



October/November/December 09

FAQs About H1N1 and Seasonal Flu

The following information was posted on the [Des Moines Public School's Web site September 3, 2009](#). Feel free to share this information with anyone you believe needs to know. Thank you.

Q: What is pandemic influenza?

A: Pandemic influenza is a strain of influenza that has the ability to spread across the world. Pandemic means a disease has caused someone to become ill on nearly every continent. Four things must happen before a disease can cause a pandemic:

- 1) It is caused by a germ that no one has had before;
- 2) The disease must be able to infect humans;
- 3) It must cause illness or death; and
- 4) It must spread easily from person to person.

Q: How are the seasonal flu and pandemic H1N1 flu different?

A: Influenza happens every year in nearly every country in the world. It spreads through a population for a few months and then will disappear or will move to another country. Influenza usually occurs in the fall and winter months. Also, people who usually become ill with influenza are the elderly, the

very young and people with chronic medical conditions.

Pandemic influenza could strike at any time of the year. The strain will be one never seen before and it will spread quicker and easier from person to person. Pandemic influenza may cause illness in any person and in the past has caused illness in more healthy young and middle-aged people. It will probably circulate several times around the world or in "waves."

Q: Why should we be concerned about the spread of flu in schools?

A: Students who get sick with the flu can easily pass it to each other during school and bring it home to their families. So far, with 2009 H1N1 flu, the largest number of cases has been in people between the ages of 5 and 24 years old.

Q: What can parents do to prepare for flu during the 2009-2010 school year?

A: 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 by checking for fever and other symptoms of flu.
- Update emergency contact lists.
- Identify a separate room in the house for care of sick family members. Consider designating a single person as the main caregiver for anyone who gets sick.
- Pull together games, books, DVDs and other items to keep your family entertained while at home.
- Talk to your school about their flu pandemic or emergency plan.

- Get your family vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines are available.

Q: What can school personnel, families and students do to keep from getting sick and spreading flu?

A: School personnel, families and students can keep from getting sick with flu in three ways:

1. Practicing good hand hygiene. Students and staff should wash their hands often with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds — the time it takes to sing Happy Birthday twice — especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners containing at least 60 percent alcohol are also effective. (Note: if alcohol-based products are not allowed in the school, other hand sanitizers that do not contain alcohol may be useful for cleaning hands, though they are not as effective as alcohol-based sanitizers.)
2. Practicing respiratory etiquette. The primary way flu spreads is from person to person in the droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. It's important to cover your mouth and 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.
3. Staying home if you are sick. Keeping sick students and staff at home means they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.

Q: What are our schools doing to prepare for flu

response during the 2009-2010 school year?

A: All district schools are taking the following actions:

- Review and revise existing pandemic plans and focus on protecting high-risk students and staff.

- Develop a plan to cover key positions, such as the school nurse, when staff stay home because they are sick.

- Set up a separate room (a sick room) for care of sick students or staff until they can be sent home. Identify ways to increase the space between people (social distancing).

- Purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks for nurses and other staff providing care for sick people at school. Provide training for staff providing care about basic infection control and the use of PPE.

- Continue educating students, parents and staff to encourage hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

- Communicate regularly with parents and staff about decisions to send sick students home, how families can identify students who are at high-risk of complications from flu, how staff members can self-identify who is at high risk of complications from flu, or decisions to cancel mass gatherings. Remind parents and staff how long sick students and staff should remain at home.

- Develop a school dismissal plan and options for how school work can be continued at home (e.g., homework packets, Web-based lessons, phone calls), if school is dismissed or students are sent home when sick. Communicate this plan

to all community members who would be affected.

- Collaborate with the local health department, community organizations, local businesses, and social services on a plan for response.

Q: Are local health authorities still recommending that school closure be used to stop the spread of H1N1?

A: No. Last spring it was recommended schools close to stop the spread of H1N1 cases in the school. This experience showed the potential positives of school closure were often outweighed by the negatives, such as kids being left home alone, parents missing work, and kids not having access to meals. When H1N1 returns this fall our goal is to minimize the disruption of the school and work day by focusing on strategies that are proven to reduce the spread of disease, such as staying home when sick, proper hygiene, good hand washing and proper sanitation.

