



PRACTICAL PARENTING PARTNERSHIPS

Working Together for Our Children

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HEALTH, WELLNESS AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

by Janet Shepard, Director

Parent Involvement and health and wellness activities in schools go hand in hand. The Coordinated School Health Model identifies eight components of school health. Parent and Community Involvement is one of the eight components. PPP is a member of the Coordinated School Health Coalition in Missouri which gives leadership to schools in implementing school health plans. At the school level the plan is written and implemented by the school health advisory council (SHAC). You can learn more about the coalition and sign up for blog updates at the website at www.healthykidsmo.org. You will also find many ideas for health and wellness activities. Resources which may be downloaded or ordered include a School Healthy Advisory Council Guide which was just updated last year.

For several years now schools have been required to have a wellness policy in place. In many schools the SHAC was given the responsibility for writing and implementing the wellness policy. Sometimes the school food service director or school nurse has responsibility for the wellness policy. Do you know who chairs these groups at your school?

Frequently I hear about SHACs and wellness committees feeling challenged by the parent involvement requirements. This can be a great partnership opportunity for the PPP team and the wellness committee to work together. Share the outlines in the yellow Wellness notebook in your PPP resource notebooks, share ideas from the wellness regional PPP hosted a few years ago, forward this newsletter to them and include a link to archived issues of the newsletter on the [website](#).

October offers some great opportunities around wellness and family engagement. October 7 is International [Walk to School Day](#). If you are not already planning to celebrate this year, put it on the calendar for next school year. You will find ideas for celebrating on the website.

Fourth and fifth grade teachers may want to take a look at the Extreme Health Challenge which is a free nutrition and fitness activity featuring the Katy Trail. Students are challenged to log enough physical activity to equal walking the full Katy Trail which is 225 miles. Participating classes will receive two pedometers and a map poster to track the progress. You will find details at [Team Nutrition](#). Just click on Extreme Health Challenge on the left side bar of the home page. It looks like great fun and offers an opportunity to incorporate social studies, health and math all into one project. While there is not a family component to this project, there certainly are lots of ways to include families.

Each year we hear of more schools planting gardens or hosting a Walking School Bus in temperate weather. Many of you offer a walking program for students and faculty. All of these are also great opportunities to include parents and community volunteers. Remember, volunteering is the topic of regional meetings this year. Sessions in Webb City and St. Louis are scheduled for November. The registration forms for both locations are on the PPP website.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND ONE OF THE 2009-1010 PPP REGIONAL WORKSHOPS!

The topic for this year's regional workshops is organizing, maximizing and utilizing school volunteer programs. These workshops will support schools in their efforts to utilize volunteers, especially in the challenging times we now face. This workshop will explore the value of volunteer programs, discuss how to establish a program, strengthen volunteer skills, look at working with students, teachers, and parents, review management and legal issues and provide tips and resources. The workshop should be attended by:

- school staff members and/or volunteers who are interested in taking the information back and training volunteers in their school community;
- volunteers interested in receiving training.

Participants will receive a training notebook. Come join us and others in your region for support in strengthening parent and community involvement in your school, thus improving education for students!

Follow the link for registration:

[Click Here for PPP 2009-10 Regional Flyer](#)

PPP CENTER UPDATE

by Janet Shepard, Director

Fall finds us busily scheduling training, family workshops, staff development and hosting regional meetings. The Springfield Regional meeting on Volunteering was well received. We are accepting registrations for other locations around the state. Next month Shelly will be holding sessions in [Webb City](#) on November 10 and in [St. Louis](#) on November 17.

Implementation Training will be held in Kansas City October 27 and 28 at the Kansas City Regional Professional Development Center in Union Station. Watch for the registration form on the website or e-mail [Janet](#) for a form. Cost is \$400 for the training with the set of resource notebooks and \$200 for the training. Each participant will receive a facilitator's guide. We are still working on details for St. Louis and other parts of the state. Please let us know if you are planning on sending someone to training this year.

