

## The War on Illness in the Infant Rooms

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Everyone knows that washing their hands is one of the most important ways to keep oneself healthy during flu and cold season and all year long. It is one of the most important rules that we must follow in child care and we are pretty rigorous about it. Illness can spread so quickly when children are involved that we teachers often suffer from dry hands due to the incredible number of times we wash our hands every day. We also wash your children's hands regularly, after diaper changes, before and after eating, and if they've been exposed to snotty noses.

There is a viral post going around social media right now that visually demonstrates the benefits of washing hands, especially before eating. It involves bread and the growth of mold on pieces that were exposed to unwashed hands. Here is a picture of the result:



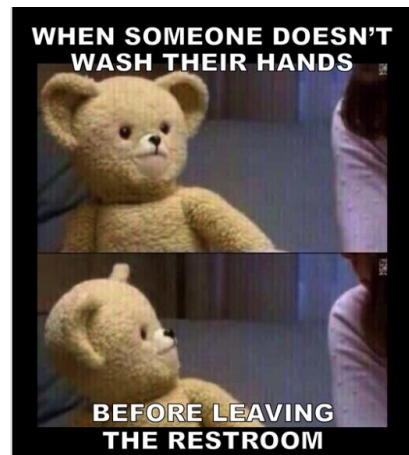
The first piece of bread is an untouched sample, the 2<sup>nd</sup> was touched with dirty hands. The 3<sup>rd</sup> was touched with hands that were washed with soap and water and the 4<sup>th</sup> was cleaned just with sanitizer.<sup>1</sup>

It's important to wash your baby's hands after diaper changes and before and after eating. It's also a good idea to wash your baby's hands when you drop them off at daycare in

the morning. And as they grow older teach them how and when to wash their own hands.

"Feces (poop) from people or animals is an important source of germs like Salmonella, E. coli O157, and norovirus that cause diarrhea, and it can spread some respiratory infections like adenovirus and hand-foot-mouth disease. These kinds of germs can get onto hands after people use the toilet or change a diaper...A single gram of human feces—which is about the weight of a paper clip—can contain one trillion germs."<sup>2</sup>

When washing it is recommended to use warm water to wet your hands and then use soap to lather and scrub for at least 20 seconds. Make sure to cover all parts of the hands. Then rinse with warm water. We can work together to keep your children healthy and happy.



Sources:

1. Claudia Harmata. *Classroom Experiment Shows the Importance of Hand-Washing After Moldy Photos Go Viral*. PEOPLE. December 18, 2019. Available at <https://people.com/health/viral-classroom-experiment-proves-the-importance-of-hand-washing/> Accessed on 12/18/2019.

2. Staff writers. *Show Me the Science - Why Wash Your Hands?* CDC. September 17, 2018. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/why-handwashing.html> Accessed on 12/18/2019.