

infosheet

GOOD HYGIENE - GOOD HEALTH



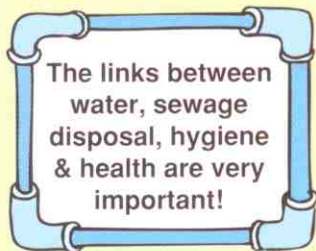
it's a fact!
Gastro-enteritis
is one of the 3
main causes of
death in South
African
children under the
age of 5.

We all need water for life, but it is important to know that water can also be a carrier of disease. Water is especially dangerous when it is **contaminated** with human faeces. Faeces contain bacteria called *E. coli*. When *E. coli* counts in streams, rivers or dams become very high, this indicates faecal pollution. This means that there is an increased possibility that disease-causing micro-organisms which are also known as **pathogenic bacteria** may be present in the water.



it's a fact!
some disease
organisms can
live for up to 3
years in human
faeces

Diseases that are carried in water are known as waterborne diseases, for example cholera, typhoid and dysentery. When drinking water becomes contaminated with urine and faeces, these diseases are able to spread quickly and much further: When whole communities get sick with the same disease, the outbreak is known as an epidemic.



The links between
water, sewage
disposal, hygiene
& health are very
important!

People who have waterborne diseases usually suffer from diarrhoea. This means that they have 'runny tummies' (pass frequent watery stools). Sometimes they also vomit and have swollen stomachs that cramp. Diarrhoea causes the body to lose a lot of fluid (water and dissolved salts) in a short period of time. This leads to dehydration and makes a person feel weak and tired. **Dehydration** can and must be treated immediately or else it will lead to death, especially in babies and young children. Waterborne diseases can often be prevented through improved sewage disposal and hygiene practices.

Types of hygiene include:

- *Personal hygiene* - such as washing hands after using the toilet
- *Household hygiene* - such as keeping flies away from food
- *Community hygiene* - such as reporting overflowing sewers immediately
- *Environmental hygiene* - such as treating sewage before putting it back into the rivers.





WATERBORNE DISEASES

1. Ask the learners if they know of anyone who has become sick as a result of drinking or swimming in dirty (polluted) water. Discuss the examples given.

2. Ask learners to visit their local library or clinic to find out more about the following diseases and their symptoms:

- gastroenteritis
- typhoid
- polio
- dysentery
- cholera
- yellow jaundice



3. Ask learners to prepare the **rehydration** drink described below. This activity also provides an opportunity of finding different ways to measure 1 litre.

step 1

Boil 1 litre of water and let it cool.

Add 2 teaspoons of sugar...

and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt.

step 2

Stir well

step 3

Give the patient 1 teaspoon every half hour.

Take Note!
Before giving someone the rehydration drink, taste it! It should be no more salty than tears.

An easy **rehydration** treatment can be prepared at home and given to the sick person. The drink replaces water and salt and provides the body with sugar for energy. If available add half a cup of orange juice or a little mashed banana. This helps replace the potassium that the sick person has lost.

4. Using the Coliform Bacteria Water Test kit, which can be purchased from Share - Net or Umgeni Water (see Support Sheets), test a local stream, river or dam for *E. coli* bacteria. This is a very simple test that will indicate the level of faecal pollution in the water. Discuss the findings and ask the learners to decide whether the water is safe to use or to swim in.



PHOTOCOPY

activity



Hello Learners! I am a nurse from one of Durban's busy clinics.

Today we are going to learn about

Making Sensible Connections

for good health. First, study the facts and the actions below and then draw lines to join the facts and the actions that go together. Don't be surprised if each fact has more than one action! Discuss your choices in small groups.

its a fact

action



Germes can enter the body through the soles of the feet.

Always wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet - even if they don't feel dirty



The faeces of babies and small children are just as dangerous as the faeces of adults.

Keep your food and water covered at all times.

Avoid playing in places where people urinate and defecate on the ground.



Flies spread diseases.

Clean the yard of all dog faeces everyday.

Always wash your hands with soap and water after changing the nappy.



The shigella dysentery virus can live for up to 17 days on a toilet seat!

