

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Most of us are aware of recent news reports regarding Pandemic H1N1 (Swine Flu), one of four types of Type A flu. Because it has been determined that children and teens are among those most at-risk of catching this flu, protecting your child's health and safety are of top concern for all of us, as we all play an important role in protecting ourselves, our families, and our community.

Please be aware that the symptoms of Swine Flu are similar to those of regular seasonal flu and include fever, lethargy, loss of appetite and coughing. Some infected people have also reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. As with seasonal flu, most people who get Swine Flu recover at home in approximately one week.

It should be noted that flu is typically spread from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes. People also become infected when the virus gets on their hands and they rub their eyes or nose. With this in mind, below are several everyday actions we can take to help prevent the spread of flu and to stay healthy:

- Do not send children to school with a fever of 100 degrees or greater. Keep children with flu-like illness at home so they do not infect others.
- Sick children should not return to school or participate in any activities putting them in contact with others until they have been fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours.
- Avoid giving children aspirin and products that contain aspirin. Aspirin has been linked to Reyes Syndrome.
- Consider having the entire family, including children, vaccinated against regular seasonal flu.
- Encourage children to cover their nose and mouth when they cough or sneeze—using their sleeve in such cases is good! ☺ If they use a tissue to cover coughs or sneezes, they should throw it in the trash after using it.
- Encourage children to wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Children should avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread that way.

All that said, let's all be good role models for our children, practicing these same activities every day!