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# Preface

**A**dolescent children with a variety of common health problems, chronic illnesses, and disabilities are present in virtually every school system across the United States. Because these adolescents are now included in the regular classroom environment, it is important for teachers, coaches, classroom aides, and school administrators to be familiar with their unique health care needs.

The classroom teacher is often at the forefront in responding to classroom emergencies, recognizing a potential health problem, or providing support to children living with chronic illness or disability. *Health Problems in the Classroom 6–12: An A–Z Handbook for Educators* will be a valuable and easy-to-use resource for teachers and others in learning about various health problems and the appropriate classroom management. The goal of this text is to provide concise and practical information about health problems that teachers are likely to encounter in their classrooms. It is not, however, within the scope of this book to address every health problem known to adolescents or to include every known situation that can occur in the classroom environment.

## How This Book Is Organized

*Health Problems in the Classroom 6–12* begins with an overview in Part I. Chapter 1 covers common health problems, accidental injuries, chronic illness, disability, and the effects of hospitalization on adolescents as well as their impact on the classroom milieu. Chapter 2 discusses family and community issues influencing adolescents and offers strategies for promoting positive development of these young people. Chapter 3 focuses on stigmatizing issues associated with adolescents and teens. This chapter specifically addresses the concerns of labeling and the importance of promoting self-esteem. Relationships with peers, gender identity issues, and sexual identity also are discussed.

Part II is an alphabetical reference guide to 150 health problems that affect adolescents. Arranged for convenient “at-a-glance” review, each topic identifies a common health problem, chronic disease, or disability and then offers the following coverage of the topic:

- Provides other names by which the problem/illness is known or referred to
- Gives a brief description of the problem/illness written in language appropriate for laypersons
- Identifies primary groups affected by the health problem
- Offers associated signs and symptoms
- Presents suggested classroom guidelines with cross-references to appropriate health policies and procedures as well as to other related health problems
- Recommends attendance guidelines
- Indicates medications that the affected students may be taking
- Suggests communication topics to be discussed with parents/caregivers or others
- Lists authoritative resources such as national organizations associated with the specific health problem/illness and Web sites where teachers might be able to obtain further information

Part III covers a variety of useful procedures and guidelines. Here the teacher will learn about the appropriate method of hand washing as the most effective way in which to decrease the spread of infectious disease in adolescents. Also in this section is a pictorial guide for administering epinephrine in emergency situations; procedures for providing for the needs of adolescents with casts, tracheostomies, or feeding tubes; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s guidelines for the prevention of skin cancer; medical emergencies that warrant immediate response; guidelines for handling bleeding, cuts, and abrasions; the procedure for conducting a testicular self-exam; the recommended schedule of immunizations; and a table of infectious diseases related to pets and reptiles that may be found in the classroom. It is the hope of the authors to adequately address the concerns of teachers regarding appropriate management of health issues in the classroom.

## How to Use This Book

The intent of this book is to provide an easy reference for school personnel to access in the event of encountering students in the

classroom who are experiencing health problems or concerns. Teachers who just want to increase their knowledge in assisting students with a myriad of health concerns may also find this book of value. In addition, this book provides suggested guidelines for managing specific health problems in the most effective and least disruptive manner. The teacher can refer to the alphabetical listing of each health problem. Health problems are identified by both their common name and their medical nomenclature. A bold **911** label has been assigned to selected signs and symptoms. This **911** designation serves as an alert that this selected sign or symptom may be indicating a medical emergency or life-threatening situation and that the teacher might want to elicit immediate medical assistance for the child. Classroom guidelines are intended to suggest certain strategies or techniques in planning for the health needs of children present in the classroom. The teacher can refer to the communication section for identifying key questions to be addressed so that the adolescent experiencing health problems can be successfully integrated into the classroom environment. The teacher who desires to further his or her knowledge beyond the scope of this text may find the selected resources valuable in enhancing understanding of the adolescent's health issues.