

Tackle the Flu E-Message: Child Care

Flu Season is Here

The Best Way to Prevent the Flu is to Get Vaccinated

Child care facilities serve a vital role in helping control the spread of the flu. By encouraging flu vaccination you can help staff and children in your care stay healthy.

Getting a flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu. Annual vaccination against flu is recommended for all people six months of age and older, unless they have a condition or medical reason not to get the vaccine.

Please talk with staff and families of children in your care about getting the vaccine now. By getting vaccinated against the flu now, individuals are not only protecting themselves from the flu, but are less likely to spread the virus to family members, co-workers and others. The flu vaccine is readily available this season in all communities.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' *Tackle the Flu* campaign resources are available to help you encourage staff and students to get a flu vaccine.

These resources include a bookmark, posters, fact sheet, sticker, coloring page and tip card and are available to you at no cost. Visit the department's web site at health.mo.gov/immunizations or call 573.751.6124 to order.

Please consider distributing these resources to staff and families of children in your care.

Controlling the Flu in a Child Care Facility

The following guidelines can help control the spread of the flu:

- Frequent hand washing, especially before and after eating and after using the bathroom.
- Coughing and sneezing into a tissue or the inside of the elbow – not on bare hands.
- Staying home when sick.
- Surfaces and items that staff and students normally touch, such as desks, door knobs, toys, table tops, water fountains, computer keyboards, etc., should be thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis.
- Children and staff who are sick must be sent home as soon as possible. They should stay in a separate room until they can go home. Children and staff need to stay home until 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).

Resources

- Tackle the Flu, flu vaccine campaign tools and materials, health.mo.gov/immunizations
- Hand washing and infection prevention materials, www.health.mo.gov/PandemicInfluenza/CampaignMaterials.pdf
- General influenza information, www.health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/influenza

