

# Lesson Plan #1 – Introduction to Germs

Germs are everywhere and can cause illnesses; in fact germs are so sneaky, they make their way into our bodies without us noticing. We don't know they've entered our bodies until we start getting symptoms and start feeling sick. This is why we need to wash our hands often to remove germs from our hands and prevent giving those germs to other people.

This lesson plan will help children learn about germs. It will give them an understanding of where germs are found, how they enter our bodies and how they are transmitted. They will learn strategies to stay healthy. Supplemental activities can be utilized to further develop their knowledge of germs.

## Key Messages

### What are germs?

Germs are very small organism, or living things, that can make you sick. They are very small and can only be seen using a microscope. It is important to remember; even if you cannot see these germs they are still present. When they get in our bodies, we don't know what hit us until we have symptoms that say we've been attacked!

- ★ Can we see germs?
- ★ What are different types of germs?

### Germs are everywhere

Germs are everywhere. They are in the air we breathe, in the soil, on our desks, on the floor and even on our favorite toys. They can sometimes be found in water and food but most importantly, germs are on our hands. They get on our hands when we touch things that have germs on them; when we use the washroom, play outside, touch animals. It's important to wash our hands often to remove the germs from our hands.

- ★ Where can we find germs?
- ★ Are germs on our hands?

## How do germs get on our hands?

There are two ways in which germs can get onto our hands. The first way is by coughing or sneezing into them, putting our fingers in our mouth or nose and even when we forget to wash our hands after using the washroom. The second way germs can get onto our hands is through objects. Germs can hide on objects because a person coughed or sneezed on them or if a person had germs on their hands and touched the objects. Germs can stay on objects for a very long time.

- ★ How do germs get on our hands?
- ★ What are some things we can do to make sure we do not get germs on our hands?

## How do germs get inside our bodies?

Germs get inside your body through the nose, mouth and eyes. If someone is coughing or sneezing, we can breathe them in. They can get inside your body if you haven't washed your hands before eating your lunch. Finally, germs could get inside your body by rubbing your eyes and not having washed your hands. Remember, if you haven't washed your hands, you shouldn't be touching your nose, mouth and eyes!

- ★ Give examples of how germs get inside your nose, mouth and eyes.
- ★ What can you do to prevent germs from getting into your body?

## Germs can make us sick

When germs get into our bodies they can make us sick. Our body is equipped with a little army called white blood cells. Their job is to try and fight the germs. Sometimes that may cause a fever. When they cannot win, we start feeling sick. Some germs cause stomach aches and vomiting, others cause sore throat, runny nose and cough. When we are sick, our body needs a lot of rest and fluids.

- ★ Have you ever been sick? How did you feel?
- ★ What are things you can do when you are sick?

## Can germs be healthy?

While it is common to believe that all germs are bad, most germs do not harm you at all. In fact, they could even be good for you. We can find helpful germs on our skin that help keep bad

germs from entering your body, and in our stomach to help us digest our food and produce vitamins. Some germs are also used for medicine to help fight other germs.

- ★ Are all germs bad for you?
- ★ Give an example of how germs can be helpful.

### **Why is washing our hands important?**

Washing our hands is the most important way to stop the spread of germs. Think about all of the things that you touched today — from toys to the toilet. Maybe you blew your nose in a tissue and then went outside to dig around the dirt. Whatever you did today, you came in contact with germs. You can't stop germs from getting onto your hands but you can wash them with soap and water to stop germs from getting you or another person sick. Remember, hands have to be washed for at least 15 seconds, try singing the ABCs.

- ★ Why do we wash our hands?
- ★ How do we wash our hands?

### **Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or tissue**

When you need to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or cough and sneeze into your sleeve. Throw the tissue away in the garbage and make sure to wash your hands after. If you don't cover your cough or sneeze, germs will travel in the air and can land on objects

- ★ How can we stop germs from going in the air when we are coughing or sneezing?
- ★ What should we do after we have used a tissue?

### **Supplemental Activities**

- Potato in a Jar Experiment
- Ah...Ah...Choo!
- Puppet Show
- Germ Treasure Hunt
- Create a Collage
- The Dirt on Germs
- Germs Travel