GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CONDOM AVAILABILITY POLICY INTRODUCTION

The mission of the DC Department of Health is to support young people in making healthy choices that impact them today and in the future. Studies confirm that following good health practices during younger ages carry forward when young people grow into adults. Statistics show that many young adults in the District are engaging in sexual activity and they are potentially putting themselves at risk for sexually transmitted infections. Recently the DC Department of Health offered voluntary screening to young people ages 15 to 21 for sexually transmitted diseases. The Department found very high infection rates for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea----- as much as five times the national average. Over the past 5 years, the number of HIV/AIDS cases doubled among 15 to 24 year olds. These disease rates make it imperative that young people are offered critical information and support to protect their health.

Due to these serious health concerns for District young people, the DC Department of Health, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, and the District of Columbia Public Schools have committed to expanding the sexual health education, counseling, and condom distribution services that are available through the Condom Availability Policy (CAP). Laboratory studies show that when used consistently and correctly, condoms are 95 percent effective in reducing the risk of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. The CAP ensures that condoms and dental dams are made available to District High School students. School nurses are a central point of availability for condoms and information in schools. In addition, the CAP gives flexibility to schools to designate other trained individuals to be a point of availability for the condoms, dental dams, sexual health counseling, and information. The Department of Health- HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, and Tuberculosis Administration (HAHSTA) will facilitate training for school-designated individuals.

School nurses supported by the Department of Health-Community Health Administration will continue to provide sexual health counseling, education and distribution of barrier methods in accordance with the scope of services specified by the Community Health Administration.

Others trained to provide education and distribute materials will also provide counseling to students individually and in groups. All individuals providing CAP related services will stress the risks of sexual activity including the potential exposures to sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. For those students engaging in sexually activity, they will instruct them on safer sex practices with proper use of male and female condoms and dental dams.

We share a commitment to young people and together we can make a difference to properly educate and safeguard their health

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1GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Community Health Administration

CONDOM AVAILABILITY PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

A. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH-COMMUNITY HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (CHA) SCHOOL NURSE PROGRAM

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

School nurses will receive annual training on the most recent, medically accurate barrier technology. Information provided in this training will be factual, evidence-based, current, and shall demonstrate sensitivity to the cultural and sexual diversity of students.

EDUCATION, COUNSELING AND CONDOM DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

1) **Student Education**

a) Students will receive information on barrier methods during HIV and STD risk reduction classes conducted by agencies and organizations that are approved by the Local Education Agency.

b) All students will have the option of receiving individual health education by the school nurse during the school year. Students may schedule health education services directly with the school nurse. Students will be informed of this option and the procedure for obtaining individual health education services by flyer. Nurses shall provide monthly activity reports with non identifiable student information.

2) **Counseling**

a) All students shall have the option to receive private, confidential counseling upon request to the school nurse to obtain barrier methods.

b) Students shall be given information on barrier method use, effectiveness, and if requested, or needed, medical referrals.

c) School nurses shall, upon request of the student, or if medically warranted, provide students with referrals for further medical services, and, or counseling. Students will be referred to their medical home, other primary care providers, free clinics, or local hospitals.

3) **Distribution**

a) A variety of barrier methods to prevent sexually transmitted diseases shall be made available to students in the school nurse suite.

b) Students can receive up to 10 condoms and up to 10 dental dams per visit. There shall be no limit on the number of visits by each student.

B. SUPPLEMENTAL CONDOM AVAILABILITY SERVICES IN SCHOOLS THROUGH THE HIV/AIDS, HEPATITIS, STD, and TUBERCULOSIS ADMINISTRATION (HAHSTA)

Teachers, school counselors, other school staff and individuals, and persons representing community organizations who have received training approved by the Department of Health HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, and Tuberculosis Administration (HAHSTA) may, with the authorization of the Local Education Agency, provide sexual health education, counseling, and condom distribution services to students individually and in groups. These trained individuals will stress the risks of sexual activity including the potential exposure to sexually transmitted diseases including HIV. Students who are already engaging in sexual activity will be instructed on safer sex practices and the proper use of male and female condoms and dental dams.

Schools participating in Supplemental Condom Availability Services shall provide reports to the Department of Health-HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, and Tuberculosis Administration (HAHSTA) on the services provided to students.

Condom Availability Policy
Revised October 2009
DOH/CHA