

Ross County



HEALTH COMMISSIONER

475 Western Ave., Suite 5A
Chillicothe, OH. 45601
Phone: 740.779.9652 Fax: 740.779.0744

August 24, 2009

To the Parents of Ross County's Children:

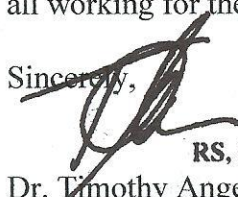
As your children are returning to school and to preschool, I'm sure you're aware that we are expecting a very unpredictable flu season. We anticipate cases of influenza earlier than usual and we're asking for your help in keeping all of our community's children safe and healthy.

Here's how you can help:

- Check your child each morning for a fever. If your child has a fever or other flu symptom (dry hacking cough, fatigue, body ache) please do not send them to school. They will only expose other children to their illness. Keep your child home and away from others until they have been fever free for 24 hours. This may create a temporary hardship, but if an influenza outbreak becomes general, schools and pre-schools will likely be ordered closed. This could last from one week to 12 weeks. This will create a challenge for everyone.
- Teach your child to wash their hands regularly, especially before eating. Also, encourage them to keep their hands away from their eyes, nose and mouth, which are entry points into our bodies for the influenza virus.
- Teach your child to cover their coughs and sneezes. Supply them with tissues and show them how to cough or sneeze into the crook of their arm if they don't have a tissue. The influenza virus is "shed" by an infected person through these coughs and sneezes. They can be inhaled by others or droplets can fall onto surfaces, where they can get onto the hands of others.
- Explain to your child how influenza is spread from person to person (coughs, sneezes and unwashed hands) and that they should try not to come into close contact with others (three feet or more is a good rule). We call this interpersonal distancing.
- If your child has a chronic health issue this advice is even more important and they are at a higher risk. You should have them vaccinated as soon as possible.

We are working with all of the county's schools and preschools in an effort to keep our children safe. School authorities have also been asked to promote these healthy habits and to exclude sick children from school. Please cooperate with your child's school and understand that we are all working for the good of our children.

Sincerely,



RS, PhD

Dr. Timothy Angel
Health Commissioner
Ross County Health District

www.rosscountyhealth.com

info@rosscountyhealth.com

Equal Opportunity Employer