

October 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian:

With the recent coverage of H1N1 in our local media, we felt it was important to share with our families the pertinent information from the Center for Disease Control "CDC" regarding this Type A Influenza Virus (H1N1). This memorandum is informational and does not preclude the need to seek the advice of your family physician if a family member becomes ill.

The letter provides information for this virus, signs and symptoms, advice on how to protect against the virus, and what to do if a family suspects that a member may have some of the warning signs.

Recommended steps to protect against an exposure include:


- Covering the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. The tissue should always be thrown away after use.
- Hands should be washed often with soap and water, especially after coughing and sneezing.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouths as germs spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you or a family member becomes ill, the CDC recommends that the sick person stay home from work or school and limits contact with others to keep from infecting others.

If a family member becomes ill and experiences any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care. Warning signs may include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or interacting
- Being so irritable that a child does not want to be held
- Flu like symptoms with a fever and bad cough
- Fever with a rash
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Confusion
- Vomiting or diarrhea

For further information, please visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>. As always, the health and safety of our families is first and foremost in our learning community.

Sincerely,


Gineen O'Neil, Ed. D.
Executive Director

"Opening the world through education to children and young adults with diverse abilities"

Action Steps for Parents to Protect Your Child and Family from the Flu this School Year

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends 4 main ways you and your family may keep from getting sick with the flu at school and at home:

1. **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
2. **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder; not into your hands.
3. **Stay home if you or your child is sick** for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Keeping sick students at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.
4. **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines are available.

If flu conditions become MORE severe, parents should consider the following steps:

- **Extend the time sick children stay home** for at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. People who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have completely gone away.
- **If a household member is sick, keep any school-aged brothers or sisters home for 5 days** from the time the household member became sick. Parents should monitor their health and the health of other school-aged children for fever and other symptoms of the flu.

Follow these steps to prepare for the flu during the 2009-2010 school year:

- Plan for child care at home if your child gets sick or their school is dismissed.
- Plan to monitor the health of the sick child and any other children in the household by checking for fever and other symptoms of flu.
- Identify if you have children who are at higher risk of serious disease from the flu and talk to your healthcare provider about a plan to protect them during the flu season. Children at high risk of serious disease from the flu include: children under 5 years of age and those children with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma and diabetes.
- Identify a separate room in the house for the care of sick family members.
- Update emergency contact lists.
- Collect games, books, DVDs and other items to keep your family entertained if schools are dismissed or your child is sick and must stay home.

Talk to your school administrators about their pandemic or emergency plan.

For more information:

- **Visit:** www.flu.gov
- **Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day**
 - 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
 - TTY: (888)232-6348
 - cdcinfo@cdc.gov