

Families and Schools Prepare to Contain the Spread of Seasonal Flu Viruses

While the media attention may seem somewhat excessive at this time, we want you to know that we are preparing to take every reasonable precaution to prevent the spread of any flu or illness in our schools when they reopen on September 8.

These preparations include:

- Staff and student training on all preventive measures
- Hand sanitizer or soap (non-alcohol) dispensers in k-6 classrooms, and in all common and office areas
- Safe, spray cleaning solutions (non-alcohol) for all teachers
- Safety wipes available for hand and surface disinfecting in k-12 classrooms
- Asking k-6 families who annually contribute boxes of tissues to also provide sanitizing wipes
- Custodial emphasis on daily cleaning of touchable surfaces, e.g. door knobs, work surfaces, railings, etc.
- A designated area in every school where sick children may wait without contaminating others or other areas
- Training coaches, repeating preventive measures to athletic teams, placing disinfectants in locker rooms, and careful cleaning of locker rooms
- Scheduling opportunities for staff and their families to get flu vaccines, when available

How families can help:

- Teach prevention at home:
 - frequent hand washing, especially after sneezing or coughing and before eating
 - use of tissues for coughing and sneezing and when unavailable, sneezing/coughing into arm/elbow
 - frequent use of hand sanitizers
 - keep hands away from mouth, eyes and nose
 - no shared eating utensils, beverages or food, especially bags of snacks
- Sanitize frequently touched surfaces
- Get flu vaccines, if available, for every family member over six months
- Have a child care plan in case your child becomes sick while in school and is sent home during the day
- **Keep anyone with a temp of 100 degrees or more at home for 24 hours after temp has returned to normal without medication***
- Keep children away from anyone who is sick

New information about normal seasonal flu and the novel H1N1 flu virus is released daily, but the most reliable information comes from the federal government's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which are commonly referred to as the CDC. Current information always is available at their web sites: www.cdc.gov or www.flu.gov, or their hotline, 1-800-CDC-INFO. If you have additional questions about school situations, please contact your school office.

*This is extremely important: To help prevent the spread of any flu virus, schools will not allow children who left school with an elevated temperature of 100 degrees or more to return the next day, per recommendations from the Kent County Health Department and CDC.