



## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Phone # (414) 329-5275

Fax # (414) 543-5713

November 3, 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian:

One case of pertussis (whooping cough) has been reported in a student at Edgewood Elementary School. Pertussis is a vaccine-preventable disease, usually given as part of the diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP/DTaP/Tdap) vaccine in children and adults. The DTaP vaccination series is required for all elementary students.

Pertussis is a highly contagious illness that is spread through the air by coughing. Symptoms generally appear 6-20 days after exposure. The illness begins with cold-like symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, tearing, conjunctivitis (red, watery eyes), and an increasingly persistent cough. Within 1-2 weeks the severity of the cough increases, may involve a high-pitched “whooping” sound and may result in vomiting. Persons experiencing any of the above symptoms should avoid contact with infants.

If your child experiences these symptoms in the next 2-3 weeks, please contact his or her health care provider. Please take this letter to the office and encourage your provider to collect a **nasopharyngeal specimen** for confirmation of the illness. Inform the provider that there has been a case of pertussis identified at Edgewood Elementary School.

Ways you can help to control the spread of whooping cough are to use good hand and respiratory hygiene by always covering your mouth when coughing and your nose when sneezing, preferably with a tissue; disposing of the tissue immediately afterwards and washing your hands. Handwashing with soap and water or using hand sanitizer is recommended. Also, do not share food, drinks, or eating utensils during meals and seek medical attention if symptoms of pertussis appear.

Greenfield Health Department nurses are available to answer questions you may have about pertussis. Please feel free to call us at 329-5275 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. week days or contact your health care provider. The Greenfield School District’s nurse, Mark Doornek, is also available to answer questions and he can be reached at 855-2439.

Sincerely,

Darren J. Rausch, MS, CPH  
Health Officer/Director