

NURSES

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ical problems are being mainstreamed into public education, the demands upon school nurses could increase even further, Alexander said.

"The school nurse has an autonomous position," Alexander said. "The nurse must have a lot of knowledge about where to refer children or where to go for help in the community."

She added that a school nurse might have to repeatedly perform duties that fall outside of a nurse's specific area of expertise.

"The nurse is a problem solver," Alexander said. "Sometimes, teachers send a child to the nurse every day. The nurse has to find out if a child's problem is re-

lated to something that is going on at school or at home."

She believes legislation should be passed to increase funding to employ more nurses at schools.

"It boils down to funding," she said.

Financial problems extend outside the nursing workforce. For low-income families, school nurses are sometimes a child's only link to healthcare, according to Jane Anderson, a USC nursing clinical associate professor who teaches community health nursing.

"Other than seeing a doctor in an emergency room, the school nurse may be the only healthcare professional in touch with a child," Anderson said.

In addition to providing school children with immediate healthcare needs, Alexander said school nurses also provide preventative health care, such as vision and hearing screenings, and scoliosis tests.

Kathy Jones Young, a USC nursing

clinical instructor, said the school nurse is also responsible for working with educators and parents to develop teaching plans for children with special needs, as well as working directly with families.

"There is an entire team effort to make sure that all issues are addressed," Young said, adding that school nurses also refer children to healthcare outside the school system.

Regardless of the added pressures, Loquist believes school nursing might be a viable alternative for qualified individuals closer to retirement or for nurses looking for more stable working environments.

"There are definite advantages in working with the school system that may appeal particularly to an aging nursing workforce. Such things as regular hours, holidays, no weekend work and summers off are attractive," Loquist said.

Anderson agrees that school nursing is a great career.

"It is a good position for nurses who are moms," she said. "They have a chance to be active in schools in their community and have the same schedules as their children. It's also a good opportunity for women and men in that they are making a difference in children's lives and their ability to learn."

Anderson added that as long as learning is the goal of education, the nurse is a crucial part of the school system.

"The school nurse plays such an important role in the health of a child and the child's ability to be in the classroom to learn," she said.

Loquist agrees. "Children who aren't healthy can't learn."

The city/state desk can be reached at gamecockcitydesk@hotmail.com.

BROWNE

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proach. Brown would shrink the federal government, end Social Security and income tax and strengthen the adherence of government employees to the Bill of Rights.

"Brown wants to free Americans from the structure of Social Security, and allow the people to make their own decisions about their retirement," Babka said.

He said independent investment could return yields to investors as much as seven times what they would receive from Social Security. Also, an independent investment could be inherited by an investor's family, but unused Social Security is absorbed back into the system, even if a person dies before ever collecting a penny.

Also, Babka said Brown wanted to return to a system that accentuated states' powers and rights.

"The states used to compete for the people through the different law and taxes they had," Babka said. "The state you lived in used to be as important as the climate. A person used to choose the state he lived in by the kind of laws and taxes it had. In that kind of system, we, as a people, would benefit."

Browne said, if he were elected, would also repeal many gun control laws.

"There are a lot of people that support gun control, but you don't see any

of them putting bumper stickers on their cars saying, 'I don't own guns.' No one would do something that silly," Babka said. "Criminals don't obey gun laws. [Gun control laws] only put law-abiding citizens at a disadvantage to protect themselves, their home and their families."

Browne feels "the war on drugs" and gun control laws invade personal privacy more than they stop real crime. He also wants to bring all overseas U.S. troops back to America, withdraw from all international organizations and mutual-defense treaties, and "allow other countries to manage their own affairs."

Browne would also end the war on drugs, which, Babka said, has turned our inner cities into a war zone. This would involve legalizing many currently outlawed drugs.

"Harry Browne does not endorse the use or drugs, nor does he use them," Babka said. "However, he believes you have the responsibility to run your own life."

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USC forms relationship violence program

BY BRANDON LARRABEE
THE GAMECOCK

A \$278,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice will allow USC to better respond to relationship violence, according to officials at the university's Office for Sexual Health and Violence Prevention.

The grant is being used to help run a program to deal specifically with relationship violence, which ranges from slapping or punching to threats of violence or emotional abuse under university guidelines.

A focus of the new program is "Alternative Housing," a residential space for students attempting to escape relationship violence, according to Shannon Hunnicutt, program director for Relationship Violence Services. The housing is available to both on- and off-campus students, Hunnicutt said.

"Someone only needs to feel threatened or to feel unsafe in their present residence," Hunnicutt said.

According to Hunnicutt, students who take advantage of the Alternative Housing option can use the housing until they "devise a plan of action." That plan of action could include looking for a new permanent residence, attempting to get a restraining order against the student's former partner, or the student simply taking a few days to make a decision on what to do next.

Hunnicutt said the program also provides other services for victims of relationship violence, including accompanying victims to the emergency room, advocacy for victims in the criminal and student judicial systems, safety planning and academic assistance. The program also plans to start an open support group in October, which victims can join at any time.

The program also helps victims of relationship violence contact university offices, providing a "centralized location" instead of making students visit several separate offices, Hunnicutt said.

That, according to Tricia Phaup, director of the Office for Sexual Health and Violence Prevention, helps students who are in a situation that "is, in and of itself, a nightmare."

"We'll actually connect them, depending on what they want to do, to the services that are out there," Phaup said.

While the university has helped students get out of crisis situations in the past, according to Phaup, the new program will allow the university to provide for residences with better conditions.

"It makes it much easier in crisis situations to make that transition much easier if it's needed," she said.

Phaup said the program also provides for education and prevention programs on campus to help students who might commit relationship violence.

"Domestic violence is a learned behavior," Phaup said. "That [preventive education] is key to maybe changing some of these patterns of behavior that someone might have learned from their

family of origin."

Phaup said her office applied for the Justice Department grant in July 1999 and got word of the approval that September. After receiving full notification later, the relationship violence committee met in December. Through the spring and summer semesters, protocol and policies were developed, and the official policy was approved in May 2000.

The office has applied for renewal of the 18-month grant and will likely hear back from the Justice Department by the end of the month, Phaup said.

"We're waiting to hear on funding for the second tier," Phaup said.

The Office for Sexual Health and Violence Prevention's Emergency number is 777-7619.

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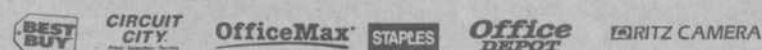
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