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An Important Message for Parents and Teachers from the Middlesex County Public Health Department

Protect Children from the Flu

Flu is spread from person to person through coughs and sneezes. It is necessary to cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough and sneeze and then throw away the tissue after you use it. You should also wash your hands after using a tissue, after using the bathroom, before you eat, or if your hands become dirty. If a tissue is not available cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve.

When washing your hands, use soap and warm water and wash them long enough to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice (20 seconds). When soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand cleaner may be used. Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

Germs such as the flu can also be found on door knobs and toys. You should clean objects which are shared and used often. Parents and teachers can help keep children’s environments clean by using an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered household disinfectant labeled for activity against bacteria and viruses. Remember to always follow label use and storage instructions when using any EPA registered disinfectant.

Other ways children can prevent the flu and other illness are to practice healthy habits. Habits such as healthy eating and drinking and getting enough rest can help their immune system fight off sickness.

If children do get sick, parents should keep them home and away from school or child-care settings until the child has been without symptoms for one (1) to two (2) days. This will help prevent the spread of illness to others.

Every household should develop an emergency plan and put together an emergency preparedness kit. Your emergency preparedness kit should contain items such as water, nonperishable food, a flashlight, a battery powered radio, extra batteries, prescription medication, medicines for fever, and a thermometer. Remember to include all household members and pets in your emergency plan.