Plans are on the drawing board for a year-long training and coaching series for parent liaisons. We hope to pilot this idea with low performing schools as a part of our PIRC grant project this year. If you qualify and are interested in being a part of this pilot project please call 573-761-7770 or e-mail [Janet](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2009	is expected to be named by Congress soon as School Principals Month
October 27 & 28	Implementation Training – KC RPDC-Union Station
Monday, November 10	PPP Regional Workshop – Webb City
Tuesday, November 17	PPP Regional Workshop – St. Louis
Wednesday, December 2	PPP Regional Workshop – Blue Springs
Wednesday, January 6	PPP Regional Workshop – Rolla
Thursday, January 14	PPP Regional Workshop – Cape Girardeau
Thursday, February 4	PPP Regional Workshop – St Joseph
Wednesday, February 10	PPP Regional Workshop – Jefferson City

GRANTS

by Janet Shepard, Director

The National Gardening Association in partnership with Home Depot awards Youth Garden Grants to schools and community organizations with child-centered garden programs. Details are available on the [Kids Gardening website](#). We have been focusing on volunteers this fall and this could be another great community volunteer partnership with the local garden club or master gardener group.

Several PPP sites have been successful in winning Lowe's Toolbox for Education grants. They are a great way to help fund playgrounds, walking trails, gardens and other healthy lifestyle projects. Other types of projects are also funded. Details are available at <http://toolboxforeducation.com> Applications will close October 16 or when 1,500 applications have been received. You can become a fan on Facebook to get an idea of projects funded and more details about their foundation.

NEA members may apply to the NEA Foundation for Student Achievement grants up to \$5,000. With the demonstrated link between parent involvement and increased student achievement, there are some possibilities for incorporating PPP into this grant. For details check the [NEA](#) website. Applications are due October 15.

KINDERGARTEN TRANSITION

by Janet Shepard, Director

In many school districts kindergarten students will experience their first school party at the end of this month. Kindergarten room parents or class volunteers may be planning their first party. With class parties there are typically refreshments. Whether school policy requires foods carried in to be commercially prepared and packaged or whether home made is still permitted, there may still be a tendency toward high sugar foods.

Some districts through their wellness teams are also adapting policies about healthier snack foods for parties. If your school hasn't taken that step yet, you might introduce the idea with kindergarten and move the idea upward as students progress to succeeding grades.

You might also include information and links about health and safety tips relating to Halloween in your newsletter to parents this month. There are two good on-line tip sheets from University of Missouri Extension. One is a list of [Healthy Halloween Treats](#) featuring both food and non-food treats. Another great article, written by Susan Mills-Gray, Nutrition Specialist headquartered in Cass County is called [Healthy Halloween Treat Options](#) and includes healthy snack ideas. Share your ideas with us!

HOME VISIT

by Janet Shepard, Director

Home visits offer the opportunity to share wellness information with families. PPP Home Visiting resource notebooks include information on typical development ages 5 -18, Hygiene and Health Issues, Anger Management, and Safety Issues. The home visiting resource notebooks are divided into six sets. Check the web site for a complete list of [notebook topics](#). Schools which have PPP team members trained in home visiting may always add to their resource notebook sets.

Home visits can also be a great way to get homework or learning activity bags to children who are absent for an extended period of time. Even though the home visitor may not enter the home due to risk of exposure to illness, visiting briefly at the door is a great way to send a message of care and concern from the school.

We are scheduling training this year based on requests, so let us know if you are interested in home visit training. We can schedule on-site at your school or in a location convenient to several interested school districts. Home visit training is \$50 for a six-hour training, the training notebook and lunch. Training with a complete set of home visit resource notebooks is \$275 while supplies last. Several home visitors should be able to share a set of notebooks. We do recommend that each building have its own set of materials.

SITE NEWS

by Janet Shepard, Director

Those of you who participated in the Fab 5 Health Fair at the Partnering for Success conference last spring will no doubt remember the WHACK the Flu skit performed by students from Saint Joseph's School in Westphalia. The students had previously performed the skit for students and families at their school. To view the skit and see a great germ costume, click on the [Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services](#) website. You will also find a list of free teacher materials for teaching about flu prevention.

PROMOTING GOOD HEALTH IN SCHOOL

by Shelly Lock, Program Development Coordinator

With flu season upon us, schools must review their health practices to ensure that all is being done to reduce student and staff illness risks. Schools make up about one-fifth of the country's population; it is important that we do all we can to decrease illness risks in schools. We also know that school age children are among those at higher risk for getting the flu due to the close proximity they have to others on a regular basis. Students can get sick with flu and schools may act as a point of spread, where students can easily spread flu to other students and their families. So far, with 2009 H1N1 flu, the largest number of cases has been in people between the ages of 5 and 24-years-old. What can schools do to promote good health in the school?

