

HAND WASHING OR HAND SANITIZING

Goal: Students shall have access to hand washing or sanitizing before meals and snacks.

The Board of Directors recognizes the health of the student is directly related to personal hygiene and cleanliness. Students who are present at school on a regular basis benefit from increased instruction and learning. To support this need, the district has established practices to reduce the spread of bacteria and viruses, such as the flu, the common cold, Norovirus, and Hepatitis A.

Students shall have access to hand washing or sanitizing before and after meals and snacks. School staff is directed to implement these procedures whenever students use the restroom and prior to dining.

Purpose Of Hand Washing

1. To reduce the spread of bacteria and viruses, from person to person and from people to food contact surfaces which are the main cause of the spread of Norovirus, the common cold and the flu.
2. To reduce germs and bacteria found on the hands to safe levels, to prevent or to eliminate the spread of bacteria and viruses, which increase the spread of illness in the cafeteria and classroom.
3. To reinforce and practice personal hygiene practices with all students.
4. To provide an opportunity for the class to develop correct hand washing procedures and then apply the procedures on a regular basis.

Hand Washing Procedures

1. Wash hands using soap and warm, running water, at least 100°F.
2. Vigorously rub hands during washing for at least 15 - 20 seconds (Sing the Happy Birthday song) with special attention paid to the backs of the hands, wrists, between the fingers and under the fingernails.
3. Rinse hands well while leaving the water running.
4. With the water running, dry hands with a single-use towel or a warm air dryer.

5. Turn off the water using a paper towel, covering washed hands to prevent re-contamination from the dirty faucet.

When To Wash Hands

Hands should be washed after the following activities:

- After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands and clean, exposed portions of arms.
- After using the toilet
- After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue
- After eating or drinking
- After recess
- After handling dirty equipment, utensils and supplies
- After engaging in other activities that contaminate the hands

Use Of Hand Sanitizers

1. Hand sanitizers may be used in place of hand washing ONLY when access to soap and hand sinks are not available.
2. Only hand sanitizers containing 60-90% ethyl alcohol or isopropanol in concentration with equivalent sanitizing strength may be used as an adjunct to proper hand washing.
3. Note: Researchers say that hand sanitizers may not be effective in removing certain allergens, including peanut allergens, and may instead spread them around (1).

Role Of The Principal

As the instructional leader, the principal has a continuing role in policy implementation. The principal should:

1. Communicate the hand washing and hand sanitizer policy to teachers, parents/guardians, and students.
2. Organize in-service training for all building staff as part of the policy implementation.
3. Ensure the staff complies with the hand washing, sanitizing policy.
4. Coordinate the availability of supplies for hand washing: soap and single use towels, in bathrooms and classrooms with hand sinks.
5. Evaluate and monitor the implementation of hand washing and hand sanitizing.

Role Of The Teacher

It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to instruct students in a meaningful manner. The teacher should:

1. Demonstrate and present the steps to hand washing clearly and concisely.
2. Ensure that proper and adequate facilities (i.e., sinks) are available and are in good working order.
3. Provide time prior to meals and snack for hand washing.
4. Reinforce hand washing by setting the example and washing their hands according to when to wash hands.
5. Consider assignments that permit the student to demonstrate handwashing comprehension.
6. Motivate students in when to and how to wash hands.

Role Of The School Nurse

It is the school nurse's role to support the classroom teacher and principal in instructing teachers and students. The school nurse should:

1. Provide instructional materials for use in the classroom and restrooms which reinforce proper hand washing.
2. Assist the principal in instructing teachers on proper hand washing procedures.
3. Assist the classroom teacher in instructing students on proper hand washing procedures.
4. Communicate with the principal, food service manager, and teachers any concerns related to increases in visits to the nurses' office, which may be the result of improper handwashing or a foodborne illness outbreak.

Role Of The Student

The student should:

1. Be familiar with the hand washing and hand sanitizing policy of the school.
2. Become familiar with the proper steps of hand washing and know when to wash hands.
3. Develop good hand washing habits.

4. Take personal responsibility for washing hands not only at school but when away from school.

Role Of The Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians can encourage their children by showing interest and displaying positive examples of hand washing. The school district will copy and distribute to parents/guardians information designed to promote hand washing and identify roles for parents/guardians in promoting hand washing. (Examples of materials that can be used and/or modified for this purpose can be found in the “Resources” section below.)

Evaluation/Monitoring

Principals, teachers, school nurses, and parents/guardians make a significant contribution to learning personal hygiene practices. Students will increase learning time and practice good hand washing or sanitizing when time for hand washing before meals and snacks is structured into the day, and supplies are provided at all hand sinks for hand washing. Therefore, it is essential that the entire community embrace the practices of proper hand washing and support the child’s practice through observation and repetition.

The principal will compile data on the number of in-service sessions in which hand-washing information is provided and the number of teachers/staff in attendance.

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, An Ounce of Prevention Campaign -

<http://www.cdc.gov/ounceofprevention/>

Arming health educators and consumers with information as well as practical and useful tips on preventing infectious diseases, the Ounce of Prevention campaign was created by the National Center for Infectious Diseases, Coordinating Center for Infectious Diseases of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in partnership with Reckitt Benckiser, Inc., the makers of LYSOL® Brand Products. The campaign's goal is to provide resources about hand washing, cleaning and disinfection, and other easy-to-follow steps in an effort to develop and maintain successful hand hygiene and cleaning practices, and is aimed at educating a broad consumer and professional audience.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Clean Hands Save Lives-

<http://www.cdc.gov/cleanhands/>

This CDC website provides information about proper hand washing technique and links to other sources of information related to hand washing.

GloGerm Kit and Children’s Handwashing Video - <http://www.glogerm.com/>

The GloGerm kit is designed to demonstrate the importance of hand washing. Downloadable videos in both English and Spanish also promote proper hand washing.

Partnership for Food Safety Education, Fight Bac! - <http://www.fightbac.org/>

The Partnership for Food Safety Education unites representatives from industry associations, professional societies in food science, nutrition and health consumer groups, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Food and Drug Administration in an important initiative to educate the public about safe food handling practices needed to keep food safe from bacteria and prevent foodborne illness.

United States Department of Agriculture, Team Nutrition Website, Food Safety: Hand Washing -

http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=14&tax_level=2&tax_subject=231&topic_id=1198

This portion of the Team Nutrition website provides links to resources related to hand washing.

References

(1) Perry, Tamara T. et al, "Distribution of Peanut Allergen in the Environment," Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, May 2004, Vol. 113, No. 5. (Press release can be accessed at: http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/Press_releases/2004/05_08b_04.html)