

Home Handwashing Curriculum Objectives:

To create life-long practitioners of the 4 Principles of Hand Awareness.

To observe an increase in handwashing behavior.

To observe a reduction in T-Zone contact at home.

Reduced infectious disease episodes for the family, hence fewer days absent from school or work.

Reducing the risk of Epidemic hence Pandemic.

Help your children and the other adults understand that Hand Hygiene Awareness is important for good health. Children can learn to protect their own bodies, and we want them to develop a greater awareness of the role their hands play in the spread of infectious disease. Children will mimic adult behavior, and you demonstrating repetitively the 4 Principles of Hand Awareness will teach children the correct behavior to mimic. Yes, it is a fact that this program targets adults and using humor is critical to break through their defenses to spark a change in human behavior.

Discuss with children: Why do we wash our hands?

-Germs, bacteria or virus, cause illness. (See addendum titled [Definitions for Germs, Viruses, and Bacteria.](#))

-Germs are tiny microorganisms that spread disease.

-The common cold is a virus. Handwashing is the first step to protect you from COVID-19.

-We don't see bacteria or viruses like we see dirt, but they are there. (Show the poster "Germs on Your Hands".)

-Streptococcus bacteria (round clumps of bacteria) cause nasty sore throats. We have to go to the doctor and will need to take an antibiotic to kill the bacteria in our throat.

-Staphylococcus bacteria are on our skin, which causes pimples or cysts to form.

-Germs can be on every surface (point out where germs may be: counter tops, hand rails, floors, desktops, doorknobs, pencils, etc.).

-A sneeze is a blast of air that goes approximately 200 mph (Demonstrate Respiratory Atomizer simulating a sneeze). It carries tiny bacteria or virus in a mist (aerosols and droplets) and spreads everywhere. So, it is critical to cover your sneeze and cough!

Discuss with children: When should we wash our hands?

1. Before eating.
2. After using the toilet.
3. After blowing or wiping your nose.

4. After you cough or sneeze into a tissue, not your hand please.
5. Upon arriving home from school (mall or church) to prevent bringing germs from school (mall or church) into your home. Your home is a "safe zone" from outside germs.
6. Upon arriving at school to prevent bringing germs from home to school. This helps to protect the school by not introducing new germs picked up on the way to school or from home.
7. After petting animals. Petting zoos are a haven for new germs. Simply wash your hands and you are safe.
8. Depending on your families living circumstance there may be other opportunities to discuss Hand Hygiene Awareness with your family. COVID-19 has prompted many of us to talk about handwashing more often.

Demonstrate with children: "Action" and "Result"

Please demonstrate the "Action" and then have them explain the "Result." This is effective for retention, knowing that for every action there is a reaction. Using a visual aid and repetition are key to retention, as well.

Action	Result
Sneeze into your hand	hand now has the germ
Open the door	doorknob now has the germ
Someone else touches the doorknob	the germ is now on that person's hand
Person touches their eyes, nose, or mouth	they have now contaminated themselves with the germ
The germ is in their own system	they become sick

You may repeat this activity using the Germ Potion Experiment to impart a lasting image on the children when they are able to "see" those invisible germs! YUCK! This is a first step when they internalize WHY they need to wash their hands at specific times. Next you teach the How To!

Demonstrate with children: How do we properly wash our hands?

1. Use SOAP AND RUNNING WATER.
2. Rub your hands vigorously for AT LEAST 20 SECONDS or more to be able to cover All the surfaces of your hands.
3. Wash all surfaces including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, and under fingernails. (*Do not forget to use a nail brush.*)
4. Rinse well - leaving soap on your hands will lead to drying and cracking.
5. Dry hands well with paper towel. Paper towels have been shown to remove an additional 20% loosely attached germs.
6. TURN OFF THE FAUCET WITH THE PAPER TOWEL you used to dry your hands. This prevents picking up the germs that are on the faucet that you placed on the faucet when turning on. Under some circumstances you may need to use the paper towel to open the bathroom door as it may have "invisible" germs on it from the previous person, who did not handwash.

Discuss with children: Henry the Hand's 4 Principles of Hand Awareness

1. WASH your hands when they are dirty and BEFORE eating.
2. DO NOT cough into your hands. Use a tissue, back of your forearm, crook of your elbow, sleeve and other sites, other than your hand for obvious reasons.
3. DO NOT sneeze into your hands.
4. Above all, DO NOT put your fingers into your eyes, nose, or mouth. (T Zone)

Discuss with children: Respiratory etiquette

Whenever you cough or sneeze, lots of droplets and aerosols that contain germs are released into the air directly in front of you, so "cover" that cough or sneeze! Sneeze into a handkerchief, tissue or the crook of your elbow so germs don't float into the air or in your hand. Otherwise, hands can touch something and then spread the infection to others. Your hands become soiled even when using a tissue or handkerchief, so it is necessary to wash immediately.

When you feel a tiny tickle in your throat, it is a clue that you are going to sneeze and you can prepare for that sneeze.

Use the atomizer (spritzer bottle) to demonstrate the droplets from a cough or sneeze showing how these "respiratory droplets" propelled into the air.

Discuss with children: Do not touch the T Zone

The T Zone is the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and mouth which are the ONLY portal of entry for ALL respiratory and gastro-intestinal diseases. If we have germs on our hands, we can put those germs into our bodies when we touch our eyes, nose, and mouth "unconsciously".

Imagine if you break this "unconscious habit" of touching the T Zone you may NEVER be sick again from a respiratory virus, like COVID-19!

Keeping your hands and fingers away from the T Zone will stop introducing germs into our bodies that can make you sick! Now that simple learned behavior will have a positive impact on your personal health and wellness!

Use Henry's Health Shield (T Zone protector) helps to demonstrate how many times you try to touch your face which then increases your awareness so you can begin to re-train your hand hygiene habit to keep fingers away from the T Zone. When in school you can wear it during science or history class. You can then talk about the history of germ discovery (Oliver Wendell Holmes, Ignaz Semmelweis, John Snow or Louis Pasteur).

Rewards:

You may reward your family members and friends daily or weekly with a Champion

Handwasher sticker, tattoo or bookmark as positive reinforcement using the Home Handwashing schedule as a metric.

Demonstrations:

In the Tool Kit there are reinforcement tools to help the message stick. A quick and easy technique used by many parents is the "sniff test": if the child's hands smell clean after leaving the bathroom they probably washed their hands, Try it and you will see the instant feedback.

[Germ Potion Experiment](#)

[Respiratory Etiquette](#)

Henry the Hand Activity Book:

Each page is its own lesson plan to be used daily or weekly. Every family should use Henry the Hand's Home Weekly Handwashing Chart as an effective self-teaching tool. Include friends in the Classroom Weekly Handwashing Chart to help the peer group reinforce the behaviors.

Parents, the Hand Awareness message needs to be reinforced. Repetition is the most effective method for retention!

Make several copies of the Home Handwashing Schedule for everyone in the family so the children can help the adults, as well! They are also available for free on the website to download with many other posters and coloring books to print and give away.

For more information, e-mail henrythehand@henrythehand.org.