



TO: Parents of Washtenaw County Daycare/Preschool Children  
FROM: Diana Torres-Burgos, MD, MPH  
Medical Director  
  
DATE: September, 2009  
  
SUBJECT: 2009-2010 Flu season (Seasonal and 2009 Influenza A H1N1)

The Flu season has been ongoing through the summer months due to the 2009 Influenza A H1N1 virus (formerly known as swine flu). As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, the Washtenaw County Superintendents and Public Health Department have been working closely over the summer following State and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines to take steps to reduce the spread of flu, both seasonal and H1N1, in your daycare/preschool. **We need your help to do this.**

Preventive measures you can take:

- **Teach your children to wash their hands frequently.**
- **Teach your children not to share personal items.**
- **Teach your children to cover their cough and sneezes using a tissue or coughing/sneezing into their sleeve.**
- **Keep your children at home if they are sick.**
- **Vaccinate your children for seasonal flu and H1N1 flu when vaccine becomes available.**

If your child is sick enough to stay home with flu-like symptoms, immediately report the illness to the preschool/childcare. This will help the preschool/childcare provide accurate information in its weekly disease reports to the Health Department. The Health Department will closely monitor flu trends, and will make decisions along with providers regarding the best actions to take.

#### **Preschool /Daycare Closure Policy**

According to CDC guidelines, the goal is to keep preschools/daycares open and functioning normally while also keeping children healthy during this flu season. Closures may occur if child and staff absenteeism due to the flu disrupts the normal functioning of preschool/childcare. CDC also recommends considering dismissal of preschools/daycares if a large number of staff and students are at higher risk of flu-related complications. The length of time preschools/daycares will be dismissed will depend on the severity and extent of illness.

#### **School Vaccine Clinics**

School vaccine clinics have been recommended as part of a mass vaccination campaign against the H1N1 flu to protect the most affected groups. Particularly, children aged 0-4 years of age have the highest hospitalization rates from Influenza a H1N1. We anticipate an increase in flu cases (both seasonal and Influenza A H1N1) since infected children may act as a point of spread to other children and their families. Check with your medical provider and watch local media sources regarding when and where vaccine is available.

Please keep in mind that this is a changing situation and we will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

For more information, visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO. For information about flu in our community, visit <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org> , <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org/healthportal> or call 1-734-544-6700.