So what if it is almost time to send your youngster to school and they say that they feel sick?

How do you decide to keep your child home from school?

Consider using these guidelines...

- A temperature over 100.0 F. (Remember that Tylenol (Acetaminophen), Advil (Ibuprofen), etc can mask the effects of a fever). Try to take your child's temperature before you give fever-reducing medicine. If your child has been sick, he/she should be **FEVER FREE** for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school.

- Persistent vomiting and/or diarrhea. If your child has vomited or had diarrhea in the past 24 hours do not send to school.

- A severe cold with fever, sneezing, and thickened nasal discharge, especially for younger children, who do not remember to cover their mouth or wash hands.

- A cough that keeps a child awake at night, worsens with increased activity, or is combined with other symptoms.

- A persistent red sore throat, especially if the tonsils are enlarged.

- A severe and persistent earache.

- Redness in the whites of the eyes, yellow eye discharge and matted lashes are symptoms of conjunctivitis (pinkeye). A doctor should be consulted for treatment as this is highly contagious.

- Rashes can be difficult to evaluate. If they are all over the body, blistery, oozing, or painful, they could be a sign of a contagious illness, such as chicken pox, measles or a viral illness.

Please consider checking with your child's doctor or the school nurse before you send your child to school.

Remember, the suggestions should be *considered a guide*, if you are still unsure whether to send your son/daughter to school, please call your physician or the school nurse at 417-261-2337 ext. 2010 for further guidance.