

## **How to Create a Handwashing Campaign at Your School**

### **Recruit School Support**

Create an infection control advisory committee (ie. school staff, parents, students, public health nurse, and relevant community partners) that meets more frequently as the committee starts up and then touches base at least monthly. Assess the needs at school and set goals.

### **Create a Germ Squad**

A team of student handwashing leaders can demo to/educate others on hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Student leaders should have input into educational materials used.

### **Create Educational Materials**

- **Posters:** Work with a class to create posters (Curriculum links for Gr. 1 & 2; B3.1, B3.2). Or hold a school wide poster contest. The winning poster could be showcased on social media and in a parent newsletter.
- **Announcements:** See Appendix C for sample announcements.
- **Video PSA:** The Germ Squad could create their own video of the steps to handwashing. See Appendix A for the steps to clean hands.
- **Parent Newsletter Inserts:** Create your own newsletter insert. Check out the link for ideas: [https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/family\\_handwashing-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/family_handwashing-508.pdf)
- **School social media:** Create tweets or posts to share with your school community to raise awareness about hand washing and preventing the spread of germs.

Consider key messages for different age groups (See Appendix B for Primary Age Key Messages & Activities)

## Appendix A

### 6 Steps of Handwashing

**Step 1:** Wet hands.

**Step 2:** Apply soap.

**Step 3:** Lather soap for at least 15 seconds.

- Rub palms
- Back of hands (Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand)
- In between and around fingers
- Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm. (Clean under nails).
- Thumbs (Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand)

**Step 4:** Rinse well under running water.

**Step 5:** Dry hands well with paper towel or hot air blower.

**Step 6:** Turn taps off with paper towel, if available.

#### When should I clean my hands?

Wash your hands often, especially before and after eating; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom, before and after touching a cut, making food and whenever your hands are visibly dirty.

#### Factsheets:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

[https://www.cbc.ca/kidscbc2/content/pdf/KIDS\\_Handwash\\_Steps\\_Print.pdf](https://www.cbc.ca/kidscbc2/content/pdf/KIDS_Handwash_Steps_Print.pdf)

#### Sample Videos:

[https://youtu.be/sCx\\_Ylo85R4](https://youtu.be/sCx_Ylo85R4)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKafkrhUXK4>

#### How to Clean your Hands with Hand Sanitizer

**Step 1:** Place a quarter-size drop of alcohol-based hand sanitizer in your palm

**Step 2:** Rub your hands together, palm to palm

**Step 3:** Rub the back of each hand with palm and fingers of the other hand

**Step 4:** Rub around each thumb

**Step 5:** Rub the fingertips of each hand, back and forth in the other hand

**Step 6:** Rub until your hands are dry (15 - 20 seconds)

Quick tip: Applying a non-scented moisturizer to your hands daily will help prevent your skin from drying out and will keep that important skin barrier (that keeps out germs) intact!

## Appendix B

### Primary Age Group Key Messages/Activities

(Adapted from WHO, 2020)

#### Primary:

- Emphasize that they can do a lot to keep themselves and others safe.
- Ask the class what are actions they can take to help themselves and others stay safe from germs?

#### Answers:

- Cover your cough and sneezes with your elbow (Demonstrate) Gr. 4 & up you could pretend it's like Dracula -Face into cape at elbow.
  - Wash your hands often
  - Social distancing (standing further away from friends, avoiding large crowds, not touching people if you don't need to, etc.) Have children practice stretching their arms out or 'flap their wings', they should keep enough space to not touch their friends.
  - Use exercises that demonstrate how germs can spread. For example, by putting colored water in a spray bottle and spraying over a piece of white paper. Observe how far the droplets travel.
  - Demonstrate why it is important to wash hands for at least 15 seconds with soap and water
    - Put a small amount of glitter in students' hands and have them wash them with just water, notice how much glitter remains, then have them wash for 20 seconds with soap and water. Notice the places they missed cleaning off the glitter.
  - Sing a song while washing hands to practice the recommended 15-20 second duration.
    - Children can "practice" washing their hands with hand sanitizer.
  - In JK/SK puppets or dolls can be used to demonstrate symptoms (sneezing, coughing, fever) and what to do if they feel sick (i.e. their head hurts, their stomach hurts, they feel hot or extra tired) and how to comfort someone who is sick (cultivating empathy and safe caring behaviors)
- Have students identify high risk behaviors and suggest modifying behaviors

For example, a teacher comes to school with a cold. He sneezes and covers it with his hand. He shakes hands with a colleague. He wipes his hands after with a handkerchief then goes to class to teach. What did the teacher do that was risky? What should he have done instead?

