

# Action Steps for Parents to Protect Your Child and Family from the Flu this School Year

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

1. **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
2. **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. **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 medicine). Keeping sick students at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others. When calling the school about your child's absence, please let them know they are out with Influenza-Like Illness (fever of 100 degrees or more **with** a cough or sore throat).
4. **Get your family vaccinated for seasonal flu.**

Follow these steps to prepare for the flu during the 2009-2010 school year:

- Make sure the school has all of your current emergency contact information for your child.
- 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 every morning before sending them to school.
- Identify if you have children who are at higher risk of serious disease from the flu and talk to your healthcare provider about a plan to protect them during the flu season. Children at high risk of serious disease from the flu include: children under 5 years of age and those children with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma and diabetes.
- Identify a separate room in the house for the care of sick family members.
- Collect games, books, DVDs and other items to keep your family entertained if your child is sick and must stay home.

## For more information:

▶ **Visit: MPS website at: [www.mpls.k12.mn.us](http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us)**

▶ **Visit: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)**

▶ **Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day**

■ 1 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)

■ TTY: (888) 232-6348

■ [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov)