



Kate Donegan
Superintendent

August 2009

H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) Information

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As you may know, there is a new form of influenza in our community and in the world—H1N1 Influenza (which has been called Swine Flu). H1N1 Influenza can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of this type of influenza. We want to keep the schools open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season but **we need your help to do this.**

We are working closely with the Skokie Health Department to monitor both seasonal and H1N1 influenza conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. One of these steps includes preventing the spread of the flu.

Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu and keep sick children at home.** 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 may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **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.** For example, if your child's fever breaks at 1:00 pm on Monday, they would not be able to return to school the next day. However, they would be able to return on Wednesday since it has now been more than 24 hours fever free. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may become infected.
- **Teach your children to wash their hands often** with soap and water. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food, or unwashed utensils. Also, teach them to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or use their elbow, arm, or sleeve instead of their hand.
- **The Skokie Health Department recommends that you have your child vaccinated against regular seasonal influenza and H1N1 influenza.** The seasonal flu vaccination is available now through your child's doctor. The H1N1 vaccination will be available at a later date (tentatively November) through the Skokie Health Department and at our schools. More information will be forthcoming.

For more information, about flu in our community and what our District's procedure are, visit the District 73½ website at www.sd735.org the Skokie Health Department's website at www.skokie.org or call your child's school nurse. We will notify you of any additional changes to our District's strategy to prevent the spread of influenza.

Sincerely,

Kate Donegan
Superintendent