

**From Orleans/Niagara BOCES School Physician 11/26/2018**

Dear Parents:

At this time of year, it is a good idea to talk with to children about **cold weather safety**. Extra care is needed, especially in younger children, to be sure that frostbite does not occur.

- It is important to **check** your children's, even teens', **outerwear** everyday during extreme weather conditions. Warm jackets, hats, scarves, warm socks, boots, and an extra pair of dry gloves in their pockets will protect them during extremely cold temperatures.
- **Develop an emergency plan and teach** your children your emergency plan in case you are not home before the bus comes to pick them up. If a bus is delayed, they need to know **where, when, and how to get help** if they think they are waiting outside for a bus longer than they should or if they sense danger. Tell your child that if you are not home while they are waiting outside for the bus, how long they may wait outside, where to go in the event the bus is delayed, and what the dangers and risks of extreme weather are.

**Explain danger signs and risks** of when to seek help:

- **the child gets cold or wet, especially boots or gloves**
- **the child feels pain or numbness anywhere especially hands, feet, ears, or nose**
- **the child senses they have waited longer than five minutes when you have alerted them temperatures have dipped into the teens, especially on a windy day**
- **the child thinks they may have frostbite which behaves like a burn and requires medical attention.**

**Teach** your child about your **cold weather plan** even if you are not there to help them. Be sure they know

- **when to ask for help,**
- **where to find safe shelter in an emergency, and**
- **how to protect themselves with proper winter clothing and an understanding of danger signs**

For helpful information about cold weather dangers, please visit the National Weather Service at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) as well as FEMA at <http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

Stay warm and safe. Happy winter!