HELP A CHILD REACH 5

Lifebuoy's Help A Child Reach 5 campaign

Handwashing with soap saves lives. Lifebuoy's Help A Child Reach 5 campaign aims to eradicate preventable deaths from diseases like diarrhoea and pneumonia one village at a time, by teaching lifesaving handwashing habits.

HANDWASHING FACTS

Child Mortality: Diarrhoea and Pneumonia

- Diarrhoea and pneumonia are the top two killers of children – together they cause 1.7 million annual child deaths, 26% of total child mortality[i]. Every 20 seconds, one child dies from diarrhoea or pneumonia (over 4,500 children each day).
- Pneumonia kills more than 3,000 children under 5 years of age every day that is 1.1 million in a year[ii]. Pneumonia is the single largest killer of children under 5 and accounts for 17% of all under-five deaths.
- Diarrhoea kills more than 1,600 children under 5 years of age every day that is 580,000 in a year. Diarrhoea accounts for 9% of all under-five deaths.
- Over 80% of under 5 deaths are in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia[iii].

The benefits of handwashing with soap

- Handwashing with soap is the single most cost effective intervention to prevent child deaths. It is proven to reduce diarrhoeal disease by up to 45%[iv] and pneumonia by 23%[v], the world's two biggest killers of children under 5.
- Handwashing with soap is has been cited as one of the most cost-effective interventions to prevent diarrhoeal related deaths and disease[vi].
- Studies by the World Bank have shown a $3.35 investment in handwashing brings the same benefit as an $11 investment in latrine promotion and a $223 investment in household water supply connection[vii]. It can also can reduce school absenteeism by between 20-50%.
- The lack of soap is not a significant barrier to handwashing. An 11 country[viii] review of handwashing behaviour showed that 95% of poor households having soap. But it is rarely used for handwashing. Laundry, bathing and washing dishes are seen as the priorities for soap use.
- While most people do have access to soap, the number of people who regularly wash their hands at the right times – such as before eating and after using the toilet – is very low. Across a global review of 11 countries[ix], the average rate of handwashing after using the toilet is only 17% and this dips as low as 3% in Ghana and 1% in rural India.
- Handwashing by mothers and birth attendants was associated with a 40-44% reduction in neonatal mortality in a recent study in Nepal[x].
- Handwashing with soap prevents trachoma and ascaris infections[xi].
- Handwashing with soap is an effective control measure in pandemics such as SARS[xii] and Pandemic Flu[xiii].
- A review of several studies shows that handwashing in institutions such as primary schools and daycare centers reduce the incidence of diarrhoea by an average of 30 per cent[xiv].
- Water alone is not enough. That was again demonstrated by a study in England[xv].Washing with soap reduced the incidence of the presence of any type of faecal bacteria on people's hands from 44% to 8%, whereas handwashing with only water reduced the incidence to only 23%.
- New studies suggest that handwashing promotion in schools can play a role in reducing absenteeism among primary school children. In China, Colombia and Egypt primary school absenteeism due to

diarrhoea or and respiratory infections dropped between 20% and 50% as a result of better handwashing practices[xvi].

Neonatal

- About 3.6 million neonatal deaths occur each year, more than 99% in low and middle income countries. About half of these deaths occur at home where mothers receive little or no perinatal care[xvii].
- 86% of these deaths are due to a combination of infections, prematurity and complications during labor[xviii].
- Universal provision of low-cost interventions could reduce these rates by up to 70%[xix]. These interventions include maternal tetanus toxoid immunization, clean delivery and cord care, resuscitation of newborns, early initiation of exclusive breastfeeding, prevention and management of hypothermia, skin-to-skin care, and community based pneumonia case management.
- The World Health Organization has recommended hand washing with clean water and soap before and after handling the infant during the postnatal period to prevent infection[xx].
- A community study in rural Nepal concluded that handwashing with soap can reduce newborn deaths by up to 44%. In this study, three hand-washing categories were defined: (1) birth attendant hand washing with soap and water before assisting with delivery, (2) maternal hand washing with soap and water or antiseptic before handling the baby, and (3) combined birth attendant and maternal hand washing. Birth attendant hand washing was related to lower mortality rate among neonates, as was maternal hand washing[xxi].

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[i] UNICEF analysis based on IGME 2013, drawing on provisional analyses by WHO and CHERG 2013. References: Liu, Li, et al., 'Global, Regional, and National Causes of Child Mortality: An updated systematic analysis for 2010 with time trends since 2000', The Lancet, vol. 379, no. 9832, 9 June 2012, pp. 2151–2161. World Health Organization, 'WHO-CHERG methods and data sources for child causes of death 2000-2011', Global Health Estimates Technical Paper WHO/HIS/HSI/GHE/2013.2, WHO Geneva, available at <www.who.int/healthinfo/statistics/ChildCOD_method.pdf>.

[ii] UNICEF analysis based on IGME 2013, drawing on provisional analyses by WHO and Child Health Epidemiology Reference Group (CHERG) 2013. References: Liu, Li, et al., 'Global, Regional, and National Causes of Child Mortality: An updated systematic analysis for 2010 with time trends since 2000', The Lancet, vol. 379, no. 9832, 9 June 2012, pp. 2151–2161. World Health Organization, 'WHO-CHERG methods and data sources for child causes of death 2000- 2011', Global Health Estimates Technical Paper WHO/HIS/HSI/GHE/2013.2, WHO Geneva, available at <www.who.int/healthinfo/statistics/ChildCOD_method.pdf>. The numbers of under-five deaths by cause have been calculated by applying the percentage breakdown by cause provided by WHO and CHERG to the estimates of number of under-five deaths provided by IGME. This approach was used for comparability across diseases, and therefore these estimates may differ from those presented elsewhere.

[iii] IGME2013

[iv] CHERG 2010. Sandy Cairncross, Caroline Hunt, Sophie Boisson, Kristof Bostoen, Val Curtis, Isaac CH Fung, and Wolf-Peter Schmidt Water, sanitation and hygiene for the prevention of diarrhoea.Int. J. Epidemiol. 2010 39: i193-i205.

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[vii] World Bank; Handwashing Cost Effectiveness Study (2004)

[viii] Ghana, Kerala State in India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Peru, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and the Sichuan and Shaanxi Provinces of China.

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