February 11, 2016

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child may have been exposed to a confirmed case of pertussis (whooping cough), a reportable communicable disease, at Mahone Middle School. A person exposed to pertussis can develop the disease up to three weeks later. The Kenosha County Division of Health is conducting the investigation and follow-up of the case as required by Wisconsin State Statute 252 to prevent, minimize, and control the spread of pertussis due to this exposure.

Pertussis begins with respiratory symptoms of cold and cough and can quickly progress into severe fits of coughing and may be accompanied by vomiting. The classic cough (sounds like a whoop) may or may not be present. In some cases, the illness may seem to be a cold accompanied by a prolonged cough, which can last for six weeks or more. The pertussis disease is known as the “cough for 100 days.” Pertussis is spread by contact with the respiratory secretions or airborne droplets from an infected person. The most effective way to prevent pertussis is through vaccination with DTaP for infants and children and with Tdap for pre-teens, teens and adults, including parents/grandparents, as protection from the childhood vaccine fades over time. These vaccines are available from the Kenosha County Division of Health at three locations:

Kenosha County Job Center
8600 Sheridan Road
Kenosha, WI 53143
Monday-Friday
7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Kenosha County Center
HWY 45 & 50
Bristol, WI 53104
Monday 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Closed noon-1 p.m.
Tuesday 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Closed noon-1 p.m.
Wednesday & Thursday
7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Wellness Center
Racine/Kenosha Community Action Agency
2000-63rd Street
Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Second Tuesday
9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Third Saturday of each month
9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

If your child is currently ill with respiratory symptoms or if your child develops symptoms in the next 21 days, please contact your physician immediately! Cases or suspect cases must be reported to local public health authorities. Please bring this letter with you if you seek medical care.

For more information, please contact the Kenosha County Division of Health at (262) 605-6700 or (800) 472-8008.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Johnson, R.N., M.Ed.
Health Officer/Director