



# PANDEMIC H1N1 2009 (pH1N1) INFLUENZA VIRUS

As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, the Board and our school are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu. We want to keep the schools open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season. But, we need your help to do this.

Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) is the acute onset of respiratory symptoms with fever and cough and one or more of the following symptoms; sore throat, muscle

aches, joint pain, or weakness. In children under 5, gastrointestinal symptoms may also be present and fever may not be prominent.

The Board has a comprehensive Pandemic Response Plan and is working closely with our local Public Health Units to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

## *What is the Board doing about Pandemic H1N1 2009 (pH1N1) Influenza Virus?*

- ❖ We have a pH1N1 plan in place – you can see it at [www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/fluupdates](http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/fluupdates)
  - ❖ We are conducting an awareness campaign.
  - ❖ We are continuing to report student absenteeism rates to the local public health units.
  - ❖ We encourage hand hygiene, cough/sneeze etiquette, staying home when ill and keeping the school and central office environment clean.
  - ❖ We are consulting with our local public health units for guidance on required surveillance activities, infection prevention and control, best practices and the latest information on pH1N1.
- As the flu season approaches, we will do everything we can to keep our schools functioning as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help.
- ❖ Teach your children to wash their hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
  - ❖ Teach your children not to share personal items like drinks, pencils, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. They should be encouraged to cover up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
  - ❖ Know the signs and symptoms of the flu. Symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, sore throat, sore muscles, joint pain, headache, and feeling very fatigued. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea. Contact your health professional if you are experiencing severe flu-like symptoms.
  - ❖ Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected. Parents should develop a contingency plan for child care if your child becomes ill or experiences Influenza-Like Illness (ILI).
  - ❖ Do not send children to school if they are sick. Children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.

## *Find out more –*

If your child's symptoms are getting worse, call Telehealth Ontario at: **1-866-797-0000** or contact your health care provider.

Visit the Public Health Unit website in your local area:

HALIBURTON, KAWARTHA, PINE RIDGE DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT . . . . . [www.hkpr.on.ca](http://www.hkpr.on.ca)

DURHAM REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT . . . . . [www.region.durham.on.ca](http://www.region.durham.on.ca)

PETERBOROUGH COUNTY-CITY HEALTH UNIT . . . . . [www.pcchu.peterborough.on.ca](http://www.pcchu.peterborough.on.ca)

For more information about what our Board and schools are doing about the flu, visit the Board website at [www.pvnccdsb.on.ca](http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca) or call **(705) 748-4861**, Ext. 245. We will notify you of any additional changes to our Board or school strategy to prevent the spread of flu.