



# HEALTH, SAFETY & BENEFITS



September 8, 2009

## H1N1 Flu: Parent Information

The Surrey School District works closely with public health professionals to ensure district and school staff take all appropriate measures to minimize health risks, including from viruses like H1N1. This includes ensuring students, parents and staff have up-to-date information about health risks and how they can help to avoid spreading or contracting contagious illnesses.

In most respects, the H1N1 virus has not affected students or schools any differently than a typical flu season. However, the H1N1 flu has been declared a pandemic because more cases of H1N1 flu have been reported through-out the world than would be considered normal for a flu. Importantly, school-aged children appear to be getting the H1N1 flu more than other influenzas.

### Minimizing the spread of H1N1 flu

Because school-aged children appear more vulnerable, all students, parents and school staff are urged to follow simple, yet very effective everyday routines to reduce the spread of the germs that cause respiratory illnesses like the H1N1 flu:

1. Teach your children to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
2. Teach your children to cough and sneeze into a tissue or into the inside of their elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
3. Children who are sick must stay home from school and daycare, and stay away from other people until they are feeling better and able to fully participate in normal activities; usually about seven days.

### Symptoms

The symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus are similar to the symptoms of seasonal influenza. They include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills and fatigue
- Occasionally, vomiting and diarrhea

### Additional information

The Surrey School District is monitoring absenteeism due to illness and continues to work closely with public health experts to ensure preventative practices are in place and students, parents and staff are informed as health officials provide new information.

There is more easy-to-read information about the H1N1 flu, including frequently asked questions and answers, available to you on the school district website home page at [www.sd36.bc.ca](http://www.sd36.bc.ca). You can also ask for this information from your school.