

# SHOULD MY CHILD STAY HOME? GUIDELINES FOR DECIDING

## HANDOUT

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**FEVER** A fever is a warning that the body is fighting an infection that could easily spread to others. A child with a temperature of 100 F should not be sent to school; s/he should stay home until fever free without the use of fever reducing medications like Tylenol.

**COLDS** Are more difficult to assess. A slightly runny nose and occasional dry cough is not enough to keep your child home. However, if your child's nose runs constantly and/or the cough is frequent and wet, or your child is experiencing nausea or is too tired and uncomfortable to function at school it would be best to keep the child home for a day or two.

**COUGH** If your child has a severe cough, rapid and/or difficult breathing, wheezing, or bluish tint to the skin or the cough is accompanied by a sore throat or not feeling well, the child should stay home from school.

**DIARRHEA** This is defined as an unusual amount of very liquid stools compared to the child's normal pattern. Child should stay home until able to participate normally at school.

**EARS** If the child has pain, swelling, drainage or difficulty hearing; please see your healthcare provider. Untreated ear infections can cause temporary or permanent hearing loss.

**EYES** Red, itchy eyes with a clear, yellow or green drainage from the eye may be contagious and a sign of bacterial conjunctivitis (pink eye). A child with pink eye can attend school as long as they are able to keep from touching their eyes and show that they can properly wash hands after contact with the infected eye.

**MEDICATIONS** The school district has very specific rules for all medications in school including cough drops. Please see the School Nurse if your child requires any medications while at school.

**RASH** A rash might be the first sign of an illness. If your child has a rash with a fever and behavioral changes, or a rash that is oozing/ open wound, or is tender with the rash worsening, s/he should be evaluated by a healthcare provider.

**SORE THROAT** If your child has a sore throat, have the child gargle with warm salt water. If his/her behavior is normal and the child ate breakfast, it's probably safe to send him/her to school. If the child has difficulty swallowing, or you notice saliva building up in the child's mouth because s/he can't swallow, please keep the child home. If you notice white spots seen in the back of the throat please contact your doctor, this could be a sign of an infection.

**VOMITING / NAUSEA** Please keep your child home if he or she has vomited more than 2 times in 24 hours or also has a fever or if s/he looks or acts ill.

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