

# TEACHING HANDWASHING GUIDE – Making your own handwashing activity

## Activity Overview

This activity will help teach proper hand hygiene practices and handwashing techniques. This activity can be done in a classroom setting and is suitable for a variety of ages. A Handwashing Kit can be requested from a school public health nurse, or by contacting the Comprehensive Health Promotion intake line at 519-258-2146 ext. 1555 or email [chp@wechu.org](mailto:chp@wechu.org).

## What you'll need

- Flax seed and vegetable oil **or** the GlitterBug™ Potion in the Handwashing Kit.
- Access to a sink and plain liquid soap
- [WECHU's handwashing posters](http://www.wechu.org/school-health/idp) ([www.wechu.org/school-health/idp](http://www.wechu.org/school-health/idp))
- [Handwashing videos](http://www.wechu.org/school-health/idp): ([www.wechu.org/school-health/idp](http://www.wechu.org/school-health/idp))
  - o [Young children - Hand-washing heroes \(French\)](#) ([Government of Canada](#))
  - o [Teens and Adults - How to Hand Wash](#) ([Public Health Ontario](#))

## Activity Format

**STEP ONE:** Discuss with students why proper hand hygiene practices are important:

- Can help physically remove germs from our hands and keep us and other people healthy
- Hands should be washed before and after touching food (e.g., eating, cooking), after using the bathroom, after coughing or sneezing, after going outside to play, after playing with a pet, etc. Aim to wash hands throughout the day.

**STEP TWO:** Review proper handwashing techniques:

- Show handwashing video
- Review WECHU's handwashing poster

**STEP THREE:** Complete handwashing activity:

1. **Put a teaspoon of vegetable oil on the student's hands and a sprinkle of flax seeds ("germs") or GlitterBug™ Potion.** Have students rub their hands to spread the mixture. Ask students to inspect their hands to see where the "germs" are, and take a special look in-between fingers, on the back side of hands, and wrists. If using GlitterBug™ Potion follow the instructions on the bottle.
2. **Ask students to wash their hands just using water (no soap).** Ask them how clean their hands look and feel? *Hints: probably some flaxseed has been washed off, but the hands are still oily. Again, if using GlitterBug™ Potion and the UV light is used to see what's missed.*
3. **Now ask students to wash their hands using soap and water, following the proper technique outlined in the videos and posters.** Ask students how their hands feel compared to just washing using water (and no soap). Remind students to wash the commonly overlooked areas, such as between fingers, back of hands, fingernails, and thumbs. Inspect again to see clean hands.