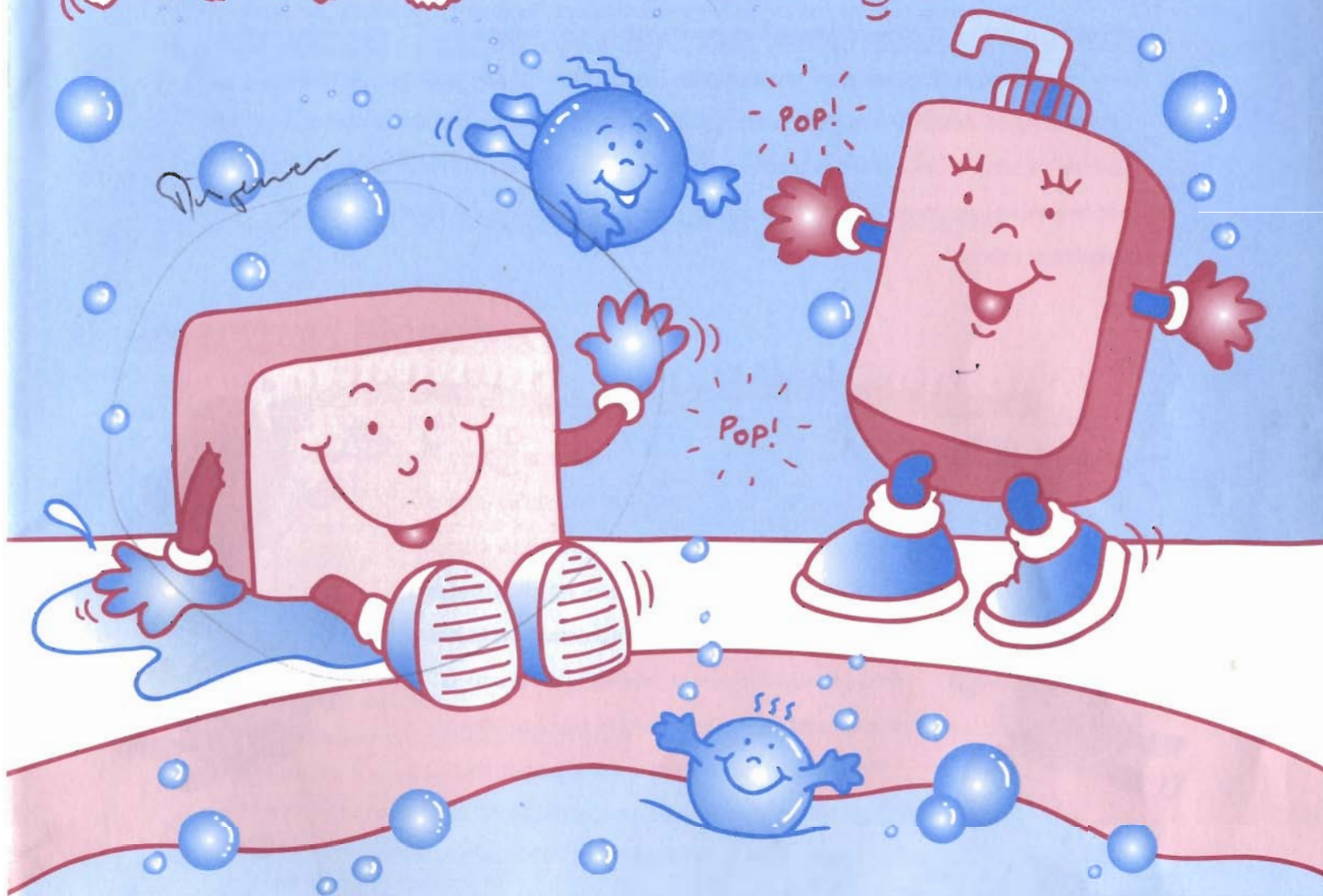


"HOORAY" FOR HANDWASHING!



