

Nursing Exploration Patch **Maryland Youth Groups**

Purpose: To increase the knowledge of youth concerning the variety of career opportunities available in the nursing profession, focusing on exploring the need for nurses, the many roles of nurses, education requirements, resources available for those pursuing careers in nursing as well as general health and wellness information.

For: Elementary, Middle and High School aged youth. These activities may be appropriate for scouting groups, school groups, church groups etc.

Requirements: To earn this patch individuals will complete six (6) of the following activities. There are five main categories with options listed under each. Activities may be selected from any combination of options from any of the categories.

Category I: Career Exploration

- 1) **Shadow a Nurse** – Contact your local hospital, doctor’s office, health clinic, school nurse, camp nurse or any nurse you know, and ask if you can shadow them for a day or half-day as their schedule allows. Document all the activities you observe. (Younger students may draw pictures) Answer the following questions.
 - a) What role (s) does the nurse perform?
 - b) How does the nurse incorporate science and math into his or her role?
 - c) What kind of leadership, organizational, or decision-making skills does the nurse use in his/her position?
 - d) Would you want to work as a nurse? Why or why not?
- 2) **Research Nursing Programs** – How many nursing programs are there in the state of Maryland? What types of degrees are offered and what are the entrance requirements? Identify what type of program you would be most interested in attending. Explain your selection. What classes or other requirements would you need to be accepted into the school you have selected?
- 3) **Learn about a Famous Nurse** – Identify a famous nurse and write or tell about that person. What contribution did that person make to nursing and society. How did the person influence new ideas about health care delivery. (This activity could be done in small groups)
- 4) **Visit a Nursing School** – Interview a nursing student or nursing instructor. Find out why they are interested in nursing. Ask for a tour of the facility, be sure to see the skills lab. Document your observations.
- 5) **Research Nursing Scholarships** – Investigate scholarships available for students interested in attending nursing school. What are the requirements? Who is eligible? Are

there more scholarships offered for specialized areas of study? Do scholarships differ depending on the type of degree you are seeking? Document your findings.

- 6) **Explore Nursing Variety** – Identify at least five settings nurses can work; five areas of practice nurses can specialize in, and three different patient populations nurses can work with. Visit the website www.marylandhealthcareers.org for some help.

Category II: Educational Lessons

- 1) **Proper hand-washing technique** - Visit the website www.microbe.org or talk with a nurse to learn the importance of proper hand-washing in general and in the health care setting. Design an activity or learning tool such as a poster to teach younger students how to properly wash their hands. (i.e. have students rub glitter on their hands and then wash them to see how well the glitter comes off) Older students can design a research project that could be performed to measure the impact of hand washing behavior.
- 2) **Create Information on Health Promotion or Safety** – Design a poster, handout, storyboard or videotape depicting the importance of a healthy lifestyle and/or behaviors. (i.e. Do a poster of the basic food groups and the recommended serving for each group, the risk of smoking, weight control, immunizations, seat-belt use, helmet-use etc. or conduct an activity at a school or in the community that emphasizes health promotion or safety, such as a bike rodeo.
- 3) **Create Information on an Illness or Condition** – Put together a short information guide on a particular disease, condition, or illness such as asthma, diabetes, cancer, depression etc. that could be shared with your group or your family. Identify at least one place someone could go to find out more about the topic you select.
- 4) **Investigate Teen Drug Abuse** - Design a storyboard or poster about the effects of drugs on the body.
- 5) **Learn How a Body System Works** – As an individual or a group, select a body system and understand how that body system works. Use a nurse, health educator, or other health care provider to help in gaining that understanding.
- 6) **Visit a Health Club or Recreation Center** – Visit a YMCA, Boys & Girls Club or Health and Fitness club. Speak with a personal trainer. Ask how exercise contributes to health. Teach a friend or family member how to perform exercises you have learned or develop an exercise program for yourself.

Category III: Skill Builders

- 1) **Earn your CPR certification** – CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Visit the American Heart Association website at www.americanheart.org to find a Basic Life Support Heartsaver Course (or any CPR course) near you. This is the entry level course

that offers guidelines for one-rescuer adult, child and infant cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

- 2) **Earn First Aid certification** - This course is usually offered through the American Red Cross. It may also be offered through any of the scouting programs.
- 3) **Attend Babysitting “How To” Workshop** - The Babysitter’s Training course provides youth ages 11-15 with the information and skills necessary to provide safe and responsible care for children in the absence of parents or guardians. This course is usually offered through your local Red Cross or County Recreation Department.

Category IV: Service Projects

- 1) **Participate in a Community Health Project** – Cancer Walk or other walk for health, Blood Drives, Health Screenings such as blood pressure checks. Find ways to participate, other than raising money. Help with registration, offer water, provide sun protection, etc. Write a brief statement of how the health project helped the community as well as what you learned about the illness/condition and how it impacts those who are coping with the illness/condition.
- 2) **Volunteer four (4) hours in a health care facility** – Volunteer your time in a doctor’s office, health clinic, hospital, retirement or nursing center. Document your observations and experience.
- 3) **Do a project for a health care facility** – Contact a doctor’s office, health clinic, hospital, retirement or nursing center to find out what project might be done to meet a need in that organization. Examples may be collecting magazines for offices or residents, donating and taping books, collecting toys for donation to a pediatric unit or doing any special event.

Category V: Technology

- 1) **Learn about Equipment and Supplies Used by Nurses** – Nurses use lots of different equipment and supplies in caring for patients. Get a nurse to tell you about this equipment, how it works, and when it is used. If possible, ask if you may use the equipment yourself to see how it works.
- 2) **Computers and health care** – Talk with a nurse about how computers are used in health care. Make a list of the various ways computers may be used in the treatment of patients or in the documentation of their care.

Adapted from the NC Center for Nursing Exploration Patch requirements 2003.