

FLU

September 10, 2009

Dear Parents,

In continuing with our diligence and preventative care of your children, we would like to once more outline the detailed plans we have developed to help reduce the spread of the influenza virus within our school.

WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW!

As you know and as we discussed at Parent Orientation Night, the influenza virus is easily spread from person to person. We will be working closely with the Monmouth County Board of Health and the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services as well as other local school districts to closely monitor flu conditions in the upcoming weeks and months. As a reminder, the Center for Disease Control has issued a strong recommendation not to close schools as a way of stopping the spread of the flu. Rather, they have concluded that practicing good hygiene and keeping children home until they are fever free for at least 24 hours and no longer exhibiting flu symptoms needs to be strictly adhered to. Continuing to teach your children good hygiene at home is also an effective way of stopping the spread of virus in school.

WHAT WE NEED TO DO!

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” ~Ben Franklin

Our school has instituted the following procedures which will help prevent the spread of the flu so that our school can function as usual throughout the year:

- **Continuous washing of hands** – students clean their hands regularly throughout the school day with a product that is effective in killing flu germs.
- **Staff members use sanitizing products daily** – that are effective in killing flu germs. Staff is cleaning daily the surfaces and toys that are most apt to be germ collectors (i.e. doorknobs, desks, table tops, etc.) In addition, we have a professional cleaning company in place that thoroughly cleans the entire school once a week.
- **Students will be given “lessons” in how to cough and sneeze** – into their elbow or shoulders, not their hands - so that the spread of germs is decreased.

Parents and guardians, we need your support as well. You play an integral role in helping to keep your child healthy and prevent the flu virus. Here are a few things you can do to help:

- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu** – symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees or higher), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache and feeling tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Teach your children to wash their hands at home** - The whole family should practice washing hands at home especially parents when they return home from work each day. Do this often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** – like drinks, food or unwashed utensils and to cover their coughs or sneezes with tissues. Children should cover their coughs or sneezes using the elbow arm or sleeve instead of their hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Keep sick children home** – for at least 24 hours after your child no longer has fever or symptoms of illness, without the use of fever reducing medicines. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who get infected – this also complies with our school health policy.
- **Parents NOW should be taking the steps** – to have a backup plan which designates a guardian to remain home with your child in the event that they become ill and you cannot take off from work.
- **Children who exhibit signs of illness while at school will be sent home.** A parent or other approved adult must come to school to pick up an ill student as soon as you receive a call that your child is sick – you should always have at least one local resident as an emergency contact. That way, if a parent is unavailable, the child can still promptly be picked up from school. Please remember, that there is a requirement by DYFS that the child must be picked up forty minutes or less after you receive the phone call.
- **Please understand that when your child returns to school after recovering from flu like illness** – the teacher together with the school nurse will assess whether the child has recovered and is well enough to remain in school.
- **Work on building your immune systems as a family** – take vitamins, eat healthy, drink plenty of fluids, get plenty of rest, etc.
- **Vaccinate your children** – children six months to 59 months who are in a daycare setting are mandated by law to receive a flu vaccine annually.
- **Sanitize your home as much as possible** – disinfect countertop surfaces, doorknobs, change toothbrushes often (especially after a cold), change sheets and pillow cases once a week, etc.

We hope that you find all of these vital points useful in maintaining a healthy home and school environment. Thank you for your understanding, cooperation and anticipated diligence in making this protocol effective. If you have any questions, please feel free to call our office 732-290-0033.

Respectfully yours,
Phyllis and Carmine Visone
Owners

David Verrett, R.N.
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