Teachers Guide

A handwashing and cleanliness programme for Infant Groups

Material Comprises:

- A story booklet
- Teachers Guide with Health and Hygiene Information and Teaching Activity Ideas
- Posters
- Stickers

revised



Germs ... how they spread

Hands are a common cause of the spread of germs. Because they are constantly touching things, they pick up germs as well as spreading them.

Remember, simple everyday activities in early childhood settings can spread germs if precautions are not taken.

Direct contact happens most often by touching an infected person. It also happens when someone sneezes or coughs on you. Consider these common scenarios:

- You help a child to blow his/her nose and then immediately comfort a crying child. By not washing your hands first, you may pass along the first child's germs.
- You help a child with toileting. The child has diarrhoea. Until you wash your hands you can spread the germs to other children and are even at risk of infecting yourself.

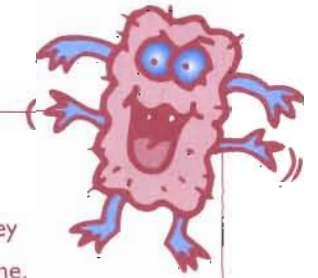
Indirect contact happens when one person touches an object, which has been contaminated by another person's germs.

Germs are spread by objects that people put in their mouths.

- One child puts a crayon in his mouth then puts it down. The next child who picks up that crayon picks up those unwanted germs.
- A child who sucks his thumb not only spreads germs, but picks up other children's germs.
- By sharing drinking glasses or eating utensils, children also share their germs.
- A child sneezes or coughs on a toy or table. Anyone who touches the table or toys while the germs are still alive can pick up those germs. Germs can live on dry and moist surfaces for varying amounts of time.

Health Alert

While the common practice is to teach children to cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze, it is a lot to expect little children to wash their hands every time. Instead, since children are less likely to touch each other's shoulders than to touch each other's hands, teach them to cough onto their shoulder. The child simply needs to turn their head and cough into the upper arm/shoulder area. But stress that he/she must not turn and cough onto a neighbour. The idea is to 'give their cough the shoulder'.



Common questions about the spread of infectious diseases

Q If I don't allow anyone who is coughing or sneezing into the classroom, will this help control the spread of infectious diseases in my group?

A It's not that simple. Many infectious diseases are contagious before the first symptoms appear. Also, some people can be carriers of germs and not actually be sick themselves. Whenever you take care to wash your hands and clean surfaces, you are helping to protect yourself and the children.

Q Are all children at equal risk of becoming ill?

A Children who are undernourished, under stress, are sick or lack sleep are more vulnerable to disease. Generally, healthy, properly fed children are more resistant to disease.

Q What can staff do to promote good health?

- A** A number of things can be done:
- Stress the importance of hand washing.
 - Take a few extra minutes to both clean and disinfect surfaces.
 - Encourage everyone to cover coughs and sneezes.
 - Dispose of used tissues properly.
 - Open windows to let in fresh air.

