



Smart Cookie Club
S T A Y · P L A Y · L E A R N

Healthy Habits: Hygiene **Activity Pack**

“Wash your hands. Brush your teeth. Did you use soap?”

These are just a few of the phrases that parents repeat like a broken record. It's a fact: children and germs go hand in hand. Each day, parents watch their children play in the sand at the park, stick fingers in their noses and mouths, pick up slimy creatures, and reach eagerly for food that's fallen on the ground.

There are many methods to teach the importance of hygiene to young children. Use dolls or bears as props, chart your child's accomplishments, or reward them with stickers.

Incorporating the actions in your everyday routines will build your child's self-confidence and self-esteem. Getting your child to take over the brushing, scrubbing and rinsing of themselves is an important step in the development of their independence. Not only does it give parents a break, but teaching basic hygiene concepts to children at a young age will form the groundwork of a healthy lifestyle in the future, and help to keep them healthy along the way.

Young children don't yet have the knowledge or skills to take care of their hygiene. Therefore, parents need to oversee their habits. The best way to teach your child about hygiene is to start early, with simple practices at home. See the activities below for some creative ways to teach your child about healthy hygienic habits.

Click the titles below to follow the circle-time links

[Hello Song](#)

[Happy Tooth, Sad Tooth - Story](#)

[Hygiene Charades](#)

[Healthy Habits Video \(related to COVID-19\) - by: Annie and Ben](#)

Introduce the topic with the pepper experiment!

Materials Needed: A bowl of water, pepper, a small dish of water, a small dish of soap, cloth.

Activity Description:

1. Invite your child to sprinkle the pepper into the larger bowl of water.
2. It's presumed your child will want to stick their finger in, but if they don't do it independently, invite them to do so. Notice how the pepper sticks to your finger.
3. Clean your finger on the cloth.
4. Dip your finger in the soap and then into the bowl of pepper again and observe what happens. The pepper will react to the soap and move to the edge of the bowl leaving your finger clean and pepper free.
5. Discuss the outcome and other possibilities asking open-ended, thought provoking questions.



Questions and conversation during this activity:

- "What do you think will happen?"
- "Why did the pepper move like that?"
- "What will happen if we try the experiment again with other liquids?" (such as jam, shampoo, honey).

Keep in mind your child's skill level and make sure to set them up for success while challenging their abilities. Older children can set up the activity on their own with some instruction, and of course supervision. Be ready to do this again and again as your child explores the outcomes of the scientific reaction.

Hand Washing Procedure Cards (Literacy)

Materials Needed: [Print this Public Health handwashing poster](#) or make your own.

Activity Description: By providing directions with pictures throughout the sequence of hand washing, children are able to make sure they are completing each step.

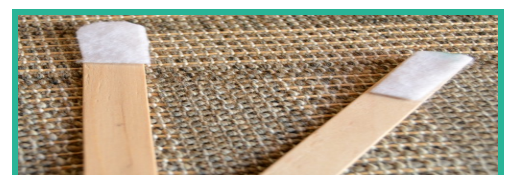
1. Print the poster or make your own.
2. Invite your child to help you post the steps for handwashing near the sink.

Each time you wash your hands, your child will practice reading. Yes, even **younger children** are building those reading skills by evaluating the picture and processing the information presented.



Brush Away the Alphabet (Literacy):

Materials Needed: White ice cube tray, whiteboard markers, popsicle stick, felt, glue.



Activity Description:

1. Glue some white felt on the end of your popsicle stick to make your toothbrush stick.
2. Use your whiteboard marker to make letters on the upside-down ice cube tray.
3. Invite your child to find, recognize and erase different letters on the 'teeth' using their toothbrush stick.



Counting Teeth (Math)

Materials Needed: Cardboard, scissors, permanent markers, glue gun, dried beans, toothbrush.

Activity Description:

1. Cut a round circle out of a piece of cardboard and draw a face with your markers, drawing the mouth open.
2. Use your glue gun to glue the dried beans into the mouth opening.
3. Label each tooth with a number (or for older children, use a number representation such as dots) using your permanent marker.
4. Invite your child to count the teeth, using the toothbrush to point to each tooth as you count using one-to-one correspondence, just like a dentist.



If you don't have these materials on hand, make a mouth model using marshmallows or a recycled egg carton (see the building activity).

Sparkle Germ Handwashing Experiment (Science)

Materials Needed: Lotion, glitter (or cocoa powder), handwashing sink with soap.

Activity Description: We really want to emphasize that even though we can't see them, there are in fact germs everywhere.

If you'd rather not break out the glitter or you just don't have any on hand, you can substitute with cocoa powder.

