



Parent Resource Center

October 2009

Dear PRC Families,

As I'm sure you are aware the World Health Organization raised its pandemic level to six (6) during this current flu season and we are in the grips of a world epidemic impacting people of all ages and health status. What is most concerning about this pandemic, H1N1, is that it impacts all people of all ages. Additionally, the 'old fashioned' flu that most severely impacts the young, elderly and those with compromised immune systems is still present in our community.

The Department of Health considers organizations such as the PRC to be a "non-essential public place" (as opposed to 'essential' such as hospitals, schools, day cares) and as such we are encouraged to close to the public at any point that we feel it is safe and appropriate to do so. The PRC Board of Directors would make this decision; in the meantime we have decided to remain open but create and implement a mandatory pandemic plan immediately. This plan will stay in effect until the World Health Organization lowers its pandemic level. The PRC is committed to providing a safe environment for your family and appreciates your cooperation in this effort.

Staff is being trained and basic hygiene measures and precautions have already been put in place. Disinfectant supplies have been purchased and cleaning measures have been increased. Wet activities, which can promote contamination, have been pulled from the sensory table and play dough, often mouthed by little ones, has been removed until the pandemic level is decreased. Staff are wiping down common areas routinely throughout the day with bleach solutions and any staff who are sick are being required to stay home until they are fever and symptom free for 24 hours. Please note that due to the small size of our staff, if the majority of staff are ill, the center will close to all families until such time that it is safe and appropriate to reopen.

In order to protect staff and visiting families, we are implementing the following:

- All families and staff are required to wash their hands with soap and water in the restroom before entering the center. Anti-viral tissues are around the center for your use, as well as anti-bacterial soap and disposable hand towels. Signs illustrating the proper way to cover a cough or sneeze are located in the center and on the elevator. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with these Department of Health recommended practices.
- All families and staff are required to stay home while sick until all members have been symptom and fever free for 24 hours. If staff or another family recognizes that there is a sick individual (adult or child) in the center, that family will be asked and required to leave immediately. This practice, while crucial to decreasing illness in the center, may be uncomfortable for all involved and therefore we hope that families will exercise good judgment when deciding whether or not all are well enough to visit the center.

Should the staff be met with resistance to basic hygiene practices or families are routinely coming to the center regardless of illness indicators, the Board of Directors is comfortable implementing mandatory daily thermal scanning for all staff and visitors until the World Health Organization lowers its pandemic level. We would do this only as a measure of last resort and only in the best interest of all in the center.

Thank you for taking the time to read this communication and for respecting the health of all who share the play space. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to speak to one of the staff, or me directly. If you would like to contribute to our pandemic plan, monetary or in-kind donations of tissues, bleach bottles, bleach, hand soap, paper towels, Clorox wipes, Pine Sol, sponges and non-water hand sanitizer are deeply appreciated. Let's make this the healthiest flu season possible! Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Kimberly H. Townson

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Executive Director, PRC

Heather Hanson

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President, PRC Board of Directors



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