

## **Hoover High School Health Center Fills a Gap for Students Who Access Services**

Hoover High School, located in the City Heights neighborhood of San Diego, is the only high school with an on-campus Health Center in the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD). Hoover High is diverse with a student population that is approximately two-thirds Hispanic/Latino and nearly 40 percent African-American/Black or Asian/Pacific Islander. In addition, 27 different languages are spoken in the homes of Hoover High students. The student population also shows a number of risk factors for both future health problems and involvement with the criminal justice system. Specifically, Hoover High has the highest rate of teen pregnancy in SDUSD and 30 to 40 percent of the student body is considered overweight or obese. In addition, in 2003-04, Hoover High was ranked first in SDUSD for the number of reported drug and alcohol offenses, violent crime, and weapons on campus.

Hoover High's Health Center operates while school is in session and has a staff that includes nurse practitioners, a consulting physician, a dentist, a case manager, and a licensed therapist. During the 2006-07 school year, the Health Center handled nearly 6,000 patient visits for an illness or injury, as well as conducted over 2,000 vision, hearing, or dental screenings, managed students' chronic medical conditions, and provided dental services. In 2006-07, The California Endowment provided funding for SANDAG's Criminal Justice Research Division to analyze the results of satisfaction surveys, completed by students who had used the services of the Health Center. This analysis was part of a larger project that evaluated health-related curricula using pre- and post-knowledge and behavior tests. A summary of the outcomes found through SANDAG's evaluation and Hoover High's records are listed below.

- Of the nearly 6,000 patient visits (visits for an illness or injury, rather than preventive care) during the 2006-07 school year, under 400 (6%) were sent home, preventing absenteeism.
- Nearly three-quarters (71%) of students who completed a survey reported that they would have missed school if they had not been able to access health services at school.
- One-third (34%) of student survey respondents reported that they would *not* have gone elsewhere if the Health Center's services were not available to them.
- Nearly 100 percent of survey respondents reported that the Health Center's appearance, their treatment by staff, and the care they received was either "excellent" or "good."

The Health Center has proven itself a valuable resource in preventing student absenteeism and filling a need for students who otherwise would not have received medical care. These positive outcomes highlight the impact that a school and its partners can have when they are committed to students' health. In times of tight budgets, prevention services like those provided by the Health Center are increasingly valuable, especially with a high-risk population such as Hoover High's students.