



## DON'T GET SIDELINED BY THE FLU: “How-To” Guide for Sharing New Influenza Educational Materials with Parents and Students

Flu outbreaks among school children are a major concern every year, and with flu season upon us, it is important that we take necessary precautions to keep our schools healthy. The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) is pleased to provide its members with *Don't Get Sidelined by the Flu*, a comprehensive online toolkit to help educate parents and students about influenza. The kit includes template educational materials – available in both English and Spanish – that school nurses can download from the NASN Web site ([www.nasn.org](http://www.nasn.org)) to raise awareness about prevention tips, symptom recognition and treatment options.

Additionally, it is important that school nurses understand their role in flu surveillance. Keeping track of flu incidence in your school will help prevent the spread of the virus in the community as a whole.

Following is an overview of the materials, as well as suggestions on how to best use them at your school. Several of these materials included in *Don't Get Sidelined by the Flu* toolkit can be customized with your school's information.

### Communications Materials (Available in English and Spanish)

- **Flu Flyer**
  - The flyer is an educational tool geared to the student, which can be posted in a high-traffic area such as the school nurse's office, sports center, student center or cafeteria.
- **Flu Fact Sheet**
  - The fact sheet can be sent to parents to help educate them on how to best protect their children from the flu. It provides answers to frequently-asked questions about the flu, including how the virus spreads, common symptoms, and simple prevention tips.
- **Flu Season Advisory: Special Needs**
  - The advisory should be sent to parents of “special needs” children. It is especially important to protect children with chronic diseases from the flu, as they are at increased risk for complications and serious illness.
- **Flu Outbreak Advisory**
  - The advisory can be sent to parents in the event of a flu outbreak in the school or community.
- **Template Newsletter Article**
  - School nurses can tailor this template newsletter article for the PTA newsletter or school newspaper to provide parents with information on influenza and tips on prevention and treatment.

### Suggested Communication Vehicles

Below are suggestions on how to reach parents with the materials.

- **Parent Mailings**
  - A highly effective method for reaching parents directly is through school mailings. The *General Flu Fact Sheet*, *Flu Outbreak Advisory* and *Flu Season Advisory* are examples of materials that can be mailed to parents. If budget does not permit, these materials can be sent home with other documents, including report cards, progress reports, etc.
- **School Newsletter/Web Site**
  - The *Template Newsletter Article*, *General Flu Fact Sheet*, or *Flu Outbreak Advisory* can be included in the school newsletter or featured on the school's Web site.
- **Parent Programs**
  - Events that bring parents to the school serve as another opportunity to reach them directly. The school nurse can play an active role in the program, such as conducting a brief presentation on influenza; setting up a booth to address parents' questions; and handing out health-related material, such as the *General Flu Fact Sheet*, *Flu Outbreak Advisory* and *Flu Season Advisory*.

For more information on *Don't Get Sidelined by the Flu*, contact NASN at 866-627-6767 or visit [nasn@nasn.org](mailto:nasn@nasn.org). *Don't Get Sidelined by the Flu* is supported by an educational grant from Roche Pharmaceuticals.