

MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of the Assistant Superintendent of Operations & Personnel

59 Tindall Road, Middletown, New Jersey 07748
TEL(732)671-3850 Ext. 1026 FAX(732)957-9377
www.middletownk12.org

Karen L. Bilbao
Superintendent of Schools

David M. Healy
Assistant Superintendent

Dear Parent or Guardian,

January 22, 2009

You may have recently heard or seen media coverage concerning MRSA or methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* infections in school-aged children. The Middletown School District Administration would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some information about MRSA and, most importantly, how to prevent and control the spread of these infections.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) indicate that this is a bacteria that is commonly found on the skin or in the nose. Over the past years, treatment of some staph infections has become more difficult because the bacteria have become resistant to the antibiotics commonly used to treat it.

The Centers for Disease Control indicate that an infection with MRSA in the community is usually a skin infection with pustules or boils that are red, painful and swollen, or have drainage. Most of the infections are most likely to occur among student athletes participating in sports where there is skin contact and/or trauma to skin (e.g., abrasions, "turf burns") These should be treated by the student's physician and covered by a clean, dry bandage. In a further recommendation the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services has indicated that students will not be excluded from school as long as they follow infection control measures.

Students participating in contact sports must be particularly careful. A student, with an infection, may be excluded from participating in a sport if they cannot keep the wound properly bandaged. In the event that there are multiple cases among the members of one sport, and that sport shares common equipment, that sports team may be temporarily closed down.

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services indicate that there are some practices that will reduce the risk of contracting MRSA. These are:

- Practice frequent and proper hand washing techniques with soap and water.
- Practice proper personal hygiene after sports events including showering and wearing clean clothes.
- Discourage the sharing of personal items such as clothing, towels, bar soap and sports equipment.
- Encourage your child to keep any wounds bandaged and to see their healthcare provider for evaluation of any suspicious skin lesion.
- Notify your school nurse and coach if your child is diagnosed with MRSA.

The health and safety of your child is important, if there is any concern about your child's health, please feel free to discuss it with your school nurse.

Respectfully,

Ken Walls

Supervisor of Plant and Safety