

STUDENT HEALTH and SAFETY

Health and Counseling Services

The Staff of the Health Center, our Certified Athletic Trainer, and our Counseling Staff provide health care to Middlesex students. We are here to help students with all natures of health concerns, including advocacy and prevention, offering health teaching and counseling, illness and injury care, consultation, risk assessment and referral. As facilitators of health in the School community, we ask that you keep us informed with changes in your child's health and treatment programs which are determined or initiated while she or he is away from School, as well as any changes in your health insurance. This includes day students as well as boarders so as to care as fully and competently for your child as possible. All clinical information is handled confidentially. Given the residential nature of the School, however, there may be conditions and situations of which others in the School need to be aware (such as advisors, dorm faculty, coaches, administrators, etc.).

CRUZ HEALTH CENTER

The Cruz Health Center, located in the basement at the south end of Ware Hall, is a resource for all students. Please seek non-emergency treatment between 7:30am and 10:15pm. Emergency services are available at all times, with a registered nurse on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Beds are available for daytime or overnight care. **When School is in session, the Health Center can be reached at (978) 371 6583.**

Students may see the Nurse Practitioner (both walk-in and by appointment) who is at the Health Center full-time throughout the week, or the School Physician (by appointment) at the Health Center; they are able to refer to medical specialists when appropriate. Every effort is made to schedule appointments during students' free blocks. The School can arrange transportation for students with off-campus medical appointments. In such cases, students and parents should be aware that charges will be incurred on a student's school bill.

Before the School can accept responsibility for any student, all required health forms and permission must have been received by the Health Center. Physical examinations are required each year. The School will not accept physical examination forms signed by the student's parent or guardian, even if that individual is a physician or other clinical provider. Health forms and policies are available on the parents' log-in section of the Middlesex website (www.mxschool.edu).

If a student is too ill to attend classes or other obligations, he/she must stay in the Health Center. Any student who misses two or more obligations due to illness during an academic day **may not** participate in athletics that day.

Any day student who, having come to School, feels too ill to attend further classes, must report to the Health Center and be evaluated by the nurse on duty before leaving campus to return home. Missed classes will not be excused unless this procedure has been observed.

If a student needs to visit the Health Center after 10:15pm, he/she **must** inform the Head of House and must be accompanied by a faculty member or another adult. Please telephone the Health Center **before** arrival between 10:15pm and 7:00am.

Emergency Services

Emerson Hospital is the nearest emergency service. Emerson is a 177-bed full-service non-profit community hospital located 10 minutes from campus. When necessary, other facilities in the Boston area can be accessed for emergency services.

Head Injuries

Due to the potentially serious consequences of a head injury, Middlesex School has conservative and proactive guidelines for the management of students with head injuries. These guidelines aid in ensuring that students are identified, treated and referred appropriately, receive follow-up care, including academic oversight, and are fully recovered prior to returning to activity. These guidelines are stated in our Head Injury Policy and are implemented via the Nurse Practitioner, Athletic Trainer and Health Center staff. Although an outside provider or specialist may be involved in the care of a student the final decision for sports clearance will be given by the Middlesex School health team.

Sports Injuries/Training Concerns

Certified Athletic Trainers will examine sports-related injuries and supervise rehabilitation in the training room of the Orr Gymnasium. They also help athletes understand and prevent injuries, and consult with the Nurse Practitioner, School Physician or an orthopedist as necessary. Visits to outside specialists will be scheduled through the Health Center.

Nutrition Services

Individual consultation with a nutritionist is available for students at School. Appointments can be made by and take place in the Health Center. If ongoing visits are needed or desired, further consultation would be contracted between the family and the nutritionist directly.

Allergy

Nut Aware Campus: In order to maintain an inclusive environment for those with nut allergies, all foods that are served in the dining hall are made without nuts, nut oils or other nut products. Peanut butter is offered in single serving containers but a separate toaster and nut-free service station is maintained in the dining hall. Signage will be provided by our dining hall vendor for daily menu items indicating the presence of the major allergens other than nuts---fish, eggs, dairy, gluten and soy. We also ask for parents' help when bringing food for special events that they do not contain peanuts or other nut products and that they list all ingredients or that they provide the packaging labels with ingredients listed. All food allergy information must be indicated on our required health forms submitted by parents. Food allergy information will be shared with advisors, heads of house, and with our dining service vendor. Students are expected to also be their own advocates for food safety. They are responsible for seeking out resources in the dining hall, asking appropriate questions and, when in doubt, avoiding questionable food items.

