

# **“Sick Day Guidelines: Making the Right Call When Your Child is Ill”**

*(This is a Guideline to assist Parents in making smart choices this cough and cold season)*

## **Should I keep my student home or send him/her to school?**

Consider keeping your student home if her/she:

- **Has a fever of 99.6 degrees or higher**
- **Has been vomiting**
- **Has symptoms that prevent him/her from participation in school:** such as
  - Excessive tiredness or lack of appetite
  - Productive coughing and sneezing
  - Headache, body aches, earaches
  - Sore throat

A minor sore throat is usually not a problem, but a severe sore throat could be strep throat even if there is no fever. Other symptoms of strep throat in children are headache and upset stomach. Contact your physician as your student needs a special test to determine if it is strep throat.

**Keep your student home until their fever has been gone for 24 hours without medication.** Colds can be contagious for at least 48 hours. Returning to school too soon may slow the recovery process and expose others unnecessarily to illness.

**Does my student have the flu?** The flu is serious. Call your physician at the first sign of flu symptoms, which typically comes on suddenly. Symptoms include: High fever, Chills, Headache, body aches, earache. Consult your child’s physician about the best way to treat their cold or flu.

## **How do I make my child feel better?**

- Make sure your student gets plenty of rest and put limits on TV watching.
- Encourage fluids, like water, soup, juice and ice.
- Help your student relax
- Consider using a cool humidifier
- When used as directed, cough and cold medications help relieve symptoms while your student is getting better. Read/follow directions and give the exact amount recommended.

## **How Can I prevent my student from getting a cold?**

- \*Teach your student to wash their hands frequently using plenty of soap and warm water. Proper hand washing should take about 20 seconds, the time it takes to sing Happy Birthday- twice.
- \*Teach your student to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their sleeve.
- \*Keep the student’s environment tobacco free.
- \*Minimize the time your student spends with other people who have cough or cold symptoms.
- \*Serve a balanced diet with lots of fruits and vegetables. Give daily vitamins if recommended by your doctor.
- \*Have annual health exams to follow changes in your student’s health---Keep Immunizations up-to-date.
- \*After your student is feeling better, clean all surfaces, wash all bedding and air out the room.

