

# HEALTHY Habits™

Presented by LYSOL® in collaboration with NEA and National PTA

## A Family Guide to Good Hygiene in the Home

### Overview of GERMS AND COMMON ILLNESSES IN CHILDREN:

- Common respiratory infections can result in coughs and colds.
- When children are first exposed to germs in a group setting, their immune systems are still developing and may take time to respond to germs that cause infection.
- When older children first enter group settings (e.g., kids entering school who haven't been in childcare), they're more likely to get frequent infections in the first few years than their peers.

### Q&A ON BEHALF OF THE GLOBAL HYGIENE COUNCIL

The Global Hygiene Council (GHC) is a group of the world's top experts in hygiene and hygiene-related fields, including microbiology, virology, infectious disease, immunology and public health.

#### **Q: What are different ways to help prevent my child from getting sick at school?**

**A:** To help reduce the spread of germs, your children should be washing their hands before and after different activities throughout the school day, such as before lunch and after recess. Children should also wash their hands after using the toilet, coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose, touching or handling class pets, and whenever they have touched a dirty surface.

#### **Q: What are routines I can follow at home to help prevent my child from spreading germs at school, in addition to disinfecting commonly touched surfaces?**

**A:** There are a few steps you can take:

- Keep their schoolbag clean, especially if they carry food items like a packed lunch.
- Ensure your children bring home their gym clothes weekly for washing.
- Kill germs by washing clothes at a high temperature (140°F or higher). If you need to wash at a lower temperature, add a laundry disinfectant.
- Make sure your children practice frequent and proper handwashing, as well as proper cough and sneeze etiquette. Encourage these habits both in and out of school.

#### **Q: How can I keep my kitchen free of germs?**

**A:** The majority of food-borne illnesses can be traced to germs in the home. A study by the Global Hygiene Council found that a third of kitchen cloths are contaminated with *E. coli*, which could make your family very ill. Make sure to regularly disinfect key kitchen hotspots, including faucets and chopping boards, and regularly decontaminate and dry kitchen sponges/cloths after each use (or use disposable cloths instead). Don't forget frequently touched surfaces too, like door handles and light switches. Use a quality antibacterial product that's safe to use around food, and follow the instructions on the label.

#### **Q: How can I keep my bathroom clean and germ-free?**

**A:** Most people think that the dirtiest place in the bathroom is the toilet seat, however a Global Hygiene Council study found it was actually the toilet flush that was germiest. Make sure to regularly disinfect key hotspots, including faucets, handles and the flush. Mold can be a problem in damp

bathrooms, so make sure the room is well-ventilated and regularly disinfect mold-prone areas like shower seals.

Encourage your family to put the toilet seat down before flushing. This will reduce bacteria being spread around the bathroom by the force of the flush. Make sure to regularly disinfect shower heads to help prevent the spread of infection.

Visit [www.lysol.com/healthyhabits](http://www.lysol.com/healthyhabits) for more information on helping prevent germs in the home.