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## FACTSHEET

May 4, 2009

Ministry of Education

### **PROTECTING YOUR KIDS FROM SWINE FLU**

H1N1 (swine flu) is a type of influenza (flu) virus that causes respiratory disease that can spread between people. Young children, pregnant women, and people with chronic diseases like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease may be at higher risk for complications from this infection. In most children, the symptoms of H1N1 (swine flu) are similar to the symptoms of regular flu. They include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills and fatigue
- Occasionally, vomiting and diarrhea

Flu viruses spread from person to person mainly through the coughing or sneezing of a sick person. Flu virus may also be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with the virus and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth. Right now, there is no vaccine to protect against Swine Flu, but there are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like Swine Flu:

- Teach your children to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cough and sneeze into a tissue or into the inside of their elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least six feet away from people who are sick.
- Children who are sick should stay home from school and daycare and stay away from other people until they are better.
- In communities where H1N1 (swine flu) has occurred, stay away from shopping malls, movie theaters, or other places where there are large groups of people.

You can call [HealthLink BC](#) at 8-1-1, 24 hours a day/seven days a week to speak to a nurse if you have more questions or are concerned about any illness/symptoms experienced by you or your children.

