



CHETEK-WEYERHAEUSER
AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Big Enough for Opportunities, Small Enough to Care

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3/16/2017

HEALTH ALERT

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Confirmed cases of Pertussis (whooping cough) have been positively identified in the Chetek-Weyerhaeuser Area School District. The school is working closely with the Barron County Public Health Department to help identify other students at risk from exposure. The Health Department will contact parents of any students determined to be a close contact and in need of antibiotic treatment to help prevent transmission and development of the illness.

Pertussis is a respiratory illness caused by bacteria. Pertussis generally starts with cold like symptoms. As the illness progresses, it can lead to spells of explosive coughing that can interrupt a person's breathing, eating and sleeping. The severe coughing spells can last for several weeks to months or even longer. Pertussis is treatable with antibiotics.

Pertussis is spread by contact with the respiratory droplets from an infected person—usually through sneezing or coughing. Exposure generally occurs after repeated indoor face-to-face contact. Please encourage your child to cover their cough or sneeze and to wash hands (or use hand sanitizer) frequently throughout the day.

Routine childhood vaccines, specifically DTaP, help protect from this illness. An additional booster (Tdap vaccine) is now required for children 11-12 years of age. Vaccination, while not 100% effective, is still the best way to protect yourself and your child from this illness. Generally persons who have been immunized for Pertussis and develop the illness experience a milder case.

I have included with this letter a Pertussis Fact Sheet.

It is important that you observe your child at home and if they develop cold like symptoms that include a cough that interrupts their breathing, eating or sleeping-please contact your child's health care provider to have them evaluated and tested.

You may also contact the School Nurse's Office (715) 924-2244 [ext. 2094 or ext. 2052] with any questions/concerns.

Please also remember to promptly notify your child's school if your child is being tested or treated for Pertussis.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,
Jessica Rundhaug RN (School Nurse)