nurses

Teachers and administrators are crucial advocates when ensuring our children receive a quality education. A role that sometimes goes under the radar is the job of a school nurse who provides medical assistance to make sure they are healthy while learning.

Their importance will be nationally recognized on May 6, when School Nurse Day is celebrated. According to the National Association of School Nurses, the holiday was adopted in 1972, under a proclamation made by President Gerald Ford. However, their daily duties should be celebrated throughout the year as these unsung heroes provide a safe and healthy place for schoolchildren and faculty.



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## ATTENDING TO EMERGENCIES

Statistics from the United States Department of Education states about 60 million primary and secondary-aged students attend public, charter or private schools daily. School nurses are exposed to numerous types of emergencies throughout their year. Here are a few common situations they face, as report-

ed by the NASN.

- Student and staff health-related emergencies or injuries.
- Weather-related situations.
- Hazardous material instances.

The position of the school nurse is even more complicated as many of these emergencies happen to young children who may not understand how

to communicate during distress.

## CREATING CARE PLANS

Nurses are required to become familiar with each of the students. The role can be daunting as they must provide accurate documentation and understand an individual's needs based on their family medical history. To create

these custom health strategies, a school nurse utilizes an individualized health care plan. Not only does this plan help them assess a student's needs during the school day, but it also develops guidelines to be taken during actual or potential emergencies that may occur on field trips or sponsored activities outside of normal hours.

## DISCOVERING PROBLEMS AT HOME

School nurses are prone to discovering signs of abuse or neglect that guidance counselors may fail to see without a student telling them. By analyzing symptoms and suspicious marks on a child's body, a nurse can report to the proper officials and potentially save a child from harm.

# Therapy and Service Dogs

It's no secret that our four-legged friends quickly become a part of the family and offer unconditional love to their owners. Dogs are also a great help to those with disabilities and to provide comfort for people in need.

With proper training, a canine can assist in facilities like schools, nursing homes, hospitals and even in-home care.

If you're unfamiliar with the difference between a service and therapy dog, the Americans With Disabilities Act states, "service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities." This can include blindness, deafness and even aiding some people through a seizure.

While therapy dogs aren't supported under the ADA, their ability to provide psychological benefits to people during times of stress can be beneficial. Here is a more in-depth look at the responsibilities and benefits of both therapy and service dogs.

## THE THERAPY DOGS

According to the American Kennel Club, therapy dogs are trained to volunteer in places like schools or nursing homes.



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Their mission is to improve the mood and invite their serene presence to a sometimes-stressful environment. The Mayo Clinic recommends people facing these situations to ask their health care provider about a therapy dog program. Therapy dogs can help:

- Those with dementia and cardiovascular disease.
- People receiving cancer treatment.
- Veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Those in long-term care

facilities.

If you or a loved one could benefit from a therapy dog, but programs are lacking in your area, contact officials about your desire to begin one. With community involvement and fundraising, it's possible to bring this helpful service to your neighborhood.

## SERVICE DOGS

While therapy canines are proficient in providing mental serenity, service dogs are highly trained companions who serve

those with physically debilitating conditions. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, these specialized pups excel at:

- Assisting with navigation for those with low vision or blindness.
- Providing non-violent protection or rescue work.
- Alerting individuals to the presence of allergens.
- Providing physical support to those with balance or mobility disabilities.

Since service dogs are

allowed in nearly every facility to assist their handlers, it's important to treat them with respect and avoid distracting them from their mission. You can typically recognize a working canine by a specialized harness or vest.

Attempting to pet or call attention to a service dog may cause them to see you as a threat to their handler. Remember, they are highly trained canines with one thing in mind — protecting their person.

# Personal Trainers

Under the guidance of a professional personal trainer, you can achieve your body's pinnacle condition through a reformed diet and exercise regimen.

Their advice and expertise are efficient tools they utilize to create a custom plan for your specific situation. While losing weight and committing to a healthier lifestyle is beneficial to your quality of life, an expert can develop a strategy to ensure you reach your goals safely.

Their dedication will keep you motivated throughout the experience.

## QUALIFICATIONS

While certifications can vary based on different facilities' requirements, most professional trainers hold valuable knowledge to guide you during your quest for fitness. They understand the advanced human anatomy, nutrition and hold an in-depth comprehension of exercise science. According to the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, trainers who are seeking accreditation should complete a program from one of these four bodies.

They are the American College of Sports Medicine, the National Academy of Sports Medicine, the American Council on Exercise, and the



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National Strength and Coordination Association.

Most trainers also hold and maintain CPR and AED certifications, as they must be prepared for physical emergencies faced by their clients. Heavy exertion can sometimes lead to cardiac or breathing problems which require an expert to maintain stability

until help arrives.

## CHOOSING A TRAINER

While researching a personal trainer to hire, begin by ensuring they are accredited from one of the agencies above. Once satisfied with their qualifications, you should ask them for references from previous clients and get

in touch with them. They will give you a general idea about their experience and results.

During the initial meeting with your prospective trainer, pay attention to how they answer your questions and discuss a personal strategy. Be honest with the idea of how comfortable you feel around them, their genuine interest in

your success and their methods of motivation; encouragement should be positive reinforcement.

You should also make sure your budget fits into their expected compensation. The road to fitness is a long-term commitment and finances shouldn't play a role in inhibiting the results.

# Emergency Dispatchers

During an emergency, first responders like police and firefighters are often praised with their quick thinking and problem solving, which saves many lives. While their respect is highly deserved, there is another set of heroes behind the scenes in public safety.

Emergency operators are often the first voice a person in distress is connected to. They must identify the type of emergency, dispatch responders to the right location and attempt to keep the other person on the line calm.

The job of a dispatcher can be incredibly stressful as they guide people through sometimes life-changing moments and chaotic situations.

## CALLING 911

During an emergency, it may be difficult to compose yourself while you call for help. Prepare yourself by understanding these etiquette tips when calling 911, from the National Emergency Number Association; they can help you receive immediate help rather than a delayed response.

**Stay calm:** Answer each question asked by the opera-



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tor. Even if it doesn't seem pertinent to the situation, your answers are important to get responders to you quickly;

**Know your location:** While GPS can give dispatchers an idea of where you are, make sure to disclose your exact location. If the address is unknown, look for street signs, landmarks or well-known buildings in the area;

**Be clear and concise:** Describe the emergency as clearly as possible. Include

the condition of the patient, their age and what happened. This will ensure the operator sends the right type of relief immediately.

You can prepare your home for an emergency by clearly posting your physical address on the front of the building and both sides of your mailbox.

## AVOID THE BYSTANDER EFFECT

If you witness an emergen-

cy in a public or crowded place, don't assume someone else will step in and call officials. The International Academies of Emergency Dispatch describes the bystander effect as the presence of others discouraging an individual from helping in a drastic situation. When you are in the area as disaster strikes, make sure to call 911 and wait with someone in need until help arrives. If you are trained to tend to emer-

gencies, ensure another witness makes the phone call while you assist the patient.

## SAYING THANK YOU

After a situation is resolved, you can show appreciation to your acting operator by reaching out to their management and discussing their optimal assistance. Make it public by sharing the story on social media and encouraging your peers to increase their trust in the local emergency services.



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# Pilots: Stewards of Safety

Modern America relies on airplanes to rush us through the air safely. The pilots in control of those planes sacrifice time with their families at home to travel the country and beyond while ensuring passengers reach their destinations safely.

The role of the pilot goes far beyond their commercial responsibilities they may be most known for. They provide tremendous relief in our country's mili-

tary and even life-saving medical situations.

## **AIR FORCE PILOTS**

Military pilots are required to master precision and knowledge of air space while controlling the most advanced aircraft ever created. To excel in this position, pilots must meet strict physical, medical and academic requirements.

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, the United States Air Force was officially founded on Sept. 18, 1947, when Stuart Symington was sworn in as its first secretary.

While airplanes had long been used in America's forces, the new branch was

necessary as air technology and pilots began advancing.

Recent data shows that the Air Force employs more than 12,000 pilots who are tasked with protecting and serving the country.

