

September 2, 2009

Re: Precautions for Novel Influenza in the EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start Program

Dear Parent:

In the last couple of days, local and national media sources have been reporting about a growing outbreak of the Novel H1N1 virus (swine flu) across our nation and our locality.

We have two confirmed cases of swine flu at the Waco Head Start Center. We take this threat seriously and will continue to monitor our centers. In addition, our Agency will continue to monitor this situation through the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District. Any EOAC Head Start and Early Head Start events will be posted on the EOAC Head Start website ([hsehsonline.org](http://hsehsonline.org)) and communicated to parents as soon as possible.

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal influenza and include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Additional information on swine flu can be found at [http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/key\\_facts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/key_facts.htm).

A vaccine is available to protect against the swine flu. Contact your private physician or the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District for further information regarding the vaccine. There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illness like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Viruses can be spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

It is also recommended that students and parents are aware that this is not the time to be concerned with perfect attendance and if your child is ill they should remain at home.

If you have reason to be concerned that you or your child may have Swine Flu, please contact your family doctor as soon as possible. A medical professional can only diagnose swine flu. If you are sick, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.

Debora A. Jones, Director  
EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start