Prescription and Over the Counter Medication

The School does not permit students to keep prescription drugs in their possession without the knowledge and consent of the Health Center. Boarding students who have been prescribed drugs by health providers not connected with the School must notify the Health Center of this fact in order to determine the level of supervision necessary for the distribution of this medication. Be aware that the health center will not dispense Marijuana or any Marijuana formulations. Parents are asked to ensure that students do not return to School with prescription drugs without checking in at the Health Center upon arrival. Certain prescription medications, such as Ritalin and other stimulants, are circulating dangerously in school communities because some students believe that it can aid them in their studies. The potential dangers of a student ingesting some medications without medical supervision are profound. Parents should not put their children in the position of being custodians to such medications. The comprehensive **Medication Policy** is available to download from the parents' portal of the Middlesex website and on request. Please understand that failure to observe the rules around medication may result in disciplinary action.

While students are permitted to have over the counter medications, we strongly recommend that they keep only small supplies of such medicine. A false sense of safety surrounds preparations purchased without a prescription; misuse and overuse of such medications occurs. The Health Center has a variety of such medication available for those in need.

While we take issues of confidentiality and privacy very seriously, for safety reasons, information regarding students who are on various medications may be shared with other adults in the community on a need to know basis. This may include, but is not limited to, Heads of Houses, advisors, and the Director of Counseling.

No student should purchase non FDA approved drugs or medication from online vendors. There is significant risk involved due to the lack of regulation and potential lack of integrity and/or quality control within the entities engaged in this type of commerce. Students should not procure, possess, share, or distribute non FDA approved medications.

Medical Response to Alcohol/Drug Use

The School realizes that use of drugs and/or alcohol can produce immediate threats to the physical health and safety of students. The primary concern in such circumstances is the welfare of the student. All students are encouraged to seek help from any adult or peer to remove a fellow student from a potentially dangerous situation. No student will be allowed to drive if it is known that he/she has been using drugs or alcohol nor will any student be allowed to spend the night in a dormitory following the ingestion of drugs or alcohol. Since recognition of potentially dangerous levels of drug and/or alcohol ingestion is often difficult, any student who has been using drugs and/or alcohol should go or be taken to the Health Center for appropriate care which will include an evaluation by the clinical staff and a follow up program of counseling.

Discipline Responses to Drug and Alcohol Rule Violations and “Sanctuary” Policy

By agreeing to join the School community, Middlesex School expects all students to observe and live by our rules prohibiting the use of alcohol and drugs. Our rules and expectations on these matters are clear, and our faculty endorses and enforces those rules at all times in our supervisory responsibilities based on our duties of care for our students.

Students who are apprehended by faculty or other adults, including police or other security personnel not employed by Middlesex School, for infractions of our rules are subject to normal disciplinary procedures. If the apprehension occurs on campus, that affected student will be brought to the Health Center for clinical evaluation and care and in addition to the disciplinary response will be required to pursue follow up counseling.

However, we realize that there can be times when young people make very poor choices regarding drugs and alcohol, choices that can create dangerous situations in which the intervention of peers can avert potential crises. While we insist that the community respect the rules by which we live together, we want to support a culture in which students take action to avert problems and crises. Thus, under this “sanctuary policy,” all occasions in which student rule-breaking has created a potentially dangerous situation and student-initiated or aided action has brought the matter to the attention of a Middlesex adult will result in a modified disciplinary response. The specifics of this modification are as follows:

1. If a student who has used drugs and/or alcohol comes to the Health Center alone or with another student actively seeking adult help, the matter will be treated as a special health concern. The student will be evaluated and will stay the night if necessary. The Deans’ Office will be immediately informed, and affected student’s parents and advisor will be informed as well, but no formal disciplinary action will be taken. A specific follow-up program of counseling will

be instituted. Our reason for this policy is to encourage students who are in trouble as a result of drug and/or alcohol use to seek immediate adult help, and to encourage students concerned about others to seek immediate adult help. If appropriate, the affected student may be required to continue to see a counselor or to attend a specific drug and/or alcohol rehabilitation program outside the School community.

