

Calhoun County School Wellness Program

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November 15, 2012 marks the date for **“The Great American Smokeout.”** We are encouraging all families with smokers to take this challenge and finally make the commitment to quit smoking—if not for your own health, at least for the health of your children. Secondhand smoke is a **real danger**. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), most exposure to secondhand smoke occurs in homes, workplaces, and private vehicles. In Calhoun County we have banned smoking in public places but no such policy bans smoking in the home. In children, secondhand smoke causes the following:

- Ear infections
- More frequent and severe asthma attacks
- Respiratory symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath
- Respiratory infections such as bronchitis and pneumonia
- A greater risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Risk for mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, conduct disorders, and ADHD

We tell our students that smoking is the single most dangerous, destructive, and deadly thing they can do to their body. Most smokers begin to experiment with tobacco in the middle school years. Often students mention that when someone in their home smokes, it makes them sick and it bothers them. There are many resources and quit kits available to help you quit smoking. Your chances of success are greater if you enlist some help and support. Please ask your doctor about them or call 1-800-QUIT NOW or visit www.michigan.gov/tobacco to find out more. Even if you tried to quit before and were unsuccessful, **don't quit quitting!** There is no risk-free level of contact with secondhand smoke; even brief exposure can be harmful to health. Please keep the effects of secondhand smoke in mind as your children spend time at home and in the car with you.



Cold and Flu season is upon us!

Take action to protect yourself and others from the common cold, influenza, and other upper respiratory infections.

- Wash your hands before eating and after coughing, using a tissue, and using the restroom (more on hand washing next month)
- Get a flu shot (ask your school nurse about flu shot clinics in your area)
- Stay home—prepare now for child care with a sick homebound child
- Be knowledgeable... do you know the difference between a cold and the flu?

Is it a COLD or the FLU?		
Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	Rare	High(100-102)
Headache	Rare	Prominent
Body Ache	Rare	May be severe
Fatigue	Mild	2-3 weeks
Exhaustion	Never	Prominent
Stuffy Nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Cough	Mild-Moderate	May be severe
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes

The Common Cold

☞ The common cold is an upper respiratory infection that is caused by several families of viruses. It is one of the most common infectious diseases in humans. The average American has one to three colds per year.

The Flu (Influenza)

☞ The flu is a respiratory infection caused by the influenza virus. The infection is very contagious and typically is spread by air or by direct contact, from one person to another. Most cases occur during epidemics, which peak during the winter months nearly every year.

- ☞ Sniffing, achy, and a little tired? Both the flu and the common cold can leave you achy, tired, and congested. And both the flu and colds are contagious, so stop the spread. When you have symptoms, some of which include runny nose, sneezing, and nasal congestion, stay home.
- ☞ If you have a mild cough but no fever, you are dealing with a cold. A fever and cough are symptoms of the flu, and sometimes the cough can become severe. A mild cough is common with a cold, but fevers are rare. The first two or three days you notice cold symptoms, such as a cough, sneezing, and congestion, stay home—that cold is contagious.
- ☞ Ears aching? Simple congestion from the common cold can leave you with aching ears, but sometimes a cold can lead to more—a bacterial infection in the middle ear. If your ears really hurt, you may have an ear infection. While it's not contagious, you will want to see a doctor. Ear infections, which can have several causes, don't usually go away on their own; you may need an antibiotic.

☞ Most colds are over in four to seven days, though they can last for as long as two weeks, with a cough being one of the lingering symptoms. Though you may feel a bit run-down, your cold isn't contagious. You can find symptom relief for a cough with antihistamines or cough suppressants (talk with your doctor first). Then you should be good to go...To work, that is. If your cold symptoms worsen within a few days, you could have complications, such as a bacterial infection. Some infections—like strep throat—are contagious. Call your doctor if you experience unusually severe cold symptoms, high fever, ear pain, sinus-type headache, a worsening cough while cold symptoms improve, or flare-ups of chronic lung problems such as asthma. Your doctor will take a history of your symptoms and perform an exam. Until you know the results, stay home.