

## HEALTH HINTS FROM YOUR SCHOOL NURSE

As your child progresses through middle school, there are a few health related items that will assist in making the school year less stressful for everyone. The health and safety of your child has a great effect on their academic success. Please feel free to contact the school nurse with any health related questions or concerns regarding these matters.

1. The Des Moines School District requests that 6<sup>th</sup> graders have a physical prior to the start of school. **All grade level athletes must renew athletic physicals every 13 months.** Physical forms should be completed by the parent and physician and returned to the school nurse. **Students are not allowed to participate in athletics unless a completed physical form is on file in the school nurse's office.** The form can be obtained from your school nurse or from the Merrill office.
2. Please bring your child's immunization record to the school nurse especially if your child has received the Tdap or Meningococcal vaccine.
3. Please review the emergency information on your enrollment forms and make any necessary corrections. The school staff utilizes this information to contact you in case of an emergency or illness. If this information should change throughout the school year, please notify the office with the updates.
4. If your child is going to be absent from school, please notify the school attendance office at 242-8358. Absences will be excused if a physician's written excuse is submitted to the attendance clerk or nurse. This includes excuses for illness and scheduled appointments.
5. Physical Education excuses are required to be written physician orders and should be given to the School Nurse.
6. The Merrill Health Office follows the medication policy of the Des Moines Public Schools. Physician prescribed medications must be in an original pharmacy container with a pharmacy label listing the student's name, the name of the medicine, the dosage, and the time to be given. Students may also receive up to 5 total doses per year of Tylenol and/or ibuprofen without a physician's order if parents check the consent box on the Health Services-Over the Counter Medications section of the Infinite Campus Online Registration. Cough drops and chapstick are allowed in class unless the individual teacher refuses the privilege if misused. Self administration of inhalers requires certain forms to be completed by your physician. These forms are available from your school nurse. Please contact the nurse if you have individual concerns.
7. Please see that your student receives an adequate amount of sleep and a proper breakfast to assist them in their classroom success.
8. In promoting a healthy atmosphere and to prevent the spread of disease within the schools. Please be proactive in advising your child to:
  - Avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth.
  - Cover coughs and sneezes by using a tissue and then disposing the tissue after using. Cough or sneeze into your elbow when a tissue is not available.
  - Wash your hands with soap and water. Wet your hands with running water; lather with soap by rubbing the front, back, between the fingers, around the thumb and wrist; rinse; and dry with a clean cloth.
  - If no soap...use a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Apply the hand sanitizer to your palm and rub for 20 seconds until dry.

These are just a few things that will assist your student as they continue the journey through middle school. Your cooperation and support in these matters will be greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact the school nurse at 242-8448 with any health concerns. I am looking forward to working with the students and their families.

Kelli Luft, BSN, RN  
Merrill School Nurse  
Phone: (515) 242-8448  
Fax: (515) 323-8656