2. If a faculty member receives information from a concerned student, parent, or other “third party” that a particular student is in need of help as a result of drug and/or alcohol use, the affected student will be treated as specified above.
3. Exemption from normal disciplinary procedures will be granted only once in a student’s career. Any student admitted to the Health Center for a second time for drug and/or alcohol-related reasons will be subject to disciplinary action according to the student’s current disciplinary status.

As stated earlier in this Handbook, all school rules apply when School is in session, regardless of whether students are physically on campus or not. In the case of a Middlesex-led off-campus situation in which an affected student or that student’s peers actively seeks adult help because of drug and/or alcohol use, the same rule of sanctuary applies, with the added consequence that the affected student, once recovered and if feasible, will be sent home immediately at his or her own expense and at the faculty’s discretion may not be allowed to participate in future school-sponsored trips.

The Intervention Team

This team under the supervision of the School Counselor is comprised of faculty members chosen by the community who work with a student’s advisor to ascertain the level of the student’s involvement with drugs and/or alcohol. Concerns about students can be referred to the intervention team by any member of the community. Work of this team is not linked to the discipline system.

Sexual Intimacy

Because of the emotional and physical risks involved for high-school aged teenagers, the School believes that this is neither the time nor the place for intimate sexual relations and discourages such activity. The Health Center does provide a safe environment in which to get health information, care and counseling regarding a variety of health concerns, including various aspects of sexuality.

Confidentiality

Our goal is to provide a safe and open environment in which our students can seek appropriate guidance and care. Unfortunately, many teenagers are concerned that their conversations with our health care staff will be reported to their parents. Without an assurance of confidentiality, these teenagers may not get the support they need. Consequently, to enable us to be most effective in working with students, we respectfully suggest that parents give the School permission to provide information, counseling, examination and/or treatment with respect to substance abuse and sexual activity on a confidential basis. We truly believe that assuring confidentiality promotes responsible communication and treatment.

Rest assured we will always encourage students to speak with their parents in addition to working with our staff. We recognize and appreciate the critical importance of dialogue between teenagers and their parents. And we will, of course, initiate communication with parents of students who are minors when we become concerned about a student’s welfare. Please note that as a matter of state and federal law, students who are 18 years of age or older control the confidentiality of their educational records, which include health and academic records maintained by the School. Thus, for

a student 18 years of age or older, care provided by the School's Health Center is kept confidential in the absence of the student granting permission to the School to communicate with his/her parents. If the School deems it necessary to communicate with parents based on the level of concern for a student 18 or over, the School may override that student's right to withhold health information from parents. A request for permission to provide confidential care was sent home with the Health Center new student forms; it is also available on the Middlesex website parent portal.

Since Middlesex is, first and foremost, a school, it is important for students and families to know that any information shared with Health Center staff or the school counselor that potentially affects the health and safety of the community may not be kept confidential and may be shared with certain faculty members on a need-to-know basis.

Counseling Services

The counseling office is located near the student mailboxes in office #5 in Eliot Hall. Our school counselor is on campus 5 days a week (Monday through Friday). You can drop in to set up an appointment, call or email. Family consultation is also available. Issues for which students seek support include but are not limited to: stress, sadness, homesickness, organizational problems, family problems, sleep problems, relationship problems, sexual identity and more. We take issues related to self-destructive behavior very seriously and may respond with actions including, but not limited to, counseling, psychological evaluation, medical leave or other appropriate measures. Outside referrals can be set up through the counseling office. In addition, our consulting psychiatrist regularly meets with students on the Middlesex campus. A peer support program made up of Middlesex students is available to those who may wish to discuss an issue with another student.

Medical Leave Policy

Any medical or psychological reason that keeps a student out of classes for more than three days may result in a Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA). The proposal for a MLOA must originate with and be approved by either the Director of the Health Center or the Director of Counseling in consultation with appropriate faculty members and the Head of School. When a MLOA is granted, a letter is sent to the student's family stipulating the student's care and treatment during the leave, the conditions that must be met prior to the request for returning to School, and the re-entry process that must be followed. The re-entry process will be tailored to fit each student's needs and situation but must include communication with the student's parents and health care providers to determine the student's ability to function well as a student at the Middlesex School, as well as an on-going plan for that student's assessment and care. Included in the re-entry process and stated in the letter sent home to families is an adherence to our "80% rule," which stipulates that a student must attend at least 80% of the scheduled class meetings for any given class in order to be eligible to receive Middlesex credit for that course.