

Dear Parent,

We want to share with you information about the steps Extended Love CDC *is taking now* to help prevent the spread of flu.

At this time, program staff and children who are NOT sick can safely come to the early childhood program. We are working closely with the Kenosha County health department and will keep you updated with any important information regarding the current flu conditions.

The following steps are being taken at our program to help keep children and staff from getting sick with flu.

- **Encouraging our staff to get vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu** (if recommended) when vaccines become available.
- **Encouraging parents to have children (6 months of age and older) vaccinated** for seasonal flu and H1N1, when the vaccines become available. Children under the age of 5 years are at higher risk for flu complications.
- **Child care providers are educated and encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze**, and are teaching children how to do the same.
- **Child care providers are practicing good hand hygiene** and we are providing the time and supplies for staff and children to wash their hands as often as necessary. Our staff is actively helping children wash their hands frequently.
- **We are performing a daily health check of children and staff when they arrive at the child care program.** Please make sure your contact information is up-to-date so we can contact you to pick up your child if he or she becomes sick.
- **If children or staff have flu-like symptoms, they are kept in a separate, but supervised, space** until they can go home. We are also limiting the number of staff who takes care of sick children.
- **We are asking parents and staff to keep themselves and children home if they have flu-like illness.** They should stay home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius measured by mouth), or signs of a fever (chills, feeling very warm, a flushed appearance, or sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen).
- **We are frequently cleaning surfaces and items** that children touch with their hands, mouths, and body fluids such as toys, diaper stations, chairs, or playground equipment.
- **We may decide to temporarily close the program if there is a lot of flu in the community.** Please consider alternate child care arrangements in case we need to close temporarily. Check with your employer to find out if they will allow you to stay at home to care for your children. Ask if you can work from home. If this is not possible, start planning for other ways to care for your children at home.

If the flu conditions become MORE severe, we will consider adding the following steps:

- **Extending the time sick children or child care providers stay home** to at least 7 days, even if they feel better. Those who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away.
- **Allowing children and staff at higher risk for flu complications to stay home.** Parents and staff should make this decision in consultation with their health care provider.
- **Finding ways to increase social distances** (the space between people) in our program by dividing classes into smaller groups, moving play stations farther apart, and holding classes outdoors, weather permitting.
- **Considering temporarily closing the program** if we are unable to continue to operate because many staff and children are at home or if the CDC or our health department asks us to close to help decrease the spread of flu in our community.

For additional information about flu, visit www.pandemic.wisconsin.gov

Sincerely,