



Children's Center

Bridgewater State College

May 2009

H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Information

by Nancy Clark, director

The outbreak of a new strain of swine influenza, now called H1N1 by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), continues to expand in the United States and internationally. On April 29 a young child in Texas died from this infection, and the first two cases in Massachusetts were confirmed. The situation is evolving rapidly, but as this newsletter goes to press, most of the 226 cases reported in the United States, including the seven in Massachusetts, have been mild, and most of the patients have recovered. Every year some Americans die from the flu, but this does not necessarily constitute an immediate emergency.

Planning, preparedness, and prevention are critical with flu outbreaks. Bridgewater State College has a Pandemic Planning Committee which meets regularly to discuss a range of issues and to develop protective measures for the college campus

and community. This Committee met with Town of Bridgewater Health Department professionals on April 28 and continues to closely monitor H1N1 flu developments as they may possibly affect the college. At this time the Pandemic Planning Committee does not see a need to curtail any on-campus activities.

I receive regular health updates, guidance, and advisories from the MA Department of Early Education and Care. Little is known about how this new H1N1 flu will affect young children, however, we know from seasonal flu and past pandemics that those younger than 5 years of age and children who have medical conditions such as asthma and diabetes may be at higher risk for complications from this infection. Young children may not have typical symptoms (see page 4), but may have difficulty breathing and lethargy.

The Children's Center's Health Policies, found in our Parent Handbook, will continue to be strictly enforced. Please keep your child at home if s/he develops any symptoms of influenza. We will continue to do everything possible to prevent the spread of all illness, including promoting frequent hand-washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and disinfecting tables, counters, door and cabinet handles daily.

Further information about H1N1 flu can be found in the bulletin from the Centers for Disease Control reprinted on page 4.

What You Can Do to Stay Healthy

- *Stay informed.* The Center for Disease Control will be updating their website regularly: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu>
- *Avoid close contact* with those who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- *Stay home when you are sick*, especially if you have a fever. Keep sick children at home, except of course when seeking medical care.
- *Cover your mouth and nose.* Use a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or use the inside of your elbow, rather than your bare hand.
- *Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds*, especially after coughing and sneezing. (This is about the time it takes to sing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star".)
- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.* Swine flu is believed to spread mainly through person-to-person transmission through coughing or sneezing, or by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching the eyes, nose, or mouth.
- *Practice good health habits.* Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Dates to Remember

May 25 - Monday

Children's Center closed for Memorial Day (no college classes)

May 26 - June 29

Summer Session I

June 29 - Monday

Children's Center closes at 5:30 p.m.

September 2 - Wednesday

Children's Center reopens (first day of the fall semester)

Self-portrait by Gregory



Curriculum Notes - Investigator Group

by Jane Doyon, lead teacher



We were very happy to say good-bye to winter and hello to spring the past few weeks! We got to shed our hats and mittens and spend more time outside in the beautiful sunshine. One thing we discovered in the warm weather was the sudden appearance of bugs. Therefore, we decided to make our next unit of study on these interesting creatures. We learned that insects have six legs and three body parts (a head, a thorax, and an abdomen) and other bugs like spiders do not. We also learned that some bugs and insects are good for the earth such as bees that make yummy honey and ladybugs that eat smaller bugs (aphids) that can destroy plants. The children were very fascinated to see and touch a giant wasp nest that was brought into the classroom. They discovered that many wasps worked together for a long time to create the nest and that it was very *fragile*. Another favorite activity during this unit was going on a bug hunt. We looked under rocks and logs, in tall grass, and in puddles to see what we could find. We found several different bugs in these places. We saw worms, slugs, spiders, ants, roly polies, tiny flying bugs, and even a lightning bug. Photos of this bug hunt are on our bulletin board in the hallway. Make sure you check them out along with our clay bug creations in the glass display case. We sure went buggy during this unit.

