



## SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

October 23, 2009

To: San Joaquin County Parents, Guardians, and School Site Staff

From: Sheri Coburn, Ed.D, M.S., R.N., Director, Comprehensive Health Program, San Joaquin County Office of Education *SC*

### **RE: H1N1 and Seasonal Influenza**

Winter is flu season and as you know H1N1 and Seasonal influenza are circulating in our schools and communities. Public Health is asking that we treat both types of influenza cautiously and therefore need your ongoing assistance in minimizing the spread of flu in our schools. At this time, Public Health is not recommending school district closure with the presence of H1N1 and/or seasonal flu among our students or staff.

Schools continue to work together with public health to decrease the spread of flu by ensuring sufficient classroom and school hand washing supplies; routine cleaning of school sites; encouraging students and staff to cover their cough with a tissue or cough in the crook of their elbows; promoting frequently hand washing; avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth; asking individuals to become vaccinated against both types of flu; and by staying home in the presence of influenza like illness.

Whether you or someone you know is diagnosed with H1N1 influenza or seasonal influenza, the signs and symptoms of flu and treatment are the same. Influenza symptoms include fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, headaches, tiredness/fatigue, body aches, diarrhea, chills, vomiting or nausea. The **CDC recommends that individuals with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications.** This may mean you or your child may be absent for 3 to 5 or more days. Ill children or staff who come to school with influenza like symptoms will be sent home.

Individuals who are high risk, meaning you or your child has asthma, diabetes, are immunocompromised, or pregnant, are encouraged to contact their healthcare provider when they get influenza like illnesses and follow their healthcare provider's directions.

Individuals who are not at high risk, are encouraged to stay home, treat their symptoms and self-isolate; that is, stay away from others to prevent the spread of flu. *San Joaquin County School Districts understand that many health care providers are not seeing children with flu like symptoms and therefore have temporarily suspended their policy requiring "doctor's note" with the absences that are related to influenza like illnesses.*

The Centers for Disease Control encourages ill individuals to:

- \*Drink clear fluids, such as water, broth, sports drinks or electrolytes beverages to prevent from becoming dehydrated.
- \* Get plenty of rest
- \* Seek immediate medical attention if you:
  - o Have difficulty breathing or chest pain
  - o Have purple or blue discoloration of your lips
  - o Are vomiting and unable to keep liquids down or
  - o Show signs of dehydration, such as feeling dizzy when standing or being unable to urinate.
- \*Contact your health care provider for additional recommendations.

Winter is here and therefore it is important that we recognize the presence of H1N1 and Seasonal flu in our schools and communities and take active measures in preventing the spread of influenza. For more information on influenza visit <http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1FLU/> or call 1-800-CDC-INFO