

PREPAREDNESS FOR INFLUENZA AND OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A Resource for Troop Leaders, Staff, and Parents

The threat of a potential influenza pandemic has prompted Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines to provide health guidance and resources for troops, groups, and the parents of summer campers.

An awareness of troop members' personal health, as well as that of girls attending Girl Scout events, is important in preventing the spread of influenza and other communicable diseases. The guidelines suggested by health officials should be considered at all times – not just when there may be a health crisis.

To prevent the spread of illness, as events, troop activities, and troop trips are being implemented, please consider the following:

- Stay home if you are sick, are exhibiting symptoms of a communicable disease, or may have been exposed to someone who recently has had a communicable disease.
- Cancel the event, activity, or trip if girls and/or adults are exhibiting symptoms of a communicable disease.
- Implement effective sanitation procedures in carrying out group activities through the use of anti-bacterial wipes and hand disinfectants.
- Educate girls and adults on best practices for good personal hygiene, including:
 - Covering nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and discarding the tissue in the trash after use
 - Washing hands often with soap and water (or alcohol-based hand cleaners), especially after coughing or sneezing
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid travel to locations that have been identified as having a high communicable disease transmission rate.

GSNCCP intends to implement the following precautions at upcoming Girl Scout events:

- Summer camp medical personnel will screen campers and staff upon arrival and monitor for possible exposure to communicable diseases throughout all camp sessions.
- Summer camp properties will provide appropriate personal and equipment disinfectant supplies at all owned or leased sites.
- GSNCCP will consult and cooperate with public health officials to ensure the health and safety of all campers, adult volunteers and staff at council-sponsored programs, events, and properties. Should any wide-spread outbreaks of communicable diseases occur, we will proceed with cancellations and closures, in accordance with the guidance of local, state, and federal health agencies.

Please visit the websites listed below for more information on how to decrease the risk of exposure to a communicable disease, as you prepare for upcoming events, activities, and trips:

http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/home_work_school.htm

http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu_you.htm

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/ppt/cleanhands.ppt>

<http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/>