

# HOW TO REDUCE AND PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN SCHOOLS

## 1 INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

### Wash your hands

Wash your hands with soap and water after going to the toilet, before touching food and eating, after coughing and sneezing, and after playing or doing things outside. You should wash your hands for at least 20 seconds – the equivalent of singing "Happy Birthday" twice.



#### How to do it properly:

To eliminate all traces of the virus on your hands, a quick scrub and a rinse will not cut it. Here is a step-by-step process for effective handwashing:

1. Wash hands with running water
2. Properly soap your wet hands
3. Make sure to clean every surface on your hands for at least 20 seconds – including the back of the hands, palms, wrists, spaces between fingers and under nails
4. Clean your hands of soap and dirt using running water
5. Rub hands dry with a single-use towel, paper towel or a clean piece of cloth

### Sneeze and cough carefully

Whenever you sneeze or cough, keep in mind to cover your face. It is best to sneeze in your elbow, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue which afterwards has to be thrown away in a closed bin. While sneezing or coughing, turn away from people standing nearby, if possible.

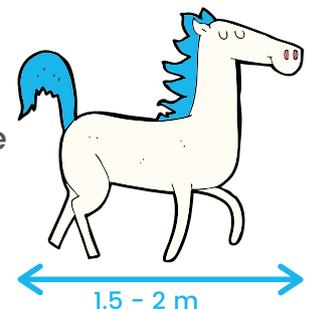
### Be open and honest

In case you feel unwell, for example if you have caught a cold/fever or are coughing a lot, please consult a family member or someone you live with.

### Keep a distance

It may be tough, but please try not to touch others e.g., when greeting. Instead, you can use gestures, e.g., waving, bowing, a namaste or hand on your heart.

Keep a reasonable distance of minimum 1.5 meters (the length of a pony) to everyone you do not live with. Just imagine that a pony is standing between you and your classmates.



To prevent the virus from reaching your mucosa, do not touch your face, nose, or mouth.

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## 2 INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND EDUCATION STAFF

Education ministries, school principals, teachers, and administrators are expected to disperse knowledge about appropriate behaviour e.g. by including it in the curriculum. Consequently, information on adequate hand hygiene can trickle down from administrative entities to students, their families and local communities. Proper hand hygiene facilities should be provided by executives (e.g., water and soap).

### Create an environment that enables physical distancing

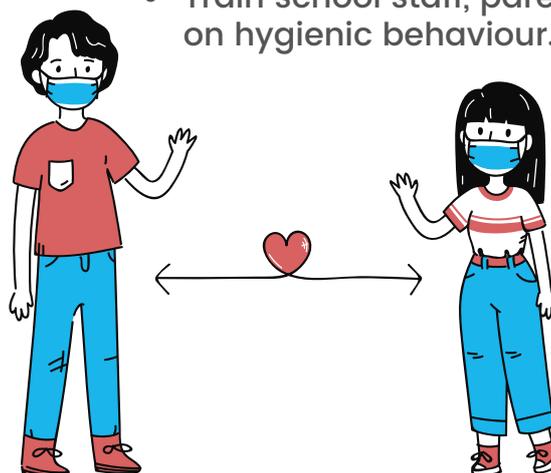
Steps to encourage physical distancing during in-person schooling may include:

- Close down lockers.
- Create one-way traffic in school hallways, also by using pylons or sticky tape.
- Classes, instructions, meals and recess should be given in outside areas.
- Limit the number of children on school buses to facilitate physical distancing.
- Move desks apart with enough space in between them, ideally desks face in the same direction.
- Erect Plexiglas shields and partitions as physical barriers between educators and students.
- Physical distancing while hand washing must be secured in inside and outside facilities: To meet official physical distance guidelines, some of the water outlets (e.g., taps) should be covered with foil or sealed with stickers. Floor markings secure orientation and enough space among all users.
- Divide students in learning groups.
- Aerate the classrooms every 40 minutes.

### Ensure a hygienic environment

For students to comply with hygiene rules, an appropriate environment must be created in schools. The following points must be observed:

- Provide sufficient hand-washing opportunities at entrances and in restrooms with clean water and adequate soap.
- Washing opportunities must allow physical distancing and be accessible to all.
- Ensure an adequate water supply. If problems arise in this regard, ask the community for assistance, and encourage children to bring bottled water from home.
- Ensure the supply of consumables (soap, hand sanitizers, cleaning supplies, protective equipment).
- Make sure that the school is cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Appoint staff member(s) or older students from a WASH club as a monitoring team to regularly check the toilets.
- Train school staff, parents, and pupils on hygienic behaviour.



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## 3 ADVICE FOR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

### Wear a mask

The WHO recommends wearing (cloth) face masks in schools. Parents or guardians may consider the following tips:

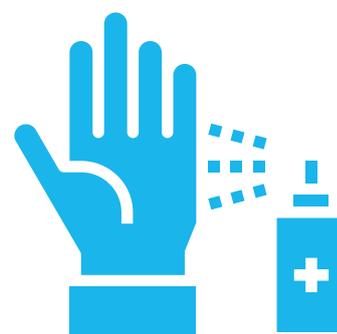
- In surroundings where physical distancing becomes a challenge, wearing cloth face masks should be a priority. In particular, this applies to school buses, bus stops or carpool drop-off areas.
- Every child should possess several face masks to wear throughout the school week. Washing masks on a daily basis is key. Provide your child each day with a clean mask, a back-up mask, and a hygienic, resealable bag for occasional storage.
- Attach a label to your child's mask so it is not confused with another child's.
- Teach your child in putting on and taking off cloth face masks. Remember to touch your child's mask minimally.
- Tell your child that they should wash their hands before and after touching their face covering.
- Instruct your child to never share or trade masks with peers.
- Explain the importance of wearing a face mask and depict a role model by wearing masks.



### Keep hands clean

To create a learning effect, practise handwashing at home with your child and explain why it is important to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Explain to your child why they should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth. Show them how to cover their mouths and noses with their elbows or tissues when they cough or sneeze and then wash their hands.

Should your child attend in-person schooling, develop daily routines before and after school that foster healthy habits, such as packing a back-up face mask and hand sanitizer in the morning and washing their hands as soon as they come home.



### Clean and disinfect

Regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (e.g., faucets, doorknobs, counter tops, keyboards, tablets, and phones) reduces the risk of an infection, no matter if your child is being schooled at home or in school.

### Stay home if sick

Closely monitor your child each day for signs of an infection. In case your child feels unwell, prevent them from joining group activities or attending class. Contact your doctor for case-dependent information and medical advice.

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