



## **2016– 2017 Influenza (Flu) Season**

### **Cases of Seasonal Flu Have Reached Epidemic Levels**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cases of the seasonal flu have reached epidemic levels across the United States. The most recent Weekly Surveillance Report reported nine influenza-associated pediatric deaths.

Influenza is a contagious disease that easily spreads every winter, usually between October and May. It can cause mild to severe illness that may result in hospitalizations and at times can lead to death. Each year an average of more than 20,000 children under the age of 5 are hospitalized because of influenza complications. The Department of Health recommends that everyone six months of age or older receive flu vaccination. Since the flu can spread through coughing or sneezing, it is also important that family members, and child care providers who regularly come into contact with children to get vaccinated.

It's not too late to get the flu vaccine. The CDC recommends flu vaccination for anyone that has not been vaccinated.

To learn how the flu spreads, click here

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/spread.htm>

To learn more about Influenza symptoms and complications, click here

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/symptoms.htm>

The CDC, recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older.

To learn more about the 2016 – 2017 guidelines for flu vaccination, click here

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/whoshouldvax.htm>

There are recommended procedures that you can implement in order to protect the health and safety of children, as well as staff in your program.

#### **Take the following Steps NOW to Help Your Program Prepare:**

- Encourage all staff, children, and parents to get the flu vaccine.
- Encourage children, parents, and staff to take the following everyday preventive actions.  
To learn about every day preventive actions, click here,  
[http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/updated/everyday\\_preventive.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/updated/everyday_preventive.pdf)
- Examine and revise your program's written plan for seasonal flu.  
Click below to review information that should be part of your written plan  
<http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/9.2.4.4>

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Member Agency – United Way of Westchester and Putnam, Inc.



- Complete the free AAP/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention online course  
To complete the course, click here  
<http://www.healthychildcare.org/flu.html>
- Help families and staff to understand the important roles they play in reducing the spread of flu. To review the handout, click here  
[https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/disasters\\_dpac\\_InfluenzaHandout.pdf](https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/disasters_dpac_InfluenzaHandout.pdf)
- Plan to distribute a customized letter to parents about influenza prevention and control practices in your program. To read a sample letter, click here  
[https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/parent\\_flu\\_letter\\_2015\\_2016.pdf](https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/parent_flu_letter_2015_2016.pdf)
- Update family contact information and child records so parents can be reached quickly if they need to pick up their sick child.

All child care programs and schools are required to post influenza educational material where it can be easily viewed within the program. The purpose is to ensure that families receive information about influenza and the benefits of vaccination.

For options in posting influenza educational material for parents, click below

<https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2423.pdf>

[http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/updated/fluguideforparents\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/updated/fluguideforparents_brochure.pdf)