

## 10 ways to give your SBHC a quick face lift!!

NMASBHC, September 2007

"The more attractive the environment, the higher the perceived quality (of healthcare) and the lower the anxiety."

(<http://www.healthdesign.org/research/pebble/data.php>)

1. **Paint.** Have a painting party -invite students, parents, teachers and community allies and paint any space that needs a face-lift (the waiting room, exam rooms). Paint a mural or something simple like a rainbow. Have students help choose paint color.
2. **Plants.** Plants add life to your SBHC. If you have trouble remembering to take care of the plant, assign a student to do it. Look for a student who may be feeling out of place at school and needs connection or a student who frequently come to the SBHC just to visit and give them the important job of plant care. Provide them a watering can, plant food and a watering chart so they can remember when they last watered.
3. **Spruce up your first impression.** Assess the path to your clinic- what are the first things a person sees as he/she approaches the clinic? Are there weeds? Could you plant flowers or have potted plants? What does your waiting room say? This is the room that gives the first impression. Convene a group of students, perhaps through your SHAC, to give you an honest assessment of your waiting room. Key word- HONEST. Ask them how it looks and feels when they walk in. What message does it send? How would they improve it so it clearly says "we value you?" Make sure you implement their suggestions so they know you are listening to them.
4. **Window coverings.** A brightly colored curtain or shade can enliven a room. Have a supportive family or a home economics class sew curtains.
5. **New Art.** Art can make a room much more comforting. Ask for students input in choosing art. Have an art class create art. Post a health-related mural in the SBHC. In general, experts say familiar scenes (such as nature) tend to calm patients more than abstract art. Framed art looks more professional than art tacked on a wall.

6. **Get rid of old health posters.** You know the one - the poster that has been on your wall forever! Get rid of it. Put new posters up. Professionalize your space by putting posters in frames (inexpensive poster frames) or on bulletin boards.

7. **Magazines.** Order a teen friendly magazine for your waiting room such as:

- Teen Ink (written by Teens by Teens, <http://teenink.com/Current/>)
- New Moon (a magazine for girls 8-14, [http://www.newmoon.org/about\\_us/](http://www.newmoon.org/about_us/))
- Teen Voices (a magazine written by for and about teenage girls, <http://www.teenvoices.com/>)
- Next step (a magazine about life after high school, <http://www.nextstepmagazine.com/nextstep/next-step-subscribe.aspx>)
- Prevention a magazine for all ages on staying healthy, <http://www.prevention.com/cda/homepage.do>)
- Sports Illustrated (covers a wide range of sports topics, when you subscribe you can opt out of the swimsuit edition, <http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/>)

8. **Add texture and color.** Teenagers love to feel different textures. Beanbag chairs, funny squeeze toys, lava lamps, and interesting sculptures.

9. **Healing space.** Can you make a space in your center that is all about thoughtful contemplation? Maybe a counseling room can have a small fountain, lamps, healing sayings on the wall and a tape player with soothing CDs that they can play. If a student just needs some time alone, this space will be ready for them.

**BONUS IDEA: Water.** Add a water station to your waiting room where students can refresh and hydrate. Include information on the importance of drinking enough water. Either order a water service or bring refillable jugs from home. It also gives students an excuse to come into the SBHC and maybe make that important appointment.

**Not sure how you can afford some of the supplies  
you might need for your facelift?**

- Partner with a local business such as a hardware, fabric or furniture store and see if they might make a donation. Have students accompany you to ask for donations - it is a good life skills exercise for them.
- Have a fundraiser (maybe sell healthy snacks) to raise funds.
- If someone asks what they can do to support you, ask them to purchase needed supplies.