Q: Which students and staff are at higher risk for complications from flu?

A: Anyone can get the flu (even healthy people), and serious problems from the flu can happen at any age. However, children under the age of 5 years, pregnant women, people of any age with chronic medical conditions (such as pulmonary disease, including asthma, diabetes, neuromuscular disorders or heart disease), and people age 65 years and older are more likely to get complications from the flu.

Q: What about pregnancy and the flu?

A: Pregnant women working in or attending schools should follow the same guidance as the general public about staying home when sick, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and routine cleaning. Pregnant women are at higher risk of complications from flu. If they develop a flu-like illness, they should speak with their doctor as soon as possible to determine whether they should take antiviral flu medication. Any person at high risk for flu complications should do the same. Early treatment with antiviral flu medication is recommended for pregnant women who have the flu. Pregnant women and their doctors should know they are part of the first priority group to receive the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine.

Q: How do I recognize a fever or signs of a fever?

A: A fever is a temperature taken with a thermometer that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius). If you are not able to measure a temperature, the sick person might have a fever if he or she

- feels warm,
- has a flushed appearance, or
- is sweating or shivering.

Q: What are fever-reducing medications and when would I stop giving them to my child, family member or taking them myself?

A: Fever-reducing medications are medicines that contain acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) or

ibuprofen (such as Motrin). These medicines can be given to people who are sick with flu to help bring their fever down and relieve their pain. Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) should not be given to children or teenagers who have flu; this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.

A sick student or staff member can return to school after 24 hours have passed if he or she has a normal temperature (98.6 degrees Fahrenheit or 37 degrees Celsius) without the use of fever-reducing medications. As the sick person begins to feel better you may decide to stop giving/taking fever-reducing medicines. Continue to monitor temperature until the temperature has been normal for 24 hours.

Q: Can the virus live on surfaces, such as computer keyboards?

A: Yes, flu viruses may be spread when a person touches droplets left by coughs and sneezes on hard surfaces (such as desks or doorknobs) or objects (such as keyboards or pens) and then touches his or her mouth or nose. However, it is not necessary to disinfect these surfaces beyond routine cleaning. Clean surfaces and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact, using standard cleaning agents for these areas.

Q: How long should a sick student or staff member be kept home?

A: In the current flu conditions, students and staff with symptoms of flu should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer

have fever or do not feel feverish, without using fever-reducing drugs. Sick people should stay at home, except to go to the doctor's office, and should avoid contact with others. Keeping people with a fever at home may reduce the number of people who get infected. Because high temperatures are linked with higher amounts of virus, people with a fever may be more contagious.

Q: Should family members of sick students stay home too?

A: No, not unless the flu conditions are determined to be more severe.

Q: How will the decision be made to dismiss schools?

A: The decision to dismiss students will be made at the community level. School officials will work closely with the Polk County Health Department and the Iowa Department of Education to make sound decisions, based on local conditions. The decision will consider:

- the number and severity of cases in an outbreak (looking at national, regional, and local data),
- the risks of flu spread and benefits of dismissal, and
- the problems school dismissal can cause for families and communities.

Q: How will our community know if the flu is more severe and they need to consider taking additional action steps?

A: CDC and the Polk County Health Department will be monitoring national data on the number of people who seek care for flu-like illness, as well as the number of

hospitalizations and deaths. CDC also will look at the geographic spread of flu-like illness and will look for changes in the virus. In addition, CDC will compare data on a weekly basis with seasonal flu trends from other years and with data collected during the spring 2009 outbreak. State and local health departments also will be on the lookout for increases in severe illness in their areas.

Q: Why would one school dismiss students while another school continues to remain open?

A: School action steps could vary based on the severity of the pandemic and the impact it is having in the school. Decisions for school dismissal will be made at the community level, based on the number and severity of cases in the school and community. Because the impact of flu on a community will differ from location to location, the steps that are taken also may be different.

Also, certain schools may have a large number of students who are at high risk for complications from the flu (such as a school for pregnant teens). These schools may decide to close based on the local situation while other schools in the community remain open.

Flu Symptoms and Preventive Action Steps

We are working closely with the Polk County Health Department, other Polk County school districts, and the Iowa Department of Education to monitor flu conditions and make

decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

In addition to the actions the district is taking to reduce the spread of flu in all our schools (see FAQs), we are encouraging all parents, students, staff and community members to know the symptoms of flu and take a few preventive action steps to help inhibit the spread of illness.