- Establish a non-contact greeting code for each class (What can you do instead of shaking hands? Instead of a high five? (A friendly verbal greeting or virtual high fives?)

## Appendix C

### Sample PA Announcements –Germs

#### Day 1:

This week we will learn how keeping clean hands, can keep us all healthy and happy.

Today's health message is:

Washing your hands often is one of the best things you can do to protect yourself and others from germs. Germs, such as bacteria or viruses are invisible and they can stick to hands. Germs need to get inside your body to make you sick. When you touch your hands to your eyes, mouth or nose you give those germs a way into your body and run the risk of those germs making you sick. Outsmart germs and wash your hands! Wash your hands for at least 15 seconds using soap and warm water, and when there is no sink around, use hand sanitizer. Washing your hands often and trying not to touch your face too much will go a long way in keeping you and those around you healthy.

This message is brought to you by the Public Health Nurse at your school.

### **Day 2:**

Today's health message is:

Ahh-Choo! (pretend to sneeze). Did you know that when you sneeze germs can travel up to 160 kilometres an hour through the air? You can stop germs from travelling by covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Cough or sneeze into a tissue, throw it out, and wash your hands after. No tissue? No problem! Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve and elbow to stop those germs from spreading. In this case, sharing is not caring. Show your school how you care about others and be a germ stopper!

This message is brought to you by the Public Health Nurse at your school.

### **Day 3:**

Today's health message is:

Germs are too small to see, but they can make you and others sick! You can help stop the spread of germs through the air by standing further away from others and avoiding crowds. Social distancing is the idea of trying to have less close contact with other people. Imagine if you had your arms all stretched out like wings, try to keep enough space to not touch your friends when you're talking to them, they should be at least two arm lengths away. When possible keep a two metre distance between you and others. Two metres is around the length of a standard three-seat couch or around the width of a car. Be a caring friend and practice social distancing!

This message is brought to you by the Public Health Nurse at your school.

### **Day 4:**

Today's health message is:

Germs are everywhere. They can stick to surfaces such as keyboards, railings, doorknobs, phones, and travel from person to person. Our hands can carry a lot of germs. Outsmart those germs and wash your hands often, especially before and after eating; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom, before and after touching a cut, when making food and whenever your hands are visibly dirty. Be a handwashing warrior! When you wash your hands, turn on the tap. Put soap on your hands and

rub your hands together for at least 15 seconds (Singing the “Happy Birthday to You” song is about 15 seconds). You can make bubble gloves! Remember to scrub the front, back, and sides of your hands, as well as between your fingers, and under your nails. Now you’ve got the cleanest hands in all the land! Wait! Germs love wet hands. Don’t forget to dry your hands well!

This message is brought to you by the Public Health Nurse at your school.

**Day 5:**

Today’s health message is:

Not feeling so hot? Starting to feel unwell? Its ok, it happens to the best of us. Stay home and rest, and remember to wash your hands, and cover your cough or sneeze to help stop germs from spreading to others. If you are at school and you start to feel unwell, that’s ok too. Let your teacher know so you can go home to rest and get better. Remember to be kind and be caring to those who do not feel well. No one likes getting sick. Being kind matters-it costs nothing but it means everything. Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud. -Maya Angelou

This message is brought to you by the Public Health Nurse at your school.

## References

World Health Organization (WHO). (2020). Key Messages and Actions for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools. Retrieved from [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=baf81d52\\_4&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI4YSlwKGC6wIVjZyzCh2TmwGYEAAYAiAAEgI1bvD\\_BwE](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=baf81d52_4&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI4YSlwKGC6wIVjZyzCh2TmwGYEAAYAiAAEgI1bvD_BwE)