

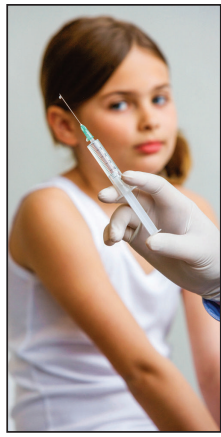
# REDUCE KIDS' RISK OF GETTING COLDS AT SCHOOL

School-aged kids who catch colds or the flu from their classmates can quickly spread those colds to their family members, who then might spread the colds further when they go to work. Preventing the spread of colds and flu at school is a team effort that requires the assistance of not just parents, but also teachers and students. Still, parents might be the first line of defense when it comes to preventing the spread of cold and flu at school.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 38 million school days are lost to the flu each year. Those lost days can affect students who miss lesson plans, but also affect parents, who often must take days off from work to tend to their sick children.

While there's no way for parents to guarantee their children won't catch a cold or the flu this school year, they can take various preventive measures to increase kids' chances of staying healthy and achieving perfect attendance.

- Make sure kids are immunized and that their immunizations are current. Vaccinations bolster kids' immune systems. That's important, as kids' immune systems are naturally less mature than adults', making them more vulnerable to germs and viruses. The CDC recommends that adults and children receive their



flu vaccinations in October while noting that such vaccinations can be administered as late as January and still prove effective. The CDC also recommends that adults and children receive flu vaccinations each year. Additional vaccinations may not

need to be administered as often, but parents should still ensure kids' are up-to-date with their shots.

- Make sure kids regularly wash their hands. Kids often catch colds by rubbing their hands that have been exposed to cold virus germs on their noses or eyes. To prevent that, parents can teach kids to wash their hands thoroughly, including scrubbing the backs of

their hands, between their fingers and around their fingernails. Kids should know to wash their hands regularly, but especially after they use the bathroom and before they eat, drink or touch their mouths, noses or eyes.

- Keep kids home when they are sick. Parents don't want their children to miss school, but kids who are suffering from colds or flu should be kept home. This prevents the spread of colds and flu to classmates and teachers, and time to rest at home may help youngsters recover more quickly.

- Teach kids to avoid common germ spots. Germs can be lurking anywhere, but some spots seem to make more welcome homes for germs than others. Studies have shown that kids were

most likely to encounter germs in schools on water fountain spigots and on plastic cafeteria trays. Teach kids to never put their mouths on fountains and to avoid eating any food that might fall onto

their trays in the cafeteria. School-aged children are susceptible to colds and flu when spending time in the classroom. But parents can reduce their youngsters' cold and flu risk in various ways.

## SNUGGLES

Care and encouragement continues at birth with skin-to-skin contact in the critical first hours after birth. Infants "room in" with mom and OB staff are trained to provide breastfeeding assistance and support.

High 5 for Mom & Baby is a Kansas initiative to support new moms who choose to breastfeed. There are five practices that are evidenced to encourage and support breastfeeding:

1. Assure immediate and sustained skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby after birth.
2. Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breast milk, unless medically indicated.

3. Practice "rooming in" – allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.

4. Give no pacifiers or artificial nipples to breastfeeding infants.

5. Provide mothers options for breastfeeding support in the community (such as a telephone number, walk in clinic information, support groups, etc.) upon discharge.

According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2016 50.2% of mothers breastfed exclusively for three months, while 23.4% breastfed exclusively for six months. The goal for 2020 is to increase those numbers to 50.2% and 25.5%, respectively.

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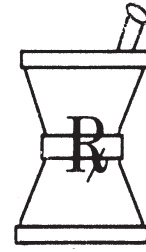
(www.high5kansas.org)  
"There are so many benefits to kangaroo care and breastfeeding. So when a mother

chooses to nurse her child, we are dedicated to providing her support and encouragement. Skin-to-skin contact is the first

see **SNUGGLES** on page 6

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Dr. Zook attended Kansas State University, and received a medical degree from KU School of Medicine. He completed his Internal Medicine residency training at the University of Colorado Hospital.

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