1. First, wash and dry your hands.
2. Give your child a small squirt of lotion and ask them to spread it over their hands.
3. Holding their hand over a trash can or sink, sprinkle a pinch of glitter (or cocoa powder) onto the palm of their hand (a little goes a long way!). Explain in this experiment, the glitter represents germs which we normally can't see or feel.
4. Invite your child to clap their hands together gently, and see how the glitter transfers from one hand to the other. Ask them what they think might happen if they touched their face or ate their lunch right now? Where would the



glitter germs end up? Try giving each other a high-five. Ask what they notice about the glitter now? What would happen if the glitter was actually germs?

5. Try rinsing the glitter with cold water without using soap. Is it easy or hard to remove the glitter? What does that mean for germs?
6. Finally, try washing off the glitter germs with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds. Use a timer to help your child understand how long 20 seconds is. Which method was best for removing the glitter germs?

Wrap up the experiment by talking about what they learned about how germs spread and how we can keep from sharing our germs with others!



Digestive Cereal Labyrinth (Science)

Materials Needed: Cardboard, glue (I used a glue gun), markers, cereal balls (or other safe, small spheres like peas).

Activity Description:

1. Cut the shape of a person out of 2 different pieces of cardboard.
2. Set one body shape aside and cut the shape of an internal labyrinth in the other. See the photo for an example.
3. Draw the face on this piece and glue in onto the other body shape.
4. Invite your child to roll the small balls through the body labyrinth, by tilting and moving the body cut out. Explore how food (and other things that go in your mouth including germs) moves through your body.



Playdough Dentist (Sensory)

Materials Needed: Pink or red playdough, white beads or beans or cheerios or even marshmallows, tweezers or tongs, toothbrush.

Activity Description:

1. Use your playdough to make a mini mouth model.
2. Invite your child to look in the mirror and see how the inside of their mouth looks.
3. Add the beads as teeth and use the tweezers or tongs to remove the bead teeth one by one.



Younger children should avoid smaller beads. Try using cheerios or other edible items you have available.

Germ Spreading (Science)

Materials Needed: Plate of flour, blocks or washable toys.

Activity Description:

Help your child understand the science behind the spreading of germs.

1. Ask your child to press their hands into a plate of flour. The flour is representing germs.
2. Now that your child has flour on their hands, ask them to shake hands with you. Then, invite your child to play with their blocks or washable toys for a few minutes.
3. After the play, sit down with your child and help them find traces of flour on your hands (from handshake), their toys and all the places they touched.



This is how germs spread. Help your child understand that whenever they sneeze/cough or touch something that is not clean, they spread germs. These germs, just like the flour, are carried with them and passed on to all the other things they then touch.

Germy Playdough (Sensory)

Materials Needed: Playdough ([print the Smart Cookie Club playdough recipe here](#)), glitter (or dried herb flakes).

Activity Description:

1. Invite your child to add some glitter to the playdough to simulate germs.
2. Try to get all of the germs out. It will be extremely tricky! Let your child explore and experiment as they problem solve and begin to understand how those microscopic germs exist.



Glove Germs (Science)

Materials Needed: Disposable glove, whiteboard markers, cloth, soap or sanitizer, timer.

Activity Description: Try this simple activity to help your child understand the significance of the time you take when hand washing.

1. Blow up your plastic glove like a balloon and tie its mouth.
2. Use your whiteboard markers to draw some germs on the glove.
3. Invite your child to wash the germs off the glove using the cloth and soap or sanitizer.
4. Use a timer to see how long it takes to get all of the germs off of the hand.



Wiping Germs (Science)

Materials Needed: Ziplock bag, whiteboard markers, cloth, soap or hand sanitizer, tape, timer.

Activity Description:

1. Trace your child's hands on the paper.
2. Place the paper inside the ziplock bag and tape the bag to the table top.
3. Use your whiteboard markers to draw germs on the ziplock bag, on top of the hands.
4. Invite your child to use the cloth and soap to wash the germs off of their hands.
5. How long do you think it will take? Use a timer to test the length of time needed to wash all of the germs off. Use this timer again to create a set length of time for hand washing.



*Use a glass plate or baking tray as an alternative to a ziplock bag or glove.

Cutting Nails (Fine Motor)

Materials Needed: Cardboard, scissors, paper, tape, children's scissors.

Activity Description:

1. Cut the shape of a hand from a piece of cardboard, making horizontal slits near the end of each finger and thumb.
2. Cut your paper into narrow strips that will fit through the slits in the end of the cardboard fingers.
3. Place another piece of paper over the paper strip and tape into place. The long strip should be able to slide back and forth, making it seem as though the finger nails are growing.
4. Invite your child to practice using scissors to cut the finger nails. Slide the paper out and cut it again and again as the nails grow.



Cutting Paper Plate People Hair (Fine Motor)

Materials Needed: Paper plate, markers, children's scissors, adult scissors.

Activity Description:

1. Use your markers to draw a face on the middle of the paper plate.
2. Cut slits in the top edge of the plate to simulate hair.



