The health and safety of our children will always be the first priority with New Horizon Academy and Kinderberry Hill Child Development Centers. Due to the reemergence of measles in our country, the following requirements regarding staff immunization will immediately go into effect:

- All employees who work with or have access to children under the age of 15 months are required to provide proof of vaccination for MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella). In addition, we strongly recommend that you request proof of MMR vaccination from all staff to ensure that any employee who enters the infant room has been properly immunized.

- For current employees, proof must be provided by Friday, March 6, 2015. For new employees, proof must be provided on or before their first day of employment.

- Employees who cannot provide proof within these time parameters should be assigned to a different classroom until such proof is on record.

HELPFUL TIPS:

- Employees who were born before 1955 are exempt from this requirement, as measles was widespread during that period of time. Most, if not all, have had the illness and would therefore have immunity. This is consistent with recommendations from the U. S. Centers for Disease Control.

- Employees who can’t access their immunization records through a medical source should contact either their high school or college. Most high schools keep this information on microfiche and will provide it at no cost.

- Employees who are not immunized and need the vaccine will find that insurance will cover the cost. One dose will provide sufficient immunity.

- Employees who believe they have been vaccinated but cannot provide proof may elect to have a blood test (titre test) to provide proof of immunity. This test is not covered by insurance. Please let your DM know if you have any employee who chooses this option and we will work on a solution.
POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- What about parents?
  - We can’t request immunization records from parents at this time, but since we can make this request of our employees, it provides another level of security for our babies who are too young to receive the MMR vaccination.

- I have an employee who is from another country and has no records. What are her options?
  - If she works with children under the age of 15 months, she must be vaccinated or be assigned to a different age group and allowed no contact with the babies.

- I have an employee who is “conscientiously opposed” to vaccination. What about her?
  - She should be assigned to an older age group and have no access to our youngest children. This will respect her beliefs and still keep our youngest children as safe as possible.

- Measles is an airborne illness and could be spread anywhere children are together. Isn’t this an overreaction?
  - We obviously can’t control all of the risk factors associated with a measles outbreak, but our ability to reassure parents that all staff who work with our youngest children are vaccinated will provide an extra measure of security and comfort.

- What about tours?
  - Here are some suggestions for parents who request a tour of the infant room, and while none will guarantee absolute safety, they are worthy of consideration:
    - Explain to parents before you begin the tour that we care for children under that age of 15 months, and that we want to limit, wherever possible, their exposure to possible infectious disease. Ask the touring parents if they have recently been exposed to any illnesses that could be contagious, including the flu and common cold. If yes, then offer to have them view the classroom through windows and doors, and then whoever is guiding the tour can take the place of the teacher so that they can chat for a few moments outside the classroom.
    - If this is not an option (parents want to enter the classroom or are certain they are healthy), be sure they wash their hands before entering, as required by NAEYC.

- Anything else we should do to help keep our children safe?
  - Continue to follow all sanitation and exclusion guidelines. Keep your youngest children separate from older children as much as possible. In reality, children are probably safest in our centers because of these rigorous policies and procedures!