

So, when should you wash your hands?

Handwashing should always occur after going to the restroom and before eating. Are there other times that hands need to be washed? According to the authors of the Environment Rating Scales handwashing should also take place to avoid spreading household germs, after messy play, and to avoid spreading diseases through bodily fluids.

Some examples of when handwashing should occur to prevent the spread of household germs are: upon arrival to the classroom, after touching the lid of the trash containers or after cleaning up spills. Examples of handwashing after messy play would be after using the sand table, after being outdoors, after playing with glue or painting, before and after cooking projects, and after handling pets. The third area where handwashing should occur is to avoid spreading diseases through bodily fluids. Some examples of this are: before and after group water play, after sneezing or coughing, after wiping nose, before and after applying sunscreen on a child, before and after dealing with cuts, scrapes or other health needs, and of course, after cleaning up bodily fluid spills.

Handwashing is the most important way to reduce the spread of germs and diseases. Studies have shown that unwashed or improper handwashing is the primary carrier of disease. Remember to wash your hands upon arrival in the class room, after messy play, and after dealing with bodily fluids. You and your class will be healthier for it.