

Step, Squirt, Scrub, Swipe

Primary Objectives

1c. Takes care of own needs appropriately

Why It's Important

Your child needs a great deal of guidance and practice as she learns to attend to her physical needs on her own. Helping your child address her needs while also encouraging her growing abilities allows her to observe and participate in each task. As each process becomes routine for your child, your role will become secondary.

Materials

Large piece of paper; markers; photos or illustrations of children carrying out the steps for handwashing

What You Do

1. Create a chart that names and illustrates the following steps:
 1. Step up to the sink with help from an adult.
 2. Hold out hands to allow adult to squirt soap into them.
 3. Scrub hands together: back, front, and between fingers.
 4. Rinse hands and use paper towel to swipe hands and rub until dry.
2. Post the chart next to the bathroom sink. Refer to the chart each time that your child washes her hands. Talk through each step with your child as she completes it: *Now you are drying your hands.*
3. Use a paper towel to turn the water off. Help your child step down when she is finished.
4. Remember that the goal is for your child to complete the steps independently. Follow her cues to determine how much or how little she can do on her own.
5. Each time you practice this activity, encourage your child to use the chart as a reminder. Offer specific encouragement as she washes her hands: *I see that you spread out your fingers so you could scrub between them by yourself!*