



HORNELL

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Schools

Jr./Sr. High	324-1303
Intermediate	324-1304
Bryant	324-2171
North Hornell	324-0014

April 4, 2017

Dear Parents / Guardians:

We have been notified by Steuben County Public Health that there are students who were diagnosed with pertussis (whooping cough) who attend the Intermediate School and High School. If your child has been in close contact with someone with pertussis, they may become sick with pertussis as well. This is especially true when the child has not received all the pertussis vaccine shots. Sometimes even if a child's shots are up to date, they still develop pertussis.

Pertussis has become increasingly common in our community in the last few years. It is highly contagious and causes severe, persistent coughing. It is caused by a bacterium found in the mouth, nose and throat of an infected person. Symptoms begin 5 to 21 days after exposure (usually in 7 to 10 days) and resemble a common cold; sneezing, runny nose, mild cough and low-grade fever. Within about two weeks coughing becomes more severe and may include episodes of rapid coughing followed by gagging or vomiting. In small children a high-pitched whoop can sometimes be heard as the child inhales after a coughing episode.

If untreated, a person can transmit pertussis from the onset of symptoms to 3 weeks into the cough. Household members of individuals with pertussis should be treated with antibiotics to avoid getting the disease. Other close contacts of the ill person while he/she was contagious need to be treated with antibiotics if they, or their close contacts, are at risk for major complications if they develop pertussis. Those at risk for major complications are persons with moderate or severe asthma, or other severe respiratory conditions, pregnant women, or children less than 12 months old. Steuben County Public Health is currently contacting the parents of all the students who are considered close contacts of the identified case, to see if they need prophylactic (protective) antibiotics.

Steuben County Public Health recommends that you review immunization records for your child and for all household members to ensure they are up-to-date on their Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis containing vaccines (DTaP or Tdap). Steuben County Public Health has vaccine available for individuals who don't have health insurance, or whose health insurance doesn't cover the cost of vaccines.

If your child is currently experiencing or develops a cough illness, notify their doctor of his/her potential exposure, and that they should consider testing your child for pertussis. If your child is tested and treated for a cough illness, **this child should be at home with only immediate family members as contacts for the duration of treatment**; this means no school, no extra-curricular activities and no visitors.

If you have further concerns or questions, you may contact Steuben County Public Health at 607-664-2438, or 800-724-0471.

Sincerely,

Douglas H. Wyant, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools