



The GDAY Good Newsletter

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SEPTEMBER 28th -- Family Day - A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children™

[Family Day - A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children™](#) is a national movement to inform parents that the parental engagement fostered during frequent family dinners is an effective tool to help keep America's kids substance free. Family Day reminds parents that "Dinner Makes a Difference!"

Watch for news about the new Safe Homes program coming in September 2009

GDAY Summer Book Group 2009

By: Betsy Dolan K-4 GDAY Liaison

This summer's new GDAY Age 9-11 Book Group was a great success! It was great to see the kids connecting their ideas on plot, characters, and deeper meaning on what they read. They made connections with each other on what the books taught them and the crossover to their present school and home life. The kids discussed their impression of the readings and characters they liked and disliked. It was a wonderful opportunity to see the children reading common literature and expand their learning with discussion questions. I encourage all parents to help their children create and host their own book group with neighborhood or school friends during the school year. It's a great way to encourage reading while developing further reading comprehension.

Books read: Because of Winn Dixie; Rules; Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimh

Back to School Tips on H1N1:

With Back to School starting on the flip of the calendar page and the Swine Flu (H1N1) still kicking around the country, medical professionals are gearing up for some major outbreaks and school closures this early fall, until vaccine production and distribution are up to speed.

According to NBC **Today Show** medical contributor Dr. Nancy Schneiderman and GDAY's community stakeholders, here are some good practices parents can teach their school aged children and college bound young adults to help reduce the risk of getting or spreading this season's flu.

1. Proper hand washing! Teach younger children to lather up first, THEN turn on the warmest water they can tolerate and scrub their hands, front and back and each finger while singing Happy Birthday at least 2 times. Using a paper towel (at home and school), turn off the faucet. With another clean paper towel, dry hands thoroughly and dispose of towels properly in the trash. Paper towels are recommended unless terry cloth hand towels are tossed into the laundry after each use during cold and flu season.
2. Invest in hand sanitizer and sanitizing wet wipes. Students may not always have the chance to wash hands (like after a bus ride) or when switching classes. Using hand sanitizer or wiping

down the hard surfaces of desks, chairs and door handles when moving from class to class may limit exposure to the virus.

3. Contrary to our best manners and good nature, do not share during flu season. Many viruses, including H1N1 can linger on hard surfaces for quite a while. Sharing pens, pencils and crayons may spread the germs. When faced with “community” resources like scissors, glue sticks, playground equipment, children should wash their hands immediately after the activity.
4. Teach youngsters to use napkins and tissues when wiping hands, faces, noses and eyes, scratching itches and of course when coughing, or yawning. Always sneeze into a tissue or the crook of your elbow! The flu is most often transmitted from hand to mouth or eyes.
5. Shaking hands or hugging good friends is always a nice gesture but not during these early days of back to school flu season. Instead, friendly fist bumping, tapping elbows or just a terrific smile are safer ways to greet friends after a summer away from school.
6. Make sure youngsters have their own water bottles or disposable paper cups at home and school. Stainless steel water bottles are safe, easy to clean with hot soapy water, and aside from knowing the water source, you are helping the environment. Students should NEVER drink from the same water or sports bottles. If you must share a beverage, pour liquid from a previously unopened can or bottle into disposable cups, or containers that will be washed in hot soapy water. Sharing food is not recommended either.
7. Finally, have an accurate thermometer available for use. If your child feels warm, take his or her temperature and if there is a fever present (anything over 99*), consult your doctor and or school nurse. If you or your child is sick, stay home for at least 72 hours after the fever has broken or until cleared by your doctor.

Work is a reality for many of us, so perhaps neighbors can meet to talk about ways to support each other when dealing with sick children at home. Sending children sick with the flu or fever to school not only endangers your child, but the other children, parents, teachers and staff at the schools, as well as extending the flu season.

Reports indicate that H1N1 Flu vaccine should be making its way to doctors’ offices sometime in October. Check with your child’s pediatrician for advice about the vaccine and your child. If you are a public service or health care professional, please contact your doctor as well about getting vaccinated.

Armed with some common sense strategies, common courtesy and community outreach, together we can work to fight the flu and keep our homes and schools happy, healthy and safe during the back to school season.