

## Tips to protect your children from germs

As parents, we work hard to monitor the safety of our children's environment. We clean, sanitize, disinfect and clean some more. We enable our children to wash their hands with soap, to not eat and drink from dirty containers and to dispose of used tissues. After all this effort, it is understandable that the first sniffle of the school year fills us with dread.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

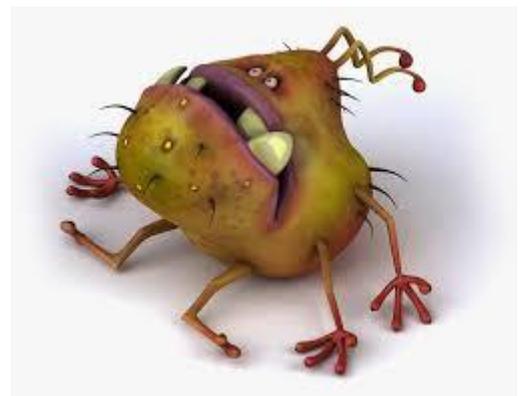
"Infectious diseases account for millions of school days lost each year for kindergarten through 12th-grade public school students in the United States:

- 40% of children aged 5-17 years missed 3 or more school days in the past year because of illness or injury.
- Nearly 22 million school days are lost each year due to colds alone.
- 38 million school days are lost each year due to the influenza virus."

With the increased number of school and work days lost to illness, it is not surprising that the average South African spends around R3 000 each year on products to disinfect their home and the areas where their children play.

Some of these products have harsh chemicals and have many adverse effects when not used properly. How many times have you wondered whether the chemical you are using to disinfect your baby's toys is more dangerous than the germs it may – or may not – be killing? Giving toys a soapy bath is advised and can be found on many parenting forums, but it is very time-consuming and not something most parents can work into their daily routines.

In the days or weeks between soap baths for toys and play surfaces, a product from IQ-Green Solutions (like the Disinfectant), can easily disinfect your child's toys and play area safely. A quick spray has the capacity to wash away bacteria and viruses, killing those like *MRSA*, *Staph*, *H1N1*, *HIV* and Tuberculosis, some of the scariest germs most commonly found in our communities.



# What do we do when our children are not at home?

We as parents do not have complete supervision over our kids and cannot follow our kids on play dates or hover over them at school. One of the most important things we can do for our children is to help them develop good hygiene habits. The goal is to eliminate bacteria and viruses before they have a chance to enter our child's body.

In a report on children's health from the CDC, they claim that,

"Keeping hands clean is one of the best ways to keep from getting sick and spreading germs. Practicing good hand hygiene gets rid of bacteria and viruses from contact with other people or surfaces."

What happens when children are at school, where hand washing is limited to only a few times throughout the day and soap dispensers are sometimes empty? Many teachers include antibacterial hand sanitizers or baby wipes as part of the school supply list for students. While these products may be better than nothing, the active ingredients and how they are used may actually cause more harm than be beneficial.

According to an ABC news report, some disinfecting wipes may serve to help spread bacteria instead of killing it. According to the article, microbiologist Gareth Williams and a team of researchers from the Welsh School of Pharmacy at Cardiff University tested three types of wipes. While the wipes destroyed or removed bacteria at varying degrees, the team reported that once used, bacteria remained on the surface of all three types of wipes. If reused, these wipes served as a means to spread the bacteria to other surfaces.

So, in the classroom, when a child is given a wipe for their hands, and this wipe is placed on the desk afterward, the bacteria that were removed from his hands are now present on the desk where he sits for the rest of the day. Like tissues, once used, antibacterial wipes should be thrown away immediately after they are used.

To help enhance the wellness of your child further, send a personal-sized spray bottle of IQ Green Solutions Sanitiser tucked into their lunchbox or backpack. It cleans hands without the harsh, drying effects of the alcohol found in many other products and it does not contain Triclosan or other possible toxic chemicals. This method will enable your child better hygiene practices and to be more aware of the harmful pathogens associated with illnesses.



## Other ways to help in the classroom

In many schools, teachers rely on parent volunteers. Here are a few ways you can offer to help the students to keep their school environment clean and relatively germ-free.

- Small children look cute holding hands as they walk down the hall and this may help keep the line orderly but it is not sanitary. Share your concerns with the teacher or school administrators.
- Arrange with other parents to disinfect the classroom during cold and flu season.
- If the teacher keeps a reading nook with stuffed animals and pillows, offer to take them home and clean them or make pillow covers that are easier to remove and clean.
- Provide your favorite teacher with a good supply of products from IQ Green Solutions such as: IQ Green Solutions Disinfectant, IQ Green Solutions Pocket sanitizer, IQ Green Solutions Surfactant and IQ Green Solutions Humidifier Solution, so he or she has the tools on hand to help keep the classroom cleaner and safer.