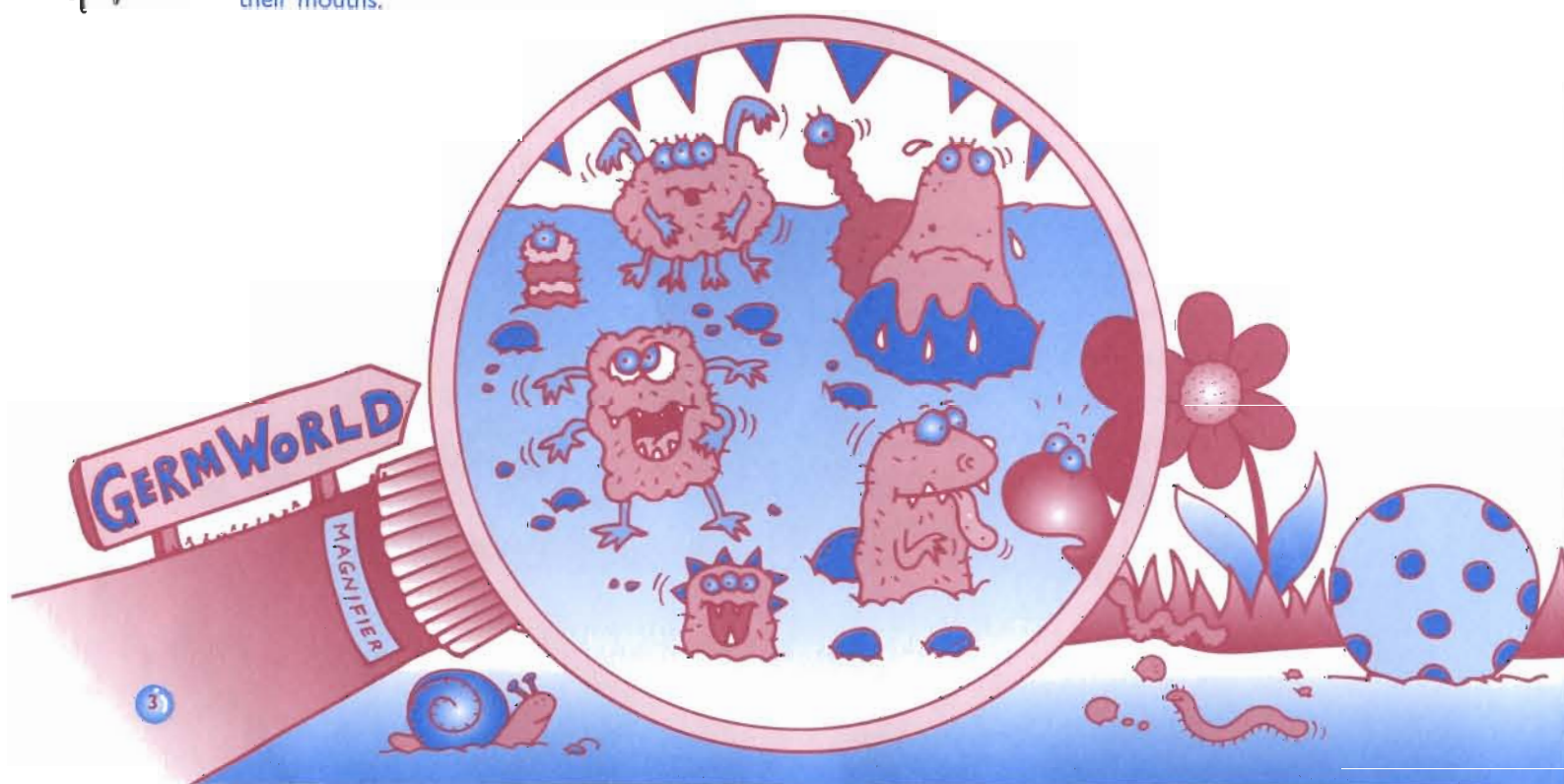
Q Can diarrhoea be spread among the group if the children share the same toilet area?

A Yes, if precautions are not taken. When a child has diarrhoea, he/she should use a separate toilet from other children if possible. Good handwashing by all staff and children is crucial in this situation.

Children with diarrhoea should be excluded for 48 hrs

Not necessary

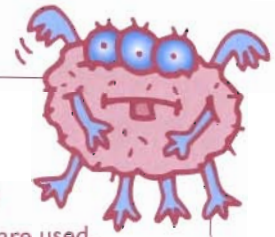
Exclude for 48 hrs =



"Can't recommend
white paper towels"

Health Alert

If using cloth towels in an early childhood setting, ensure that they are thoroughly washed regularly in order to avoid the spread of germs the next time the towels are used.



What you need to know ... about handwashing

Handwashing...the facts

Handwashing is considered by many health experts to be the single most important way to reduce the spread of infectious diseases in early childhood settings!

Hands are the most common way to spread or pick up germs. Therefore, it is important for everyone in schools - teachers, staff, children and parents to learn the proper way to wash their hands.

Handwashing...how?

Children can be taught to wash their hands properly at a very young age. By helping children develop habits of handwashing and cleanliness you can help decrease their chances of becoming ill and help them stay healthier throughout their lives.

