



# Developing an Effective Brochure for Your School-Based Health Center

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## Why is a brochure important?

**Demonstrates a positive image.** The basic elements of a positive image include the perception of competence, trustworthiness, and the command of authority. In other words, clients and parents want to know that you are an expert in your field and that you have the confidence to express it.

**Instills confidence and professionalism.** A brochure is terrifically suited as an instrument to help convey this image for a host of reasons. First of all, a brochure, to the average reader, helps to instill a sense of confidence and professionalism just by virtue of the fact that you spent the time, effort and money to have it produced. This may seem a bit simplistic, but it holds true because it is a perception and perception does not necessarily mirror reality!

**Provides information.** A brochure allows you to provide a great deal of information which you cannot always do with a magnet, postcard, or even a flyer. It can help dispel myths and provide an accurate picture of who you are and what you do.

**Invites customers to try you out.** A well thought out brochure can be a self contained marketing campaign that provides the bait, hook and the muscle to reel in a new customer. It may be just what a student or parent needs to feel like they understand your service well enough to give you a try.

## Before starting- do your homework

**Purpose.** Be clear what you are trying to accomplish in the brochure. Is the main need to explain to students what you offer and how to access your services? Do the teachers have misconceptions about the SBHC you need to dispel? Decide what your main communication objectives are and use your brochure to accomplish these goals.

**Audience.** Who are the main audiences for your brochure? Do you want different brochures for different audiences? For example, one for students and one for parents/ teachers/ community members.

**Customer needs.** Before you spend any time planning a brochure, make sure you understand your customer and remember you may have multiple customers. What are their myths about your services? What is important to them (different customers may have different needs).

**REMEMBER!** Your customers aren't really interested in you. They are interested in themselves. To get their attention, your brochure needs to focus on the **benefits** they will enjoy by using **YOUR SBHC**. Remember, people don't buy telephone answering machines to record messages. They buy answering machines so they will never miss an important call again.

## On the outside - catching their eye

*The average reader takes less than **5 seconds** to glance at the cover of a brochure and decide whether or not to read it.*

**Interesting cover.** *If your headline or graphics on the cover of your brochure are boring, few recipients will bother opening it.*

**A benefit-filled headline.** On the cover of most brochures you'll usually find nothing more than the company name, logo, and maybe a quick slogan like "committed to excellence". This isn't horrible, but there is a much

better way to enhance your brochure. If you want to turn your brochure into a powerful sales tool you need to grab your prospects attention immediately. You do that through a benefit-loaded headline. A benefit-loaded headline is a headline that clearly and powerfully communicates a desirable benefit that your product or service offers your customers. For example a benefit-loaded headline for a heating and cooling company would be “How the New XYZ System Can Shave \$800 Off Your Utility Bill This Year”. This headline is clear, specific, and powerful. If a customer were in the market for a new heating or cooling system this headline would draw the prospect into the brochure. Or how about “How your SBHC can help students stay in class and learn more” (may appeal to parents, teachers most) OR “How your SBHC can help you feel healthy and happy about being you!” (appeals to students).

**First class image on the cover.** A brochure design should project a first class image. Are the graphics compelling? Is your writing active and enthusiastic? Is it pleasurable to look at? Stay away from crowded text, clichés, clip art, and low quality production. Professional quality brochure design makes you look professional.

## **On the inside- not overwhelming them**

**The approach.** Many professional advertisers use the “AIDA formula”:  
get **A**ttention;  
create **I**nterest;  
generate **D**esire  
that leads to **A**ction.

**Headlines.** Once you've gotten the brochure recipient to open the brochure, the next thing they'll do is skim the headlines inside the brochure. Use these inside headlines to hold their attention, and move them through the copy.

**Text.** Don't pack your brochure with information. Just communicate the basics of who you are and what you do and not every single service you provide. Focus more on your philosophy of providing health care than a list of services.

**White space.** White space is the space where there is nothing. This space helps our eyes rest and allows us to scan for information. If the brochure is jam packed our eyes cannot easily scan it. Make sure there is white space on every page. Use text boxes to draw attention to quotes or information you would like to highlight.

