



Recommendations for Schools With Increased Absenteeism

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Stay Home When Sick

- Any student or staff member who is ill and unable to participate fully in regular activities should be cared for at home.
- Encourage staff and students to stay home when sick.
- Refer to the [Infectious Disease Guidelines for Schools and Child Care Facilities](#) for information on specific illnesses and exclusion.

Hand Hygiene

- Encourage hand hygiene among students and staff (through PA announcements, classroom teaching and reminders, newsletters/flyers).
- Ensure there is a sufficient supply of warm water, soap and paper towels in all washrooms.
- If hand sanitizer is available it's recommended:
 - to use 70-90% alcohol-based hand sanitizer,
 - that the product is within the expiry date, and
 - that there is a sufficient supply.
- Hand washing signs should be posted in all washrooms (available from Public Health).
- Child friendly displays and Glow Germ units to teach proper hand washing are available from Public Health (pick up and/or delivery can be arranged).

Environmental Cleaning

- Clean and disinfect common touch surfaces daily or more often as needed (e.g. door handles, hand rails, desks, table tops, water fountains).
- Clean and disinfect shared items and toys as often as possible.
- Washrooms should continue to be cleaned and disinfected daily or more often as needed.
- Launder re-usable mop heads and linens on a hot water cycle with detergent and hot air dry.
- Review disinfection procedures:
 - Follow manufacturer's directions for use, concentration and contact time.
 - Check concentrations and contact times.
 - A different disinfectant may need to be used during periods of increased illness. Contact Public Health for recommendations.
- Surfaces contaminated by faeces or vomit are to be immediately cleaned and disinfected using a high level disinfectant. Gloves and masks are to be worn during clean up. See [Cleaning Spills of Blood and Body Substances on Hard Surfaces](#).

Communication

- Consider sending information home to parents (of whole school or specific classrooms) to:
 - notify them of increased illness,
 - remind them that children are to stay home when ill, and
 - encourage hand washing and covering coughs at home.
- Make other agencies and programs within the school (e.g. child cares) of the increased absenteeism.