

Pandemic Flu Tips for Parents and Teachers

Involving children in preparing for an influenza pandemic is a great way to help them learn about preventing many common illnesses and stopping the spread of influenza. Prevention is the first line of defense against the spread of influenza and many illnesses. Teach and model appropriate behaviors consistently.

Ways to Involve Children

1. Teach Prevention Behaviors

Wash hands frequently and correctly

- Have children wash long enough to sing "Old McDonald" or another favorite song.
- Have children wash hands to practice, washing from wrists to fingertips and under fingernails.
- Have alcohol-based gels or wipes available for situations when soap and water are not available.

Cover coughs and sneezes

- Give children pocket-size tissue packs for their backpacks.
- Instruct children to use their upper arm (not hands) when tissues are not available.
- Teach children to stay away from others as much as possible when they are sick.

As always, give children positive, reinforcing feedback on their behaviors.

2. Engage Children in Discussion

- Discuss preparing for a pandemic or other emergency with children.
- Give honest, simple answers and make sure they understand.
- Create opportunities for children to talk with each other about what to expect and what to do.

3. Involve Children in Activities

- Use fact sheets, flyers, posters, activities, and games to teach children what they can do to help prevent the spread of infection.
- Help children brainstorm what they would like to do if they have to stay inside or away from others.
- Allow children to participate in preparing emergency kits for their family.