

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #2—First Bird Case

Dear Parents,

As expected, birds infected with the avian/bird flu virus are now in the United States. It is important to know that, at this time, there are no known human cases of avian/bird flu in the United States.

Health officials are worried that the avian/bird flu virus may change in a way that infects people. Such a development could lead to person-to-person spread of the disease. This would cause a worldwide flu outbreak, called a pandemic. Therefore, even though currently there is no flu pandemic, we should be aware of the potential impact that this disease could have. As such, we would like to remind you about some ways to protect your family from getting sick:

- Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.
- Teach your children to wash hands a lot with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.
- People who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are better.
- Do not touch sick or dead birds

Enclosed with this letter is a checklist to help families get ready for a pandemic flu outbreak. This information can also help your family get ready for any kind of emergency.

If you have questions, please contact your healthcare provider, school nurse or your local public health department (INSERT INFORMATION HERE).

Illinois Department of Public Health

Visit online at www.idph.state.il.us or call the Health Emergency Information Line: 217-782-4977

Federal government information

www.pandemicflu.gov

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org