School personnel and students should:

- Practice good hygiene. Students and staff members should wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective. Be sure to wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Schools should increase bathroom visits for hand washing.
- Practice good respiratory habits. The main way that the flu spreads is from person to person in the droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. It is important to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Schools should make sure tissues are available in all rooms in the school.
- Stay home if you're sick. Keeping sick students and staff members at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others. Sick students or staff members should not return to school until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever. (This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medicines.) Schools may need to revise their policies and incentives to avoid penalizing students who stay home when they are sick.
- Clean surfaces and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact (keyboards, desks, doorknobs, etc.) with disinfecting cleaning agents.
- Stay in a separate room when you become sick at school until you can go home. Limit the number of staff who take care of the sick person and provide a surgical mask for the sick person and those caring for the sick to wear if they can tolerate it.
- Pay close attention and identify students who appear ill (feel warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating or shivering) and send them to the school nurse for further assessment.
- Increase distance between students when possible. If the room space allows, spread desks further apart and limit close group work.
- Stay home if you are a high risk student or staff member. People at high-risk of flu complications should talk to their doctor about staying home from school when a lot of flu is circulating in the community. Anyone can get the flu (even healthy people), and serious problems from the flu can

happen at any age. However, children under the age of 5 years, pregnant women, people of any age with chronic medical conditions (such as pulmonary disease, including asthma, diabetes, neuromuscular disorders or heart disease), and people age 65 years and older are more likely to get complications from the flu.

Schools should plan now for ways to continue educating students who stay home through instructional phone calls, homework packets, internet lessons, and other approaches.

Stay home if you have an ill household member. This option may be recommended by the school if severe outbreaks occur. In this case, you should for five days from the day the first household member got sick. This is the time period you are most likely to get sick yourself.

The goal for schools is to incorporate these and other practices to reduce exposure to regular seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu while limiting the disruption of day-to-day activities and the vital learning that goes on in schools. According to the CDC, the decision to dismiss students should be made locally and should balance the goal of reducing the number of people who become seriously ill from influenza with the goal of minimizing social disruption and safety risks to children sometimes associated with school dismissal. Based on past practices in schools with large outbreaks in spring 2009, the potential benefits of dismissing students from school were often outweighed by negative consequences, including students being left home alone, health workers missing shifts when they must stay home with their children, students missing meals, and interruption of students' education. Schools must continue to review the situation on an individual basis as this fall is unpredictable. More people may be affected thus causing wider transmission. Therefore, school dismissals may be warranted, depending on how bad the disease is and other conditions. A school where many students are at high risk (schools for medically fragile children or for pregnant students) might decide to dismiss sooner than another school.

Schools can assist the community in tracking flu outbreaks. Schools may be asked to report:

- School absenteeism rates
- Number of visits to school health offices daily
- Number of students with influenza-like illness sent home during the school day

Schools also must be prepared for the reactions of families and community members to the policies implemented regarding illness. Communication with families upfront is important. Share the *Parent Page* of this *Practical Parenting Partnerships Newsletter* with families to give them strategies for preventing illness. Share your school policies on dealing with student/staff illness. Conduct family workshops on promoting good health for school families. Workshop modules can be found in the "*PPP Wellness Notebook*". When schools, communities, and families work together, wellness and health efforts are much more successful!

A newsletter published by the PPP Center for parents and educators participating in the PPP program.

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KEEPING YOUR FAMILY HEALTHY

by Shelly Lock, Program Development Coordinator

With the beautiful fall weather and bright colored autumn leaves, comes the onset of the flu and cold season. This year we have the added concern of H1N1 flu (Swine Flu). What can we do to reduce our risks of illness this fall and winter?

