

Special Foster Care & Therapeutic Respite Care

Tips, Tools & Resources

Wash, Wipe and Toss

The thought of superbugs running rampant in our schools can frighten parents and make them feel helpless. You may read about the latest MRSA outbreak and worry. But while the threat can be real, the solution is in your hands. Literally.

WASH

Washing hands is the first step. Wash your hands after every trip to the bathroom. Wash after playing with toys or being outdoors. Wash after playing with pets or touching animals. Wash after handling paperwork. Wash before you cook.

Warm water, plenty of soap, and lathering all surfaces of the hand are key to successful washing. Most people who do wash their hands often forget to lather the back of their hands, their wrists and/or in between their fingers. Wash for 10-15 seconds (teaching children to sing the chorus of a favorite song can help with this). Rinse and dry well. Demonstrate proper washing to your children and set up a reminder system in your home, perhaps using a pictorial flyer and/or a completion chart.

WIPE

The most common surfaces cleaned, even in a hospital room, are the trash can and the counter top. But germs can reside anywhere.

Take a look around your home. What surfaces are touched most by people? Door knobs, toys, tables, remote controls, phones, keyboards and pens/pencils are the most common culprits when it comes to spreading germs. Wipe them down on a regular basis and you will be a step ahead when it comes to staying healthy.

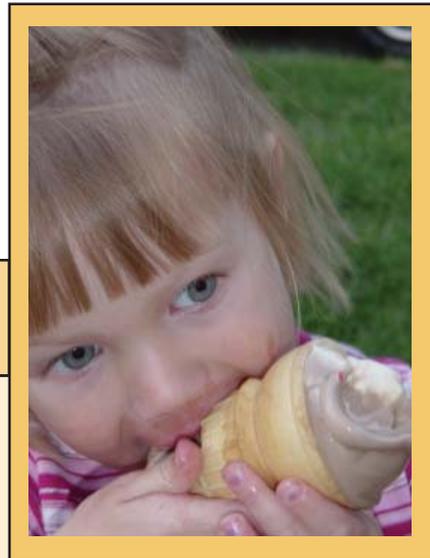
Ask your child's teacher and/or daycare worker how often he does the same. Ask what surfaces are cleaned and the schedule for doing so. Showing interest in limiting exposure among the children can encourage these caregivers to join the fight against germs.

TOSS

A common image of a sick person is someone huddled on the couch beneath a blanket surrounded by crumpled tissues. We all empathize with the red nose and the expression of misery. But the real threat in that picture is the tissues. They are full of germs and belong in the trash.

If you are ill, make sure that you dispose of your tissues as soon as you use them. If someone in your family is ill, use disposable gloves to discard the tissues that are lying around. If gloves are not available, wash your hands thoroughly after cleaning up.

Note: Gloves are also important for cleaning up any mess that includes bodily fluids, be they human or animal.



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Parent Training Exercise

What are some areas in your home that should be wiped down on a regular basis to help stop the spread of germs?

Describe how you can involve your children in the activities of Wash, Wipe and Toss.

What are some other ways that you can help keep your family healthy?

Return to your caseworker for evaluation. Accurate answers can result in a training credit of 1/2 hour.