3. Invite your child to use their scissors to snip the hair, giving the plate person a haircut.

While **younger children** will focus on manipulating the scissors and making simple snips, **older children** can try to cut along pre-drawn curves, lines, zig zags or waves (desired hair styles).

Don't have paper plates? Use an empty toilet paper roll!

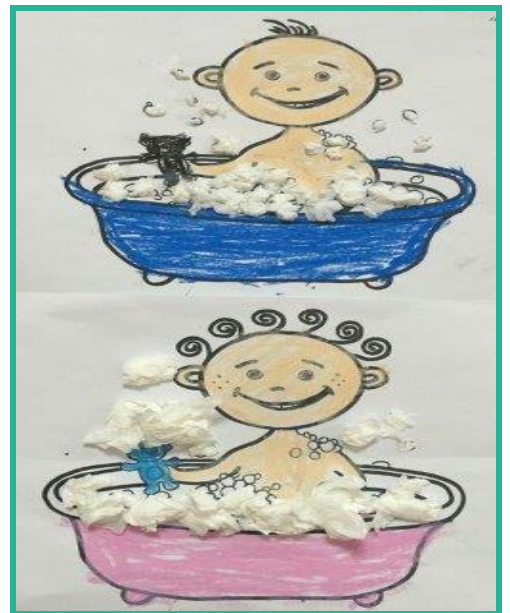


Glueing Cotton Ball Bubbles (Creative):

Materials Needed: Bath picture ([print our pdf here](#) or draw your own), cotton balls (or white tissue pieces or popcorn), glue.

Activity Description:

1. Invite your child to first colour the picture.
2. Glue the cotton balls onto the picture to represent bubbles in the bath. How many bubbles will he/she need to make him/herself clean?
3. Count the cotton balls and enjoy the sensory experience of the cotton and glue.



Block flossing (Building):

Materials Needed: Long duplo blocks (or lego), playdough, yarn or string.

Activity Description:

1. Place a piece of playdough between each of the studs on the top of your duplo blocks.
2. Use the yarn to floss the playdough out from between the studs.

Try making a mouth model using your blocks, flossing all of the teeth with your yarn.



Build an Egg Carton Mouth (Building):

Materials Needed: Egg carton cups or large marshmallows, pink or red paper, scissors.

Activity Description:

1. Cut a large oval from your coloured paper.



2. Invite your child to line the marshmallows or egg carton cups along the edge of the paper to make their own mouth model.
3. Practice coordination and control lining around the curves.

Invite **older children** to make a second or third row, while **younger children** may only place a few.

Laundry Station (Dramatic Play):

- Using your safety knife, cut a hole in the front of the box leaving one side of the circle connected. This will simulate the washer door. Although attached, I recommend using duct tape to reinforce the hinged area, as there will be a lot of opening and closing in this washing machine's future. You can fold a piece of tape in half and tape it to the outside of the door for a handle.
- Place one sturdy chair on either side of your child's play area. Tie the string or yarn to either chair creating a clothes line. Invite your child to hang their clothes on the line to dry after they are finished washing.
- Use your child's old clothing (items they have outgrown) or cut smaller pieces out of felt if using a smaller box.
- Give your dolls or little people a bath while you wait for the laundry to dry on the line. Just put some water and soap in a sensory bin with sponges and dolls to invite hours of engaged exploration through play.



Dancing (Movement)

Materials Needed: Your favourite tunes OR [click here to follow along dancing with a fun Freeze Dance song by The Kiboomers](#).

Activity Description:

Children have a natural inclination to dance.

1. Find some music played by a marching band and stage a parade in the backyard.
2. Play a game where your child dances while the music is on and then freezes when you stop the music.
3. Keep starting and stopping the music and laugh at the funny positions you both end up in. As long as you've got music, there's no limit to the fun you can have dancing.

Props will add a new dimension to dancing. Consider giving your child access to musical instruments (nothing fancy at first, you can even make musical instruments at home), fun clothing (like skirts that flare when your child spins or shoes that make lots of noise on a hard floor), a microphone or, best of all, a full-length mirror so they can check out their moves.

Dancing will not only get your little one moving, it will begin to instill value in physical activity and maintaining a healthy lifestyle while supporting communication skills and emotional development.

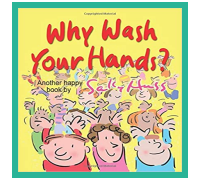
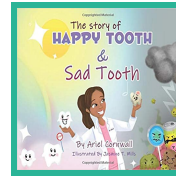


Book Recommendations: (click the titles below to follow the Amazon links)

[Happy Tooth, Sad Tooth by Ariel Cornwall](#)

[Tangle Tower by Bonnie Bright](#)

[Why Wash Your Hands? by Sally Huss](#)



We hope you have enjoyed these activities!
Please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions and feel free to share and tag us in your photos and stories about these activities!

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LEARNING THROUGH PLAY WITH
Smart Cookie Club
EVERY DAY!