Vaccinations: Flu season always has the potential to cause a lot of illness, doctor's visits, hospitalizations and deaths, but the Center for Disease Control is concerned that the new H1N1 flu virus could result in a particularly severe 2009-2010 flu season. The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices says the vaccine for H1N1 flu will be available mid-October. Vaccines are the best tool we have to prevent influenza. In addition to the H1N1 vaccine, the CDC recommends that people get vaccinated against seasonal influenza as soon as vaccines become available at their doctor's offices and in their communities. The seasonal flu vaccine is unlikely to provide protection against 2009 H1N1 influenza. The 2009 H1N1 vaccine is not intended to replace the seasonal flu vaccine. Rather, it is intended to be used along-side seasonal flu vaccine. According to the CDC, the following groups of people are recommended as a priority for receiving the new H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available:

- *Pregnant women* because they are at higher risk of complications and can potentially provide protection to infants who cannot be vaccinated;
- *Caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age and household contacts* because younger infants are at higher risk of influenza-related complications and cannot be vaccinated. Vaccination of those in close contact with infants younger than 6 months old might help protect infants by "cocooning" them from the virus;
- *Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel* because infections among healthcare workers have been reported and this can be a potential source of infection for vulnerable patients. Also, increased absenteeism in this population could reduce healthcare system capacity;
- *All people from 6 months through 24 years of age*
 - *Children from 6 months through 18 years of age* because cases of 2009 H1N1 influenza have been seen in children who are in close contact with each other in school and day care settings, which increases the likelihood of disease spread, and
 - *Young adults 19 through 24 years of age* because many cases of 2009 H1N1 influenza have been seen in these healthy young adults and they often live, work, and study in close proximity, and they are a frequently mobile population; and,
- *Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions* associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

The beginning of the new school year is a good time to make sure all of your child's vaccinations up to date. As new vaccinations are continually added, it is important to check with your child's doctor to verify if his or her vaccinations are current.

Everyday practices: Besides vaccinations, there are other things we can do and teach our children to do to stay healthy.

- Educate children about illnesses. For example, influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Wash thoroughly for 20-30 seconds under running water with soap. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Stay home if you get sick.

Activity and exercise: Plenty of physical activity is critical in maintaining good health. Help your children develop good physical activity habits at an early age by setting a good example yourself and practice heart-healthy habits. Limit television, movies, videos and computer games to less than two hours a day. Fill the rest of leisure time with physical activity. Plan family outings and vacations that involve physical activities such as hiking, walking, bicycling, skiing, and sports. You can also give your children some household chores that require physical exertion, keeping in mind their levels of strength, coordination and maturity.

Nutrition: Active kids are hungry kids. Eating healthy is another key to maintaining good overall health. Providing your children with healthy snacks is a great way to keep them going through the day. You'll also be helping them to get all the nutrition they need for their growing minds and bodies. Healthy snacking is an important part of your child's day. Remember, children have much smaller stomachs than adults so they need to eat more often during the day. In fact, some children (especially if they are very active) need to eat five or six times per day. That's up to three snacks a day, which is a great opportunity to squeeze in some extra nutrition! So what is a healthy snack? Typically, the more natural the food, the more wholesome it is because natural foods are minimally processed to conserve those rich nutrients already found in nature. You can combine two or more of the five food groups (dairy, vegetables, fruit, grains, and protein) to make nutrient-rich snacks. For example, apple slices and all-natural peanut butter are a good combination of the fruit and protein groups, providing carbohydrates for energy and protein for growth, as well as fiber, iron, potassium, vitamin C, and vitamin E. A wide variety in your child's diet is important.

Sleep: Getting enough sleep is a valuable tool in staying healthy. School age children generally need 10 to 11 hours of sleep each night. You should make sure your child's bedroom is conducive to sleep – dark, cool and quiet. Your child should avoid caffeine to improve sleep habits. Try to keep your child on a consistent sleep schedule.

When children get enough sleep they can:

- Pay attention better in school
- Be creative and think of new ideas
- Fight sickness so they stay healthy
- Be in a good mood
- Get along with friends and family
- Solve problems better

When children do not get enough sleep they can:

- Forget what they learned
- Have trouble making good choices
- Be grumpy and in a bad mood
- Have trouble playing games and sports
- Be less patient with brothers, sisters, and friends
- Have trouble listening to parents and teachers

So, as you enjoy the seasonal changes, keep in mind the things you can do to keep your family healthy during this time of increased illness. Be cognizant of vaccinations, physical activity, nutrition, sleep, and everyday healthy practices that can reduce risk of illness for your child.