

## WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL

It is important for the health of all students, staff and families that your child **not be at school when sick**. The following guidelines are appropriate reasons to keep your child home from school:

- A fever of 100° F or higher. Your child should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- A consistently goopy, runny nose.
- White or yellow drainage from the eye, crusty eyes, and/or redness of the eyelid or skin surrounding the eye.
- A bad cough – one that you wouldn't want your well child to be around.
- A sore throat, especially with fever or swollen glands in the neck.
- Shortness of breath or other problems with normal breathing.
- A child that seems ill – unusually tired, pale, or difficult to awaken; says he or she has headache or body ache; seems confused or irritable, and/or lacks normal appetite.
- A rash that is associated with fever or severe itching.
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours or as directed by your physician. Your child should be free of vomiting and feeling well for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Diarrhea and/or bloody diarrhea. According to Washington State Administrative Code, a child who has one episode of bloody diarrhea episode or two episodes of diarrhea at school must be sent home and cannot return until the diarrhea has resolved. Some diarrhea may be related to bacteria or viruses. You should contact your health care provider if your child has severe or bloody diarrhea.
- If your health care provider has prescribed antibiotics, your child needs to remain at home for at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotics.
- Any contagious disease that can infect others such as chicken pox, influenza, whooping cough or gastroenteritis.
- As directed by your child's health care provider.

If you have concerns about any of the above symptoms please contact your health care provider.

### HOW DO GERMS SPREAD?

Germs spread in many ways. Cold and influenza viruses are most often spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets produced by sneezing and coughing. Germs are also spread by touching surfaces contaminated with respiratory droplets. Desks, doorknobs, pencils, and other commonly touched items can be contaminated when a person coughs in their hands and then touches a surface. People become infected, when they touch a contaminated surface and then rub their eyes, scratch their nose or eat, allowing the germs to enter their body.

### HOW DO I PREVENT THE SPREAD OF GERMS?

Preventing the spread of germs comes down to the basics: practicing excellent hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Hand washing with warm water and soap will reduce your chances of being infected and infecting others. Teach your child to wash his or her hands properly. Covering your mouth and nose with your sleeve when coughing and sneezing will prevent the spread of germs. Also teach your child to cover his or her cough and sneeze. If you are ill, stay home. This will prevent your germs from spreading throughout your work place. Likewise, keep your child home if he or she is ill to prevent spreading germs at school.