The four steps of handwashing

1. Wet your hands with warm running water.
2. Add soap and rub your hands together to make a soapy lather. Do this away from running water so you don't wash the water away. Make sure to wash the front and back of your hands, between fingers and under nails. Continue washing for 10-15 seconds.
3. Rinse your hands well under warm running water. Let water run back into the sink, not down your elbows.
4. Dry your hands thoroughly with a clean paper towel.



What you need to know ... about maintaining a clean environment



Surface cleaning...the facts

Keeping surfaces clean and germ-free is a major challenge in any early childhood setting. A child coughs, covers her mouth with her hand and then picks up a toy, pencil or a book. Another child blows his nose and leaves the tissue on the table. Still another child uses the bathroom and forgets to wash his hands. On the way out he touches the doorknob then immediately picks up a crayon or other communal item. An environment for the spread of germs has been created.

Since some germs can live on dry and moist surfaces for several days, any child or adult who touches those surfaces is at risk of getting sick.

Surface cleaning...which products?

Frequent cleaning is important to reduce the spread of germs. Developing a regular cleaning routine and choosing the proper cleaning products can help reduce the spread of infectious diseases. There are a variety of products to help keep your room clean and healthy. These products have been designed with specific cleaning tasks in mind. The type of product will always be identified on the label.

Disinfectants are the only cleaning products

that kill germs. "Disinfectant" on the label means that the product has met certain specifications for effectiveness. You must follow the product label instructions exactly for the disinfectant to kill germs.

Disinfectants can be effectively used in childcare settings:

- Disinfectant cleaners contain ingredients that help remove dirt as well as kill germs.
- Bleach disinfects when used properly. Always read and follow the instructions on the label carefully.
- Disinfectants kill germs, but only if the surfaces are free from visible stains. Clean the surface then disinfect by following label instructions.

Multipurpose cleaners should be used for everyday spills and stains.

Glass cleaners have been developed to loosen and dissolve stains found on glass.

Bathroom cleaners should be used as sink, tile and bath cleaners. Many of these products disinfect as well as clean.

Toilet bowl cleaners should be used to clean the inside of the toilet bowl only. Many of these products disinfect as well as clean.

This is adequate for a school etc.

→ not all disinfectants kill all germs - they vary greatly

Common questions about surface cleaning

Q Isn't a well cleaned surface free from germs? Why do I have to use a disinfectant too?

