

## **ACTION STEPS FOR PARENTS TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD & FAMILY FROM THE FLU THIS SEASON**



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

- ✓ **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands with soap & water frequently, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- ✓ **Cover your mouth & 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.
- ✓ **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 medication). Keeping sick students at home means they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing or spreading the illness to others.
- ✓ **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 when vaccines become available.

### **Know the signs & symptoms of the flu:**

- Fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater)
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Feeling tired

**\*Please remember to talk with your child and encourage them to not share personal items like drinks, food, or unwashed utensils.**

**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 staying home at least 24 hours after symptoms have completely gone away.
- ***If a household member is sick, keep any school age sisters or brothers at home for at least 5 days*** from the time the household member became sick. Parents should monitor their health and any other school aged children for fever and other symptoms of the flu.

**Follow these steps to prepare for the flu for the 2009-10 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. (You may want to consider purchasing a thermometer for at home).
- Identify if you have children who are higher risk of serious disease from the flu and talk to your health care provider about a plan to protect them during flu season. Children at high risk of serious disease from the flu include children under the age of 5 years old and those with chronic health conditions such as asthma and/or diabetes.