Here's what you should know and do:

- Know the signs and symptoms of the flu. Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people also may vomit or have diarrhea.
- Do not send children to school if they are sick. Any children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home. Have a plan in place if you need to stay home with a sick child for an extended period of time.
- **Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.**
- **Teach your children to wash their hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.**

- **Teach your children not to share personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils.**
- **Teach your child to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. If tissue is unavailable they can cover their coughs or sneezes using an elbow, arm or sleeve but never their hands**

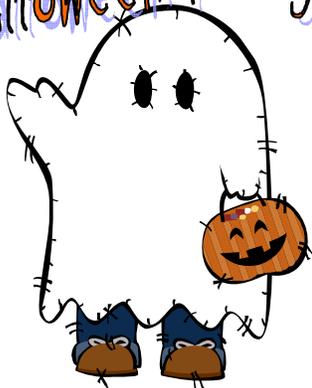


Preschoolers to the Pumpkin Patch!

The Firefly class is going to the pumpkin patch Wednesday October 7, 2009 and the Ladybugs on Wednesday October 14, 2009. Please watch for the sign up sheets. If any parent would like to volunteer to attend this field trip please let either Ms. Shelly (Fireflies) or Ms. Kandie (Ladybugs) know as soon as possible. The children can if they wish bring money to purchase a small gourd to bring home however, it is not required.



Halloween Party!

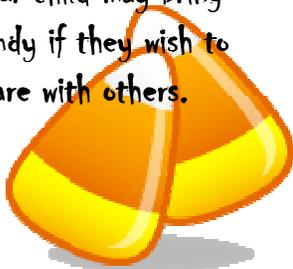


The Halloween Party will be scheduled for Friday October 30, 2009 from 9-11 am. Children may wear their Halloween costumes if they so choose!

Please have your child come dressed in their costume that morning. Please remember to bring extra cloths to have them change into later.

Please remember that the Center **DOES NOT** promote violence so keep your costumes neutral.

Your child may bring candy if they wish to share with others.



Holiday Schedule



Closed
Thanksgiving
& the Day After,
Thursday November 26, and
Friday November 27, 2009.



Thursday December 24, 2009
Christmas Eve we close early at
3:30-pm and Friday December
25, 2009 Closed.



Friday January 1, 2009 New
Years Day Closed.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Mark your calendars! The preschool class (Ladybugs & Fireflies) will present their Christmas Program Thursday December 17, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.



Annual Christmas Party/Gifts

Another year has gone by WOW, how time has flown by!

Christmas will be here before you know it. The Nannies Unlimited Child Center and Preschool Inc. tradition to replenish our toys and supplies for the children and teachers to use throughout the year will continue this year. Here is how it works! Each child brings one gift wrapped to the Center **PRIOR TO Friday December 18.**

We will have one large party scheduled for Wednesday December 23, 2009.

Each child will open a gift and place it on the shelves of their room to play with throughout the year.





E-MAIL

We really appreciate all of the positive comments about our website. If you have any comments or would like to see something added to our site please let us know. You can either email us through the website itself or if you wish you may send it to either Ms. Vickie at nanniesunltdvj@aol.com or Ms Cindy at: nanniesunlimited@aol.com

We are trying as much as we can to go "GREEN". With this in mind, all invoices will be sent electronically.

Please make sure we have your email address in the office.

All year end invoices will be sent electronically. Please watch for these after the first of the 2010 year.

Thank You!

Ms Vickie and I would like you to express our appreciation to all of our parents and family members for your encouragement and support this past year.

We truly have enjoyed having your child here at our Center and feel honored to be your chosen Daycare/Preschool.

Your business is very much appreciated, and we will do our very best to continue to meet your childcare needs.

Your continued patronage and suggestions are a vital part of our growth.

And for that, we are most grateful.

Thanks again! We look forward to serving your family for many years to come.

Ms. Vickie
&
Ms. Cindy.



Watch for the next Nannies Unlimited Child Center and Preschool Inc. newsletter January 2010.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact us (515) 264-8288 ask for Ms. Cindy or Ms. Vickie.