If you use a pit-latrine, always put the toilet lid down and close the toilet door when you have finished.

Clean toilets everyday.

If you trample on faeces, wash your feet with soap and water straight away.



Germes are so small that we can't even see them.

Help small children to learn to use the toilet.

Always put dirty nappies into a special nappy bucket.

Animal faeces contain many disease-causing bacteria



Never drink water straight from a river - even if it looks clean. Boil it first.



HYGIENE PLEDGES FOR HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

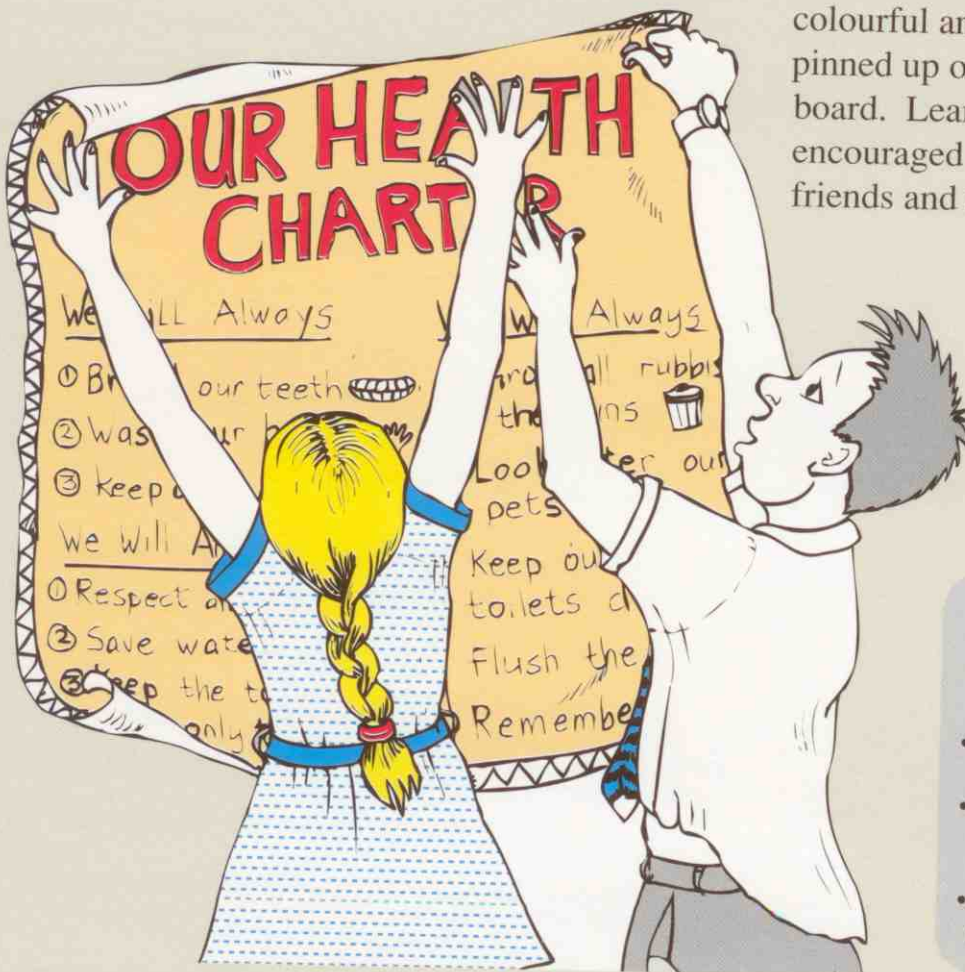
• Discuss with the class the concepts of health and **hygiene**.

• Ask the learners to draw up a:

- Personal Hygiene Charter
- Household Hygiene Charter
- School Hygiene Charter

It may be useful to have the learners first discuss their ideas in groups and to then share their ideas with the whole class.

The final charters can be written up as colourful and attractive posters and pinned up on the classroom notice board. Learners should also be encouraged to share their pledges with friends and family.



- Pin up your personal hygiene pledge in your bedroom.
- Pin up your household hygiene pledge in your kitchen.
- Pin up your school hygiene pledge in the school toilets.