

**Title: Let's Handwashing!**

**Authors:** Santos, D.R.V.<sup>1</sup>, Corassa, R.B.<sup>1</sup>, Alves, P.A.B.<sup>1</sup>, Santos, F.A.<sup>1</sup>, Viana, D.J.S.<sup>1</sup>, Pinto, S.S.S.<sup>1</sup>, Meira, J.B.<sup>1</sup>, Souza, P.<sup>1</sup>, Santos, D.D.M.<sup>1</sup>, Silva, T.M.G.<sup>1</sup>

**Institution:** <sup>1</sup>UFVJM - Universidade Federal dos Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri (Rua da Glória, 187 Centro, Diamantina - MG)

**Abstract:**

By strategies for promoting health, many respiratory infections and gastroenteritis can be prevented by handwashing with soap. Current epidemiological evidence indicates that handwashing with soap prevents about 47% of child diarrhoeas and 23% of respiratory infections. Large-scale handwash promotion programmes that move away from the simplistic assumption that imparting knowledge about germs and disease will change behaviour are needed. The purpose of this study was promoting hand hygiene behavior within children from a school in Diamantina/MG. This study took place between February 2014 and January 2015, and 120 students aged between six and 12 years were interested to participate. Six undergraduate students from health courses also participated. The study was performed in five sessions: Session 1 - Preparation of educational material; Session 2 - At this session school children were given more details about the "Let's Handwashing!" programme; Session 3 - The educational material prepared was given to the school children and they were taken to the UFVJM Laboratory of Microbiology when microbiology basic informations were provided. Session 4 - A microbiology experiment was performed to evaluate hand hygiene. Nutrient agar plates were prepared and given to the children divided in groups of three. Each nutrient agar plate was divided in three parts and part one was inoculated with a finger from a dirty hand. Part two was inoculated with a finger from a handwashing with soap, and part three was inoculated with a finger from a handwashing with alcohol gel. The plates were then incubated at 37°C for 24 hours. Session 5 - The result of the microbiology experiment was explained. At this session the importance of hand hygiene was highlighted to prevent diarrhoea and respiratory infections. Our data show that promotion of handwashing with soap can reduce respiratory-tract infections and diarrhoea, two of the leading causes of global childhood death.

**Key-words:** handwashing, hygiene promotion programmes, children

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