

# STOP SHARING GERMS!!!

The easiest and most effective way to prevent the spread of disease in a child care facility is proper handwashing. Using the proper techniques and washing hands frequently can prevent the spread of the common cold, flu, and food born illness as well as many other germs. To keep everyone healthy, children and staff must both be practicing the correct handwashing techniques. Children model behavior, so staff members who wash hands properly are setting a good example for the children in their care.



- Before and after water play/play dough;
- Before and after giving medication;
- Before and after first aid;
- Before preparing or eating food; and
- WHENEVER hands look or feel dirty.

## Some Tips for Teaching Children about Hand washing



### What Is the "Proper Technique?"

It may sound silly but leaving out a crucial step can make hand washing less effective. Teach proper techniques to children and staff members using the following steps:

- Wet hands under running water;
- Use plenty of soap to make a good lather;
- Scrub fronts and backs of hands;
- Remember to wash wrists, scrub around fingernails and rings;
- Scrub between fingers;
- Scrub for at least 10 seconds;
- Rinse well with running water;
- Dry hands thoroughly with a clean disposable towel; and
- Turn off water with paper towel.

### Always Wash Hands...

- Upon arrival and before leaving;
- After using the restroom;
- After blowing a nose;
- After sneezing or coughing;
- After touching an animal;
- After taking out the trash;
- After playing outside;
- Play with or feeding animals;

- Read a story about germs;
- Sing a handwashing song or have children sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice while they wash their hands. (Any song will do as long as it lasts 10 seconds);
- Display pictures of the steps for proper handwashing near the sink;
- Post reminders about handwashing near eating areas and in bathrooms; and
- Include handwashing in dramatic play.

### Talking Points for Parents

- Discuss with parents the methods used to promote proper handwashing at the child care facility. Ask them to remind children at home to continue the same handwashing routine.
- Explain to parents that instant hand sanitizers should not replace proper hand washing or be used on children under 5.

### Resources:

Download hand washing posters and sample health and safety policies at [www.iidc.indiana.edu/ecc/res-health.htm](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/ecc/res-health.htm)  
IN State Department of Health: 317-233-1325 or <http://www.in.gov/isdh/healthinfo/hand%20washing.htm>  
Henry the Hand: a preschool hand washing curriculum [www.henrythehand.com](http://www.henrythehand.com)

