Risk Communications - Goals

- Do No Harm
- Inform & Educate
  - Alert & Alarm
- Guidance on How to Respond to Crisis
- Timely & Relevant
- Build Trust & Confidence
- Fear Management
Risk Communications Strategies

• Provide Specific Information To Reduce Anxiety & Fear
• Help Audience Respond Appropriately
• Prevent Damaging Responses
Getting It Right

3 Rs

- Right Information
- Right People
- Right Time
Novel H1N1 – Case Study

• World-wide Scale
• Many Unknowns
• New Courses of Action
• High Media Interest
• Constant Changes
• Working Style: Adaptable
H1N1 Impact / Harvard Survey

- Shake Hands
- No Travel / Public Places
- Wash More
- Follow Closely

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Right **Information: Crisis**

- What Is Happening?
- How Does It Affect Me?
- What Is Being Done?
- Who Is To Blame?
Right Information: Messaging

- **Say:** What Know & Don’t Know
- **Don’t Say:** Don’t Worry/Don’t Panic
- Foreshadow – What Might Happen
- Be Honest
- Jargon Free
  - Less Comprehension During Crisis/Stress
Media Relations

• Designate Trained Spokesperson
  – Not Always Person w/Title
• Stay on Message
• Provide Context
• 24/7 Deadlines – Online Media
Right Information

- Quality of Information
  - Credible Sources
- CDC / WHO / US ED / DHS / HHS
- Can Result in Overload & Conflicts
- Local Health Agency
  - Relationship Dependent
- Anticipate Increased Demand
Right People

- Parents / Students
- Staff: Teachers / Aides / Administrators / Support Staff
- Community
- Media
- Consistent Base Message
  - Modify for Audience (If Needed)
H1N1: Parents w/Children

• 48% Will Get Sick in 2 Years
• 50%
• Schools Provided NO Information On Reducing Spread
Right Time

- Fast AND Accurate
- H1N1 Rapid Changes In:
  - Numbers / Locations
  - Diagnosis & Confirmation
  - Treatment Methods
  - School Closures
- News Media Driving Need
- Use Most Efficient Strategies
Coverage – Sources Cited

- **LOCAL**
  - Live Breaking News: 32%

- **NETWORK**
  - TV: 21%

- **INTERNET**
  - 17%

- **CABLE**
  - 16%

- **News**
  - 9%

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Strategies – Parents & Students

• Letters – Multi-lingual
• Phone Messaging Systems
  – Parents / Staff
• E-mail / Web Resources
• Hot Lines
• Parent Meetings
• Media Briefings
Collaborations / Messaging

Webcast: Education
Homeland Security
Health Human Services / Surgeon General
District & School Staff

- Authority: Superintendent
- Credible Materials
  - Accessible
- Visible Actions
- In Person – Nurse
  - Principals Meetings
- Central Reporting Point
- Consistent Communications
Communications Plans

- Lead Contact
- Resources & Capacity
- Establish Protocols / Processes
- Set Information Systems
- Multi-lingual Capability
- Continuity of Operations
Support School Districts

• Office of Education Communications
• Daily e-mails
• Forwarded Health Information
  – Keyed to News
• Briefings & News Conferences
• Conference Opportunities
  – State Superintendent
  – Public Health Officials
• Served As Central Contact Point
Superintendents: Effective?

Rating H1N1 Efforts by Los Angeles County Office of Education
As swine flu wanes, U.S. preparing for second wave

1918 Pandemic
  - 2nd Wave

1976 Swine Flu - Warning
  - New Vaccine Fast Tracked
  - 450 Cases of Paralysis – Related?

H1N1 Vaccine
  - Field Testing Now
  - Available Mid-October?
  - School Begins - Earlier!
Two Vaccination Campaigns

- Seasonal Influenza
- H1N1
  - 2 Courses
  - Key Populations
- Ages 6 Mos – 24 Yrs
  - Schools
- Pneumovax?
- Complex Messaging
H1N1 Lessons

• Learn from April Outbreak
• Review Relationships
• Risk Communications In Place
• Prevention
• Proactive Vaccination Planning
• Extended Closures
  – Business & Instructional Continuity
Pandemic Flu Toolkit / Exercise

- Background on Multiple Diseases
- Sample Letters
- Customizable
- Health Professionals
Continuity of Instruction

- Keep Students Engaged
- Build Instructional Packets
- Web-based Instruction
- Public Radio
- Involve Teachers in Planning
Sample School Flu Plans

- Planning Steps
- Severity Levels
- Incident Command System
- Resources
- Sample Letters
- Customizable / Word document
Sample Communications Plan

- Planning Guidelines
- Specific Steps
- Protocols
Resources

- flu.gov
- lacoe.edu/sirs (Los Angeles County Office of Education)
- nspra.org (National School Public Relations Association)
- http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/
- readycaschools.org
Contributors

- US Department of Education
- Contra Costa County Office of Education
- Fresno Unified School District
- Kern County Office of Education
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Palm Springs Unified School District
- Pleasanton Unified School District
- Santa Barbara School Districts Solano County Office of Education
- Stanislaus County Office of Education
- William S. Hart Union High School District
Thank You...

Frank Kwan
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Emergency Preparedness & Response