



# Parenting During A Pandemic & Beyond

Supporting Parents Every Step On The Way

## HAND WASHING GAMES and ACTIVITIES

We know how important hand washing is as part of a daily routine, but during a pandemic this becomes even more important. To help children with special needs understand this, and how to wash their hands properly, it can be useful to include prompts and visual reminders, games, and songs, to make the experience of handwashing more enjoyable for everyone. Here are some activity ideas and prompt suggestions to try.

### ACTIVITIES

#### Glitter Germs

*You will need:* paper, pencil, scissors, glitter, paper plate, glue



It can be difficult for young children to understand something which they can't see or smell. In this activity we replace germs with glitter to help them understand how easily germs can be spread by touch. Glitter helps children **visualise the germs** and understand how washing their hands can keep them healthy. **Tip:** you will only need a tiny amount of glitter!

1. First, get your child (or you) to draw around one of their hands on a piece of paper, and cut it out.
2. Place a small amount of glitter on the paper plate.
3. Stick a little glue over the paper hand, then place it, sticky side down, over the glitter.
4. Now get your child to use the paper hand to 'spread the germs'. Do reassure them that these are only 'pretend' germs and not the real thing – it's just to help them see how important hand washing is.

Your child may well touch their face, clothes, toys etc. As they are doing this, **talk with them about how the glitter spreads** and explain that germs do exactly the same, except unlike the glitter we can't see the germs, but they can spread on to anything that is touched and can make us feel a bit poorly, or give us a cold.

5. **There's every chance your child will get some glitter on their hands, so this is the time to remove the germs (glitter) by washing them.** Run a sink of warm water, and ask your child to see how much glitter they can remove using just that (no soap at this stage). They will see that not much of the glitter has been removed.
6. **Now suggest they try using the soap.** Make sure they wash their hands thoroughly, and they will see all the glitter has gone from their hands and that's why we need soap to remove the germs completely!

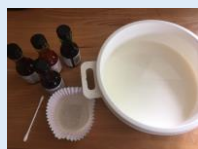


## Magic Milk!

*You will need:* a shallow dish, food colouring, cotton bud, washing-up liquid, full-fat milk

This activity follows on really well from 'Glitter Germs' to explore chemical reactions in a safe way, and why soap works much better to remove the glitter than just water on its own.

1. Pour some milk into a shallow dish, then put a few drops of different food colourings onto the milk.



2. Dip the cotton bud into the washing-up liquid then right next to a drop of food colouring and watch the magic happen!

As your child watches in amazement, you can explain that the patterns are made by the soap trying to catch all the fat in the milk. This is exactly what happens when washing up dirty pans – we use liquid soap to get all the grease and dirt off. So, when they're washing their hands, the magic soap is rushing around trying to catch all the germs for them to be rinsed away down the sink!

## PROMPTS and VISUAL REMINDERS

Breaking down instructions into small steps is really beneficial to help children understand what needs to happen and when. A poster with **visual prompts** kept close to the sink will help your child follow the picture sequence. Here are two links to ones you might like to download and print:

[The Scott Center Washing Hands Visual Prompt](#)

[National Autism Association Wash Hands Visual Prompt](#)

You can also **model** each step of handwashing, by speaking as you do each step, e.g. *"now I'm going to put some soap on my hands."*

When you are alongside your child for handwashing, rather than handing them the soap you could try **gesturing** to them that the soap is next, by pointing to it with your hand whilst saying, *"now put some soap on your hands"*.

Finally, you may find a **physical** prompt helpful, where you gently guide your child's hand to turn on the tap, reach for the soap, or pull the plug out. The main thing is to take things slowly, step-by-step. Wait until your child becomes confident with mastering one step on their own before moving on to the next.

Wash Hands		
1		Turn on the warm water.
2		Wet your hands.
3		Turn off the water.
4		Get soap.
5		Wash and scrub for 20 seconds.
6		Turn on the warm water and rinse off the soap.
7		Dry your hands with a paper towel.
8		Turn off the water with the paper towel.
9		Throw the paper towel in the trash.

# HAND WASHING SONGS

There are some great songs to sing while washing your hands – these are some of our favourites. Load them up on your smartphone or tablet and see which one your child most enjoys singing along to when washing their hands.



## [Happy Hands](#)

The chorus is 20 seconds long, so the perfect length for hand washing.



## [Baby Shark Hand Washing](#)

If your child loves the 'Baby Shark' song, this will be popular.

It's a sped-up version of the song with a 20 second timer and hand washing instructions appearing on the screen.



## [Cbeebies Wash Your Hands](#)

A quieter song with a little practice run first

## [Top and Bottoms](#)

This is a great way for your child to watch how children of their age are washing their hands. Sing along to the tune of Frere Jacques.

## Sing to the tune of 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' (from Halseysschools.com)

Wash, wash  
Wash your hands  
Wash them nice and clean.  
Scrub them here (hand motion scrubbing together)  
Scrub them there (hand motion scrubbing tops of hands)  
And scrub them in between (hand motion scrubbing between fingers).

Wash, wash, wash, your hands  
Play our handy game  
Rub and scrub, scrub and rub  
Germs go down the drain HEY!  
Wash, wash, wash, your hands  
Play our handy game  
Rub and scrub, scrub and rub  
Germs go down the drain HEY!


## Sing to the tune of 'The Wheels on the Bus' (from Halseysschools.com)

The soap on your hands goes sud, sud, sud.  
Sud, sud, sud.  
Sud, sud, sud.  
The soap on your hands goes sud, sud, sud.  
And the germs go down the drain.



# HAND-WASHING STICKER REWARD CHART

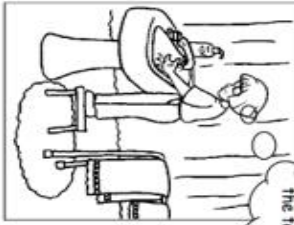
This sticker reward chart is a great way to encourage children to wash their hands! The short rhyme at the bottom in the cloud bursts can act as useful visual prompts. Be sure to give them a sticker every time they wash their hands.




## Washing Hands Reward Chart

غسل الكفاة غسل الدين


<b>Monday</b>									
<b>Tuesday</b>									
<b>Wednesday</b>									
<b>Thursday</b>									
<b>Friday</b>									
<b>Saturday</b>									
<b>Sunday</b>									




Run the water from the tap




Use foamy soap and give your hands a pat




Rinse with water, nearly done



Dry your hands, ready for fun!





# HAND-WASHING POSTER

It's best not to assume your child will know or even remember when they need to wash their hands – it's something that needs to be taught, and can take time, so this handy poster with visual prompts can be displayed around the house to help remind them.

Don't forget to wash your hands...  
لا تنسى أن تغسل يديك



Before you eat  
قبل الأكل



After using the toilet  
بعد استخدام المراحيض



After play  
بعد اللعب