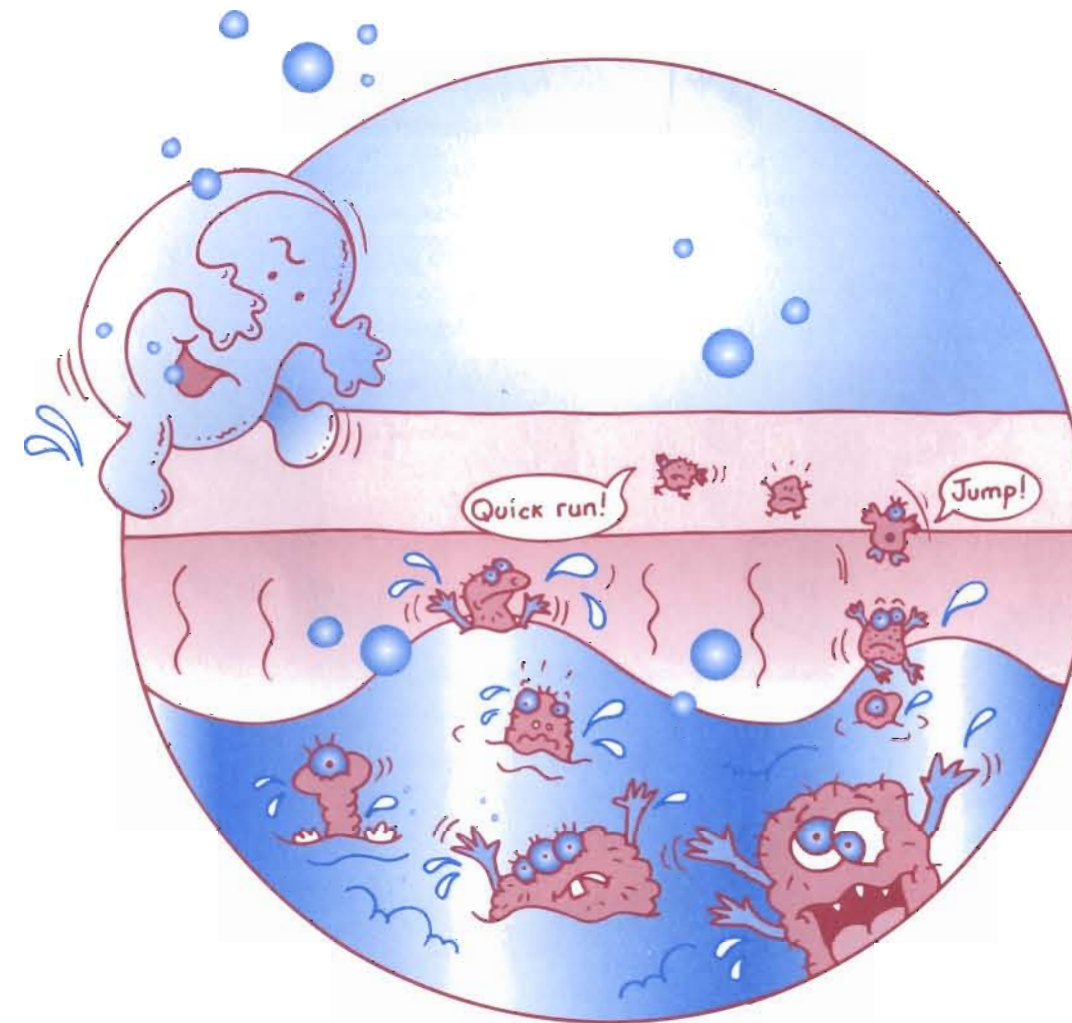
A Proper cleaning and drying remove most of the germs and usually make a surface safe; however, in group settings "most" and "usually" are not enough. Proper cleaning followed by proper use of a disinfectant or a disinfectant cleaner are much safer.

Q Is it safe to allow children to help with the cleaning?

A Allow children to help only when using a multi-purpose cleaner and then only with proper adult supervision. Do not allow children to use disinfectants, disinfectant cleaners, bleach or any other product that carry a warning on the label "Keep out of reach of children"

Q Do I need to wipe off a surface after disinfecting?

A No, rinse the surface then allow it to air dry. After the surface is thoroughly dry no active residue remains.



Disinfection not necessary - cleaning sufficient in most cases.

- Correct dilution
- Can it be sprayed

The Cleaning Cupboard

A well-planned cleaning cupboard is essential for early childhood settings. It should include all the necessary products to keep your surroundings clean (be it at home or school) but it must be safely out of reach of little hands.

Safety First

- Store cleaning products in locked cupboards away from food products and in an area not accessible to young children.
- Do routine cleaning requiring disinfectant cleaners, chlorine bleach or disinfectant when children are not in the room.
- Always store products in their original containers and never remove the original labels. Since label introductions and precautions for products differ according to their ingredients, it is dangerous to misuse a product or follow the wrong emergency treatment instructions.

- Never mix different cleaning products together because hazardous gases can be released.
- Dispose of empty cleaning containers carefully:
 - Use up all the product
 - Follow the label instructions for disposal of disinfectants
 - Replace the cap on the container to protect children, pets and refuse collectors against possible injuries
 - Discard the container in a bin with a secure lid.

Clean up helpers

In addition to your cleaning products, the following items will make your cleaning easier:

- Paper towels or other disposable wipes are best. If you use sponges or cleaning cloths, rinse in clean water and let them dry thoroughly between uses. Remember germs thrive on moist surfaces! Launder sponges or cleaning cloths on regular basis. Use bleach in the wash water.
- Rubber gloves to protect your hands
- Plastic bucket

Paper towels do not use.

