



## Summerville Family YMCA

June 19, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As you probably know, there are different strains of flu affecting South Carolina. Any flu virus can cause serious illness, so we are working very closely with local and state school officials to try to prevent the spread of the flu among students and staff. There have been several confirmed cases in our community and we have been made aware that one of our program participants has had flu-like symptoms.

There are steps every parent can take to lower their children's chances of getting sick. Teach them to wash their hands often with soap and water. Children don't always have easy access to a sink, so you might consider giving them a small bottle of hand sanitizer for their backpack. They can use it throughout the day, and before snack time and lunch in addition to the hand-washing opportunities in the program.

In addition, there are things each of us can do to prevent the spread of flu. First, teach your children to cough into their inner elbow or into a tissue, instead of their hands. This will help prevent the spread of germs, including the flu virus. Second, make sure that your child does not have signs of the flu (a fever with any of the following- cough, sore throat, or runny nose) before you send them to school each morning. And third, if your child has signs of the flu, **please keep them at home for seven days after their symptoms start, or 24 hours after their symptoms go away — whichever is longer.**

Certain people may be at increased risk for complications from the flu. If they have been in contact with someone with the flu, the following individuals, or their guardians, should talk with a doctor. They include:

- People over 65 or under 2 years of age
- People with chronic lung, heart, kidney, liver or blood disorders
- People with immune systems that are compromised (either due to illness or medicines)
- Pregnant women
- Children less than 18 years old who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy who might be at risk for experiencing Reye's syndrome after influenza virus infection

Within our YMCA, we are following guidelines put out by the public health department and we are monitoring our facilities and program participants. We appreciate your continued cooperation and support as we work together to reduce the spread of the flu in our communities.

Sincerely,

*Gary Lukridge*  
CEO

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*We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities*

The YMCA mission is to be a community cornerstone that puts Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.