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FINANCIAL SERVICES GROUP
UNDER OUR WING



NEWSLETTER

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Hands are a natural breeding ground for germs, in fact they are one of the principal carriers of disease-causing germs. Nearly **80% of infections are spread by hands**, so encouraging good hand hygiene behaviours is an effective way to stop germs spreading.

Our theme for this year's Global Handwashing Day is **"Clean hands for all"**



GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY

October 15 is Global Handwashing Day, a global advocacy day dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding about the importance of handwashing with soap as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases and save lives.

Global Handwashing Day is an opportunity to design, test, and replicate creative ways to encourage people to wash their hands with soap at critical times.

The COVID-19 pandemic provides a stark reminder that one of the most effective ways to stop the spread of a virus is also one of the simplest: hand hygiene, especially through **handwashing with soap**. To beat the virus today and ensure better health outcomes beyond the pandemic, handwashing with soap must be a priority now and in the future. This year's theme, **Hand Hygiene for All**, calls for all of society to achieve universal hand hygiene.

No matter your role, you can celebrate Global Handwashing Day!





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Handwashing with soap is easy.

Everyone can protect themselves, their families, and their communities through handwashing with soap. Though it requires few resources—soap and a small amount of water—the benefits are significant.

Handwashing with soap is effective.

When handwashing with soap is practiced regularly at key times, such as after using the toilet or before contact with food, it can dramatically reduce the risk of diarrhoea and pneumonia, which can cause serious illness and death. Handwashing with soap also helps prevent the spread of other infections, including Influenza, Ebola and Coronavirus.

Handwashing with soap is affordable.

A review conducted in 2017 analyzed proxy measures of handwashing behaviour in Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and Demographic & Health Surveys from 51 countries between 2010 and 2013 and found that the differences in soap availability were small or nonexistent in the countries, signifying that availability of soap is almost universal. Even though the world's poorest households are less likely to have access to soap, cost is not the principal barrier to handwashing with soap.

Most individuals around the world can afford multipurpose soap bars, or detergent to make soapy water. Many households that do have access to soap often use it for laundry, dishwashing or bathing, rather than handwashing. Investments in handwashing promotion are highly cost effective and can maximize the health benefits of other interventions—from access to clean water and sanitation infrastructure to nutrition promotion.



Handwashing with soap is an easy, effective, affordable do-it-yourself practice that prevents infections and saves lives.



5 REASONS YOU SHOULD MAKE A HABIT OF HAND WASHING

1. Do you know where others' hands have been?

Studies have shown that sixty per cent of all South Africans do not wash their hands with soap and water and that one in ten people do not wash their hands after using the toilet. It's easy to link unwashed hands and bacteria-