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Canadian Institute of Child Health
Institut canadien de la santé infantile

News Release

Handwashing Awareness Campaign for Canadian Children Keeping Kids Healthy!

OTTAWA, September 21, 2016 - Canadian children must be taught how and when to wash their hands. This is the message that is central to an awareness campaign this month by the Canadian Institute of Child Health (CICH) and the Canadian Consumer Specialty Products Association (CCSPA). CICH has developed a resource kit targeted at preschool children and preschool educators, which provides valuable resources on handwashing.

“Increased effort has to be made to teach young children about handwashing,” said Shannon Coombs, President, CCSPA. “Teaching small children how and when to wash their hands establishes handwashing patterns that they will carry with them all their lives.”

The campaign, entitled “*William, Won’t You Wash Your Hands?*” chronicles the adventures of a rascally preschooler named William who is resistant to washing his hands. The campaign resource kit that has been developed by CICH in consultation with experts in infectious diseases, early childhood education and care, public health, and pediatric medicine, provides a comprehensive set of resources on handwashing and infection control for early learning and care settings. CICH has worked in partnership with the Canadian Consumer Specialty Products Association, Lysol, on reprinting the kit for the 2016 campaign.

“Teaching children how to wash their hands is central to preventing many childhood illnesses,” said Dr. Lynn McIntyre, Chair of the CICH and Professor Emerita of Community Health Sciences, University of Calgary. “Research has shown that having children wash their hands can decrease the spread of infection within early learning and care programs, which has a positive impact on children, program staff and families.”

The kit is comprised of six components that come together neatly in a kit envelope:

- an illustrated storybook;
- 2 posters that can be hung in early learning centres - one on the steps involved in handwashing and the other reminds children when to wash their hands;
- 2 resource sheets for educators that include information on infection control; and

- a resource booklet that provides educators with an assortment of activities, songs and games that all teach handwashing.

“The kit includes everything an educator needs to develop a comprehensive handwashing curriculum for young children,” said Janice Sonnen, Executive Director, Canadian Institute of Child Health. “The resource material provides a great foundation for educators on the importance of good hygiene; and the storybook, posters and game ideas make handwashing fun.”

CICH and CCSPA encourage parents, early childhood educators and caregivers to teach children the steps to good handwashing:

1. Wet your hands under warm running water.
2. Put soap on your wet hands.
3. Rub soap all over the front and back of your hands, the tips of your fingers and your nails for 15 – 20 seconds.
4. Rinse your hands well under running water.
5. Dry your hands well with a clean towel.
6. Turn off taps with the towel.

“At Lysol, we are committed to promoting habits that keep schools and homes healthy,” said Lee Coomber, President, RB Canada. “As part of this effort, we have supported the “*William, Won’t You Wash Your Hands?*” campaign to arm students, parents and teachers with the resources they need to ensure children are washing their hands frequently and properly, helping them to stay healthy.”

CICH

The Canadian Institute of Child Health (CICH) is the only national charitable organization dedicated solely to improving the health of children and youth in Canada. Founded in 1977, CICH has a successful history of developing and implementing initiatives to increase public understanding and awareness of child health issues through health promotion programs, child health monitoring, education and advocacy. To purchase a kit, please go to: <http://www.cich.ca/PDFFiles/OrderForms/Order%20William%20English.pdf> or contact Janice Sonnen, Executive Director, CICH, at 613-232-8838, ext. 223.

CCSPA

CCSPA is a national trade association that represents 35 member companies in 87 facilities across Canada. Our companies manufacture, process, package and distribute consumer, industrial and institutional specialty products such as soaps and detergents, pest control products, aerosols, hard surface disinfectants, deodorizers and automotive chemicals. We are a \$20 billion industry directly employing over 12,000 people, with annual exports of \$1 billion. CCSPA also provides an excellent website – a one-stop source of information for Canadians about our products and their benefits – at <http://www.healthycleaning101.org/>.

RB

RB (formerly called Reckitt Benckiser) is the world’s leading consumer health and hygiene company. The company has operations in over 60 countries, with headquarters in the UK, Singapore, Dubai and Amsterdam, and sales in almost 200 countries. The company employs approximately 37,000 people worldwide. With a purpose of delivering innovative solutions for healthier lives and happier homes, RB is in the top 20 of companies listed on the London Stock Exchange. Today it is the global No. 1 or No. 2 in the majority of its fast-growing categories, driven by an exceptional rate of innovation. Its health, hygiene and home portfolio is led by 19 global Powerbrands including Mucinex, Durex, Scholl, Lysol, MegaRed, Veet, Finish, Air Wick, French’s, Nurofen, Strepsils, Gaviscon, Dettol, Harpic, Bang, Veja, Mortein, Vanish and Calgon. For more information, visit www.rb.com.