## **ROLE IN ORGAN TRANSPLANTS**

Time is of the essence during nearly all organ transplants. When a donor gives the gift of life to someone on a waiting list, it's not always feasible for over-the-road drivers to make it to their destination promptly.

Fortunately, there are trained pilots who are always on call to operate airplanes or helicopters to make transporting an organ successful. Experts must

be ready to leave at a moment's notice which requires incomparable planning and sacrifice that should be praised.

## **A GROWING INDUSTRY**

While different levels of air travel require certain qualifications and on-hand training, each member in charge of navigating airspace is tasked with numerous hours behind the controls. Many begin their passion for aircraft at a young age and never stop honing their skills, even after certification is achieved.

According to the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the projected demand for pilots over the next 20 years will reach 790,000.

# Technology Gurus

If you have ever stopped to think about modern conveniences offered by technology, it can be difficult to wrap your head around it.

Smartphones and software have rapidly evolved to make life easier to manage in nearly every aspect.

The creative minds who build advancements often go unnoticed when compared to the actual apps or technology they create. Their unique perspective and understanding of building innovations from the ground up has propelled things like entertainment, health care and task management.

Here are a few fields where experts showcase their skills and advance the way we live.

## **SOFTWARE DEVELOPER**

The developers in charge of writing code solutions and building applications are important members of the technology puzzle.

They are typically tasked with designing problem-solving software that improves the functionality of computer programs.

Many in this role are also in charge of repairing flaws of their applications and ensuring they are performing at



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their peak. They are required to understand various programming languages while staying informed of and utilizing cutting-edge technology.

## **COMPUTER AND INFORMATION RESEARCH SCIENTISTS**

The United States Department of Labor defines this role as those who invent

and design new approaches to computing technology while finding innovative uses for existing technology. They are expected to hold thorough knowledge of how algorithms explain instructions to computers. Through this understanding, they can develop new methods to enhance performance and stability issues.

They also play a momen-

tous role in advancing robots and machines. By working with engineers who are involved with robotic hardware, they can test the functionality of how well their robots are completing the tasks they were invented for. They are built for many different reasons including mass-manufacturing or even collecting and sending us data from outer space.

## **INFORMATION SECURITY ANALYSTS**

With so much of our personal information stored on the internet, security analysts are required to ensure the sensitive data is secure and develop disaster plans to recover if a breach takes place. They are tasked with monitoring the security of their organization's networks and even finding ways to expose vulnerabilities.

# Olympic Athletes

In 2020, America's brightest stars will head to Tokyo to compete in the Summer Olympics.

This worldwide celebration of fitness and competition excites spectators from countries across the globe. Supporting our athletes throughout the games is one way we can say thank you, as they represent the United States on the grandest stage.

So, why should Olympic athletes be considered unsung heroes? For a start, their determination and passion for their sports send a powerful message to the youth in our country.

These hard-working role models show children that they can achieve their goals with the right mindset.

Here are a few notable athletes who beat the odds and excelled at the highest level.

## **MICHAEL PHELPS**

Phelps caught the country's attention during the 2008 Beijing Games when he won a record-setting eight gold medals during swimming competitions. According to the International Olympic Committee, the "most decorated Olympian of all time," would go on to win a total of 28 medals, with 23 being gold, before his retirement after the 2016 games.

## **JACKIE JOYNER-KERSEE**

A track-and-field superstar



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during the '80s and early '90s, Kersee was voted the greatest female athlete of the 20th century by Sports Illustrated. While she narrowly fell short of gold in her first appearance during the 1984 Olympics, she would go on to win six medals throughout her career, with

three being gold. Kersee excelled in the games competing in the heptathlon which consisted of a 200-meter run, an 800-meter run and 100-meter hurdles.

## **MUHAMMAD ALI**

Participating in the Rome

1960 games as Cassius Clay, the world-renowned boxer would dominate his competition and earn the gold medal after defeating European champion Zbigniew Pietrzykowski in the final round. He was only 18 at the time.

Ali would go on to become

one of the most successful boxers in the world and a philanthropist for humanitarian affairs. He returned to the Olympic stage in 1996 when he was invited to light the famous flame to celebrate the Opening Ceremony of the Atlanta Olympic Games.