



September 2, 2009

Dear Parents,

The health and safety of your children are top priorities for the Archdiocese of Louisville and the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW). Since March 2009, a small number of cases of novel H1N1 influenza (swine flu) have been identified in Kentuckiana. With the start of the school year, there has been a slight increase in the number of cases, including cases involving school children, in Louisville and around the state.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the process for handling and providing notice of any H1N1 cases that may be identified in our Archdiocese of Louisville Catholic Schools. Over the next several months, we expect that many children in Louisville will be infected with H1N1. Up until now, however, most of the sick, including children, have had mild symptoms. Very few people have become seriously ill.

Based on current information and in line with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, we will not close a school when an individual child develops H1N1 infection. We will consider closure only if a school experiences a high number of infections that prevents daily school work from taking place. We believe that such an event will be rare. LMPHW will also **not be issuing a health advisory for each suspected or confirmed case under ordinary circumstances.**

Parents, please watch your child closely for flu-like symptoms like fever, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, body aches, headache, or fatigue. Children with flu-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

Practicing the precautions listed below **along with getting the seasonal flu vaccination as soon as possible** will help lessen the risk of illness for your child.

- Frequently wash hands (for 20 seconds or the time it takes to sing the Happy Birthday song twice.)
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Regularly clean areas and items that have a lot of hand contact. However, it's not necessary to disinfect beyond normal cleaning.
- Cover mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing with tissue or your elbow. Discard used tissues immediately and then wash hands.
- Do not share eating utensils, share toothbrushes, or drink from someone else's cup.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

As information is finalized about H1N1 vaccines, we will communicate that information to schools. Most children have not been exposed to H1N1 and will benefit from the protection of H1N1 vaccine. H1N1 illness has been mild so far, but it may become more severe in the wintertime.

We will monitor H1N1 in Louisville very closely to ensure that we have put safety measures in place to stop the spread of illness. If the situation changes, we will adjust our recommendations and practices accordingly.

Leisa Schulz
Superintendent
Archdiocese of Louisville

Adevale Troutman, MD
Director
Louisville Metro Department of Public Health & Wellness