



Frequently Asked Questions

Overview of the Program

At some point during their school years, most children experience challenges with their learning. When this happens, it can often make them wonder if they are smart or not. The more children worry, the harder it is for them to feel good. Children who have certain protective factors in their lives are more likely to bounce back if school work seems too difficult. They are also more likely to have hope for the future. Children that do not have many protective factors often give up. They can also find themselves physically and emotionally worn out. Sometimes they turn to people and things that are not healthy for them.

Alice Peck Day Hospital (APD) and the Center for School Success (CSS) have partnered to address this issue. CSS is a local non-profit education organization that specializes in helping children link how they learn best with strategies that will make schoolwork easier. Together, APD and CSS have developed a program called Prescription for School Success (*Rx for School Success*) which is offered at APD's Center for Community Care. The RxSS program helps children and adolescents who are experiencing learning challenges.

Why is my child being asked to be a part of the program?

Here is how your doctor will decide if your child will benefit from the program:

- Child is between 9-19;
- Child's RxSS pre-screener score shows medium or high risk; or the doctor knows from past history your child would benefit due to longstanding school-related concerns that are affecting her/his health;
- Child does not have an existing diagnosis;
- Child does not have an IEP, or has an ineffective IEP;



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- Child does not qualify for special services (extra help), but may have a 504 Plan;
- Child is underperforming. For example, this could mean that a child is getting good grades but may be working much harder than s/he needs to, or the anxiety level of maintaining good grades is impacting her/his health.

Through their responses on the online Health and Learning Questionnaire (HLQ), here are some typical areas with which children have reported having difficulty:

- is struggling to meet classroom expectations
- has had learning difficulties for more than one school year
- has a hard time following directions
- does not seem to remember information easily (e.g., math facts, spelling words)
- finds it difficult to express her/his ideas in writing
- can read the words in a textbook, but is unable to summarize what s/he has read
- works too quickly or too slowly on certain types of tasks
- struggles to complete homework within the given time-frame
- does not always know what is important to study for a test
- has difficulty staying focused or is easily distracted
- has difficulty starting work, staying on task or finishing assignments
- is feeling sad, anxious or overwhelmed with school work

Who are the Providers and Specialists on the *Rx for School Success* Team?

Each of the RxSS team members specializes in working with children and adolescents. Each team member serves a unique role on the team.



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- **Child's Provider:** Serve as the team leader. S/he identifies among her/his patients those who are struggling in school with the assistance of the health and learning pre-screener, as well as conversations with you and your daughter/son.
- **The Medical Director:** Dr. Williamson meets with every child and her/his family to review the health and learning questionnaire results. Then he will meet separately with your child and have her/him complete some additional tasks to rule out any physical health concerns that might be impacting your child's learning.
- **The Program Coordinator:** Nancee Tracy is the point person for the entire team. She is the main contact for the program and can answer any questions you may have. Email: tracyn@apdmh.org; Phone: (603) 442-5995.
- **Team Specialists:** Dr. Linda Addante, Dr. Steven Atkins, and Ms. Beth Reed are the team Specialists. Your child may meet with one or more of them individually while participating in the program. Their role is to explore your child's learning strengths and challenges. They will also identify useful strategies and coach your child to help make school work easier and less stressful.

You can read more about the Specialists
from the *RxSS* link on the APD website:

http://www.alicepeckday.org/services/primary_care/rx_for_school_success/

Together, the team members work to better understand how your child learns best and how they can help your child be more successful in school. In some cases, the Specialists may also talk to/or meet with a person from your child's school to help coordinate a plan of action or advocate on your child's behalf.



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Team members meet on a regular basis to discuss children's progress. A shared electronic medical record system keeps track of all important information regarding care provided by the team members.

Being a part of the RxSS program will hopefully make your child more confident and healthy overall.

How often will my child have an appointment with an *Rx for School Success* Specialist?

It all depends on each child's needs. Typically we expect to see a child at least 4-6 times. The time between appointments can vary from 1-4 weeks. They are held at the Center for Community Care, Monday-Thursday from 3:00-5:30 pm.

How long will the appointments last?

- Initial Session: The first meeting will be 30-45 minutes.
- Follow up Sessions: Follow-up meetings are scheduled for 20-30 minutes.

What will my child learn in the program?

Initial Session: At the first meeting, the Specialist will talk with your child about his/her school experience, go over the results of the on-line questionnaire, and talk about how the program might work for your child at this time. Your child always has the option to decide whether or not s/he would like to participate in the program. Any of the three Specialists may meet with a child for the first appointment. The Specialist will then consult with your child's provider to determine which Specialist would be the best match for your child's needs at this time.



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Follow-up sessions: Each 20-30 minute follow-up coaching session includes three steps to success:

- **Identify and build greater awareness** of the child's learning strengths and challenges;
- **Link your child's strengths and challenges** to her/his school experience;
- **Develop a Prescription (*Rx*) for School Success:** Together, the Specialist and your child will explore ways for her/him to be a more effective learner.

Will any information about what happens in an appointment be shared with parents?

Before your child begins the coaching sessions, you will have an opportunity to meet with Nancee Tracy, Program Coordinator and Dr. Doug Williamson, *RxSS* Medical Director. At this appointment you will receive information about your child's questionnaire results and learn more about the program and what to expect. After your child starts the program, you will also have an opportunity to meet separately with your child's team Specialist (typically after the second session) to discuss the plan of action and how you can support your child's progress. In addition, you will be invited to join your child for a few minutes at the end of each session to learn what was discussed and how you can support your child's efforts. Notes from each session will become part of your child's medical record.

We will also be offering free workshops and resources for parents that cover topics typically discussed in coaching sessions (e.g., how to manage weak attention/memory; homework battles; emotional impact of learning differently).



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Will any information be shared with my child's school?

We are happy to share information about coaching sessions with your child's school and actually encourage this opportunity to make sure strategies are consistent (home and school). **Before any *RxSS* team member can talk with anyone at your child's school, you will need to sign the school's "Release of Information" form.**

Why are coaching appointments only held during times that are after school hours?

Our Specialists have other commitments, often in area schools. We also don't want to pull children out of school, for a school-related appointment.

How do I make an appointment?

Nancee Tracy, the Program Coordinator, is the point person for the entire team and is the main contact if you have any questions about the program.

Email: tracyn@apdmh.org; Phone: (603) 442-5995.

Is there any cost associated with my child participating in the *Rx for School Success* program?

The *RxSS* program is being generously supported by donors. *There is a charge for the initial visit with the Medical Director.* However, the on-line questionnaire and meeting(s) with Specialists are offered without charge to patients and their families.