

Healthy Habit Clues



1. Wash Your Hands

Make it a family routine before every meal and snack to wash hands. If you do it together, you can model for children how to use soap, rub your hands together and rinse. To keep time, try slowly singing the “ABC’s” together while you scrub. To reinforce proper handwashing skills, a great book to read with your child is *Germs are not for Sharing* by Elizabeth Verdick.

2. Catch that Cough

When kids cough or sneeze, they tend to do it right into their hands — and then they use those hands to touch everything in sight! Instead, we can cough and sneeze into our elbow. Make it a game with the kids. Can they catch the cough in their elbow? In the beginning, cheer when they do: “You caught it! That’s what germ busters do!” If they accidentally “catch it in their hands,” they can simply wash their hands with soap and water and start the game again. You can also remind your children that our Manners Matter mascot Penny Polite® always reminds them, “An elbow please if you sneeze!”

3. “Rest is Best”

Daniel Tiger from PBS Kids reminds us that “When you’re sick, rest is best!” This is a good episode to show kids and a great song to sing when they are feeling under the weather. Tell them: “When we are sick, we can stay home and rest our bodies; we can be germ busters by not spreading germs or going to school sick.” And as a family, we can keep ourselves and our kids home if we have a fever or other symptoms.

4. Practice Healthy Habits

Remind kids that sleep, exercise and eating healthy foods are good everyday ways to strengthen our bodies. We will all get sick sometimes! They have probably already had at least one cold this season. But we can be responsible germ busters when we practice handwashing, cough-catching, resting and basic healthy living.

[*Tips courtesy of PBS How to Talk to Your Kids about Coronavirus by Deborah Farmer Kris, March 6th, 2020](#)