During the week of April 20th-24th, we celebrated the National Week of the Young Child and participated in many fun activities. On Tuesday we combined with the Explorers and enjoyed singing songs with music instructor Sarah McQuarrie from the BSC Music department. Wednesday, Dr. James Hayes-Bohanan from the BSC Geography department brought "Earth View" (a 20 foot tall, hand-painted balloon of the earth) to the Burnell gymnasium for the children to see. We were able to walk inside this unique balloon where Dr. James taught us all about the climate, physical, and cultural features of the world. The children and teachers were very fascinated with this learning experience! Thursday, families were invited to come in and have snack with their children. We enjoyed yummy ice cream sundaes with all the toppings! We were glad to see so many families attending this event. Finally on Friday, the children got to participate in a Fun Field Day sponsored by SEAM (The Student Association of Massachusetts at BSC). They enjoyed games, crafts, face painting, prizes and more. A special thanks to our teacher assistant, Jackie Blute for organizing this event. It was a great success! We also would like to give a special thanks to Emma Shockley (Alex's sister) who came in to read to the children. She read one of her favorite books, Curious George and the Puppies. This seemed to be a favorite of the Investigators as well.

Next, we turned our attention back to the warm weather and began focusing on the spring season. We talked about all the changes taking place outside and how spring is different from other seasons. We went on a nature walk and discovered all the new growth taking place both in the ground and up in the trees. We saw tulips and daffodils

beginning to grow along with the children's favorite, dandelions! We also looked closely at the branches of different trees and bushes and noticed buds and blossoms starting to come out. Aside from observing new growth, we discovered a bird's nest being built on our very own playground. As of yet, there are no eggs in it but we'll keep watching. During our group activities, we learned about plants and flowers and discussed what they need to grow: sunlight, air, rain, and soil. We also talked about gardening in preparation of starting our own Center garden in the next few weeks. We look forward to this exciting project as we begin the month of May.

It's hard to believe the spring semester is coming to an end. We will begin parent-teacher conferences in May with those whose children are *not* enrolled over Summer Session I. If your child is not attending the Center during June, please see his/her teacher to set up a time that both of you can meet. We'd like to wish all the children who are going to kindergarten in the fall a very enjoyable, successful year of learning. Make sure you come back and visit. We will miss you all!



Curriculum Notes – Explorer Group

by Angela Magnarelli, teacher



Happy Birthday:

Gregory	May 10
Nidhi	May 23
Eloise	May 28
Will	May 29

Spring has finally sprung and the children have been really busy exploring all the changes that have been taking place outside. During the first week of April, we began to look for the “Signs of Spring.” We read stories such as: *How Do You Know Its Spring, When Spring Comes,* and *Mouse’s First Spring.* Maureen Holbrook (Ashley’s mom) also came in and did a Spanish lesson about spring with the children. The children enjoyed singing, dancing, and listening to a story in Spanish. A good time was had by all, Thank you Maureen!

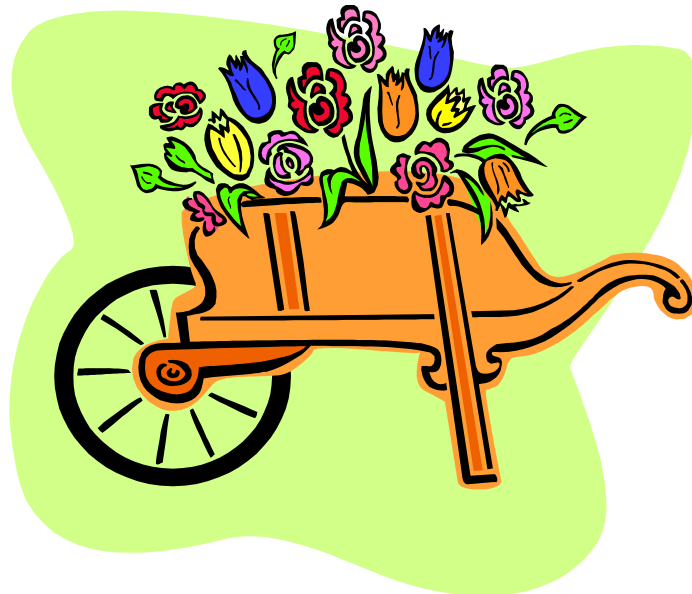
With the days getting warmer, we all ventured out on a nature walk to observe the leaves on the trees, the sprouting daffodils, and our grass becoming greener. One of the other things that the children began to notice is the variety of insects that began to appear with the much warmer weather. With their interests in mind, we ventured into a unit on bugs. We looked for bugs on the playground and dug for worms in the garden. They learned many interesting facts about a variety of insects and some even overcame their fears of certain insects (especially the teachers!). Children got the opportunity to show their creative sides at art creating bugs out of clay, marble painting a spider web and making paper plate lady bugs.

The third week of April brought us to the “Week of the Young Child.” We celebrated children this week with a special musical program with Professor Sarah McQuarrie. The children were enthralled with her songs and musical games. We also got the opportunity to have an interactive experience with BSC’s giant “Earth View” Balloon. Professor James Hayes-Bohanan used this giant, hand painted model of the earth to teach the children about our planet. Also, children, teachers, and parents all got to enjoy a special ice cream sundae snack during our annual, “Ice Cream Social.” It was great getting the opportunity to sit and chat with many of the parents as we all enjoyed this special treat. On Friday, the Student Education Association of Massachusetts at BSC (SEAM) presented a field day in the Burnell gym. The children had a wonderful time playing animal themed games and getting their faces painted. Over the course of the week, we also had numerous parents come in and read stories to the children. A very special thank you to all of the peo-

ple who made this week a very special experience for all of the children.

All of you received an introduction letter from our student intern, Yoko Kijima. She has been working directly with the children in all areas of classroom management. The children and the teachers are really enjoying having her in our classroom and we look forward to more of the creative and special activities that she has brought into our classroom, Thank you Yoko!

We are coming to the close of the semester and many of the children in our care will be leaving our classroom in the next few weeks for summer vacation. Please note that if this is your last month with us, we would like to schedule a parent-teacher conference before your child’s last day of school. If you are continuing with us into summer session I, we may schedule your conference during the month of June. Please talk to your child’s small group teacher to schedule a conference. To all of you who will not be attending summer session I, please have a wonderful, safe summer vacation!



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu): Information for Concerned Parents and Caregivers

May 1, 2009, 7:15 PM ET

What is H1N1 Flu?

H1N1 is a type of influenza (flu) virus that causes respiratory disease that can spread between people. Most people infected with this virus in the United States have had mild disease, but some have had more severe illness, and there has been at least one death. Young children, pregnant women, and people with chronic diseases like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease may be at higher risk for complications from this infection. More information about who may be at higher risk will be available when more is known about the disease. There are steps you can take to protect your family and to know when to seek medical care.

What are the symptoms?

In most children, the symptoms of H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of regular flu. They include: fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, chills and fatigue, and, occasionally, vomiting and diarrhea.

Young children may not have typical symptoms, but may have difficulty breathing and low activity. Little is known about how H1N1 flu may affect children. However, we think the infection may be similar to other flu infections. Typically, flu infections cause mild disease in children, but children under 5 years old are more likely to have serious illness than older children. Although rare, severe respiratory illness (pneumonia) and deaths have been reported with flu infections in children. Flu infections tend to be more severe in children with chronic medical conditions.

How to keep from getting it:

Flu viruses spread from person to person mainly through the coughing or sneezing of a sick person. Flu virus may also be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with the virus and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth. We think H1N1 flu spreads the same way as other flu viruses. Right now, there is no vaccine to protect against H1N1 flu, but there are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs

that cause respiratory illnesses like H1N1 flu:

- Teach your children to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cough and sneeze into a tissue or into the inside of their elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least six feet away from people who are sick.
- Children who are sick should stay home from school and daycare and stay away from other people until they are better.
- In communities where H1N1 flu has occurred, stay away from shopping malls, movie theaters, or other places where there are large groups of people.

What to do if your child is sick:

- Unless they need medical attention, keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school or daycare.
- Have them drink a lot of liquid (juice, water, Pedialyte®).
- Keep the sick child comfortable. Rest is important.
- For fever, sore throat, and muscle aches, you can use fever-reducing medicines that your doctor recommends based on your child's age. Do not use aspirin with children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.
- If someone in your home is sick, keep him or her away from those who are not sick.
- Keep tissues close to the sick person and have a trash bag within reach for disposing used tissues.

If your child comes in contact with someone with H1N1 flu, ask your doctor if he or she should receive antiviral medicines to prevent getting sick from H1N1 flu.

If your child experiences any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that he or she does not want to be held
- Not urinating or no tears when crying
- Their symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

For more information call 1-800-CDC INFO, or go to <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

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