



**Department of Health
Department of Education**

To: Parents

From: Wendy Davis, MD Commissioner of Health
Armando Vilaseca, Commissioner of Education

Re: H1N1 Vaccinations in School

Date: October 5, 2009

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) has recommended that children age 6 months through 24 years, in addition to other groups of people, be vaccinated against the new H1N1 influenza virus (often referred to as swine flu) as soon as vaccine is available. As you may have heard, this new influenza virus has caused illness ranging from mild to severe, and has caused both adults and children to be hospitalized. Because children do not have immunity to this virus, they have been most affected by it and are considered at high risk of infection.

Vaccination is the best way to protect your child from this potentially serious disease. Please remember that vaccination for this or any flu is voluntary, NOT mandatory.

To provide this protection, the Vermont Department of Health is working in collaboration with the Vermont Department of Education and your child's school to offer the new H1N1 influenza vaccine at school. Clinics will be held this fall for students enrolled in your child's school, children enrolled in pre-school if there is one located in your child's school, and to home-schooled students who are part of your school district. Some school staff may also be eligible. Your school will let you know when the clinic dates are set.

The vaccine is being provided free of charge. Children under 10 years old will need two doses of vaccine, spaced four weeks apart. All others will need one dose. Only vaccine that does not contain live viruses will be administered in the school clinics.

Enclosed are an *H1N1 Vaccine Information Statement* and an *H1N1 Influenza Vaccine Consent Form*. After you review the information statement, please complete the H1N1 Influenza Vaccine Consent Form, whether or not you want your child vaccinated, and return it to school by October 14.

Vaccine will only be given to your child with your written consent. If you have any questions about the vaccine, please call your child's health care provider or school nurse. For more information just for parents, visit CDC's novel H1N1 influenza web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/parents/>