

**Elementary School  
Health Office**  
Ext. 1345 or 1343  
Fax: (570) 853-3092



**High School  
Health Office**  
Ext. 2347  
Fax: (570) 853-3918

### **Keeping a Child Home from School:**

Almost all children get sick from time to time. Busy, working parents may give a child some over-the-counter medicine and send him/her off to school, hoping to avoid that call from the school nurse or administrator. But health experts say sending a sick child to school may simply make the child more miserable and spread an infection or illness to classmates. (See SCSD Handbook for further information.)

Sometimes the need to stay home is obvious. The child may be **vomiting** and have a **high fever** or **serious cough**. When the symptoms are less obvious, parents sometimes need to make a quick judgment. Schools often have guidelines for parents who aren't sure if their sick child should be allowed in the classroom. Health experts also offer some general tips. *Children with a fever (100 degrees or higher), diarrhea, or vomiting, should stay home, for roughly 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided.* Children with symptoms of chickenpox should stay home until the blisters have dried and crusted. Children taking antibiotics may need to be on the medications for 24 to 48 hours before they can be admitted back to school.

Headaches and stomachaches are often gray areas. It's usually hard to tell if a child is simply tired, is hungry, (skipped breakfast), or is starting to get a more serious illness. If the child is very comfortable and listless or extremely tired, he/she is probably better off staying home and resting in bed.

Call the Health Office with any questions or concerns about your child's health.

#### Bibliography

Heymann, S.J., et.al., "Working Parents", Achieves of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, August 1999, Vol. 153, No. 8, pp. 870-874.

Pappas, D.E., et.al., "Medical Exclusion of Sick Children from Child Care Centers", Southern Medical Journal, June 2000, Vol. 93, No. 6, pp. 575-578.

Research compiled and edited by Barbara Fister, Medical Editor, Beth Jennings, M.D.