**Proof.** Anytime you make a statement regarding the benefits that your product will bring, you need to back that statement up with proof. Testimonials, quotes, charts, graphs, pictures, and endorsements, and stories are great ways to prove your claims and cause your prospects to believe what you are saying. Remember that most people are skeptical initially, but you can overcome that skepticism with proof. For example can you use a quote from a respected community or student leader in your brochure?

**Action.** Invite them to DO something with the info such as “call or drop by today to make an appointment.”

**ASK FOR HELP.** If you feel overwhelmed by designing your brochure, ask for help – maybe someone in your school is a graphics or computer whiz? Maybe you have an art or graphic design teacher? Maybe a local printer will donate their time or charge a small fee to give you feedback? Maybe you want to send your brochure to a NM Alliance staff member for feedback?

## Pictures, map and font

**Pictures.** Pictures should be local – real students, real community members. Be sure you have parents sign a photo release for their child’s photo to be used in your brochure. Update pictures regularly so they do not look out of date. Maybe a new picture on the cover every year when you update your information would be good?

- Do select good quality, black-and-white photos, with medium contrast.
- Do select uncluttered photos.
- Do use photos that seem real to the students- local students.
- Do use professional photos or high quality digital photos whenever possible.
- Do limit the number of photos you use in your brochure.
- Don't use photos that will quickly date your brochure.

**Map.** Don't forget a map to your SBHC- especially if it is hard to find on campus! Starting from a main highway---include easy-to-follow directions---a map sketch, plus text instructions will be helpful. Make directions easy to read---clear type, large enough so see.

**Font.** Type style and size can significantly affect the appearance of your brochure. Serif, letters that have little cross-strokes at the ends, and sans serif - without cross-strokes---are the two primary type styles, with innumerable variations. Serif is generally considered easier to read, partly because most it's the type style most of us learned to read. Sans serif makes good headlines, subheads, or other attention-getters. Do not use many fonts in your brochure. It makes it hard to read. Choose one font for type and one for headlines and perhaps put quotes in a third type.

Examples of Serif Font (use for text):

- Garamond
- Georgia
- Times New Roman

Examples of San Serif fonts (use for headlines):

- Arial
- Lucida Sans
- Trebuchet
- Verdana

**Font size.** Type size of the text should never be less than 10 point.

## Have a plan for review and distribution

**Review.** When you are done with your brochure have students, school staff and parents review it. Do they like it? Does it answer their questions about your service?

**Distribution plan.** Don't just let it sit there in your office or at your front desk. Decide how many you will print and have distribution plan. Can they go on the desk in the school's front office? Can they be mailed out with school registration? Handed out at basketball games? Given to all arriving freshman?

**REMEMBER: Marketing your SBHC will never end. There is always someone to tell or re-tell about the wonderful work you do. So have a brochure in your back pocket and be ready to say “Funny you should ask ...”**

## Self-evaluation checklist- rate your brochure

Demonstrates a positive image.	😊 😐 😞
Instills confidence and professionalism.	😊 😐 😞
Provides information.	😊 😐 😞
Invites customers to try you out.	😊 😐 😞
Has a clear purpose	😊 😐 😞
Has a clear audience.	😊 😐 😞
Addresses your customer's needs.	😊 😐 😞
Has an interesting cover.	😊 😐 😞
Has a benefit-filled headline.	😊 😐 😞
Portrays a first class image on the cover.	😊 😐 😞
Uses the AIDA approach.	😊 😐 😞
Uses catchy headlines.	😊 😐 😞
Uses text wisely.	😊 😐 😞
Has good use of white space.	😊 😐 😞
Uses proof.	😊 😐 😞
Invites action.	😊 😐 😞
Uses quality, up to date pictures.	😊 😐 😞
Uses attractive art and maps.	😊 😐 😞
Uses serif font for text, san serif for headlines.	😊 😐 😞
Uses a font of 10 point or larger.	😊 😐 😞
Have a plan for the brochure to be reviewed.	😊 😐 😞
Have a plan to distribute your brochure.	😊 😐 😞

😊 or 😞 is an  
**opportunity** to  
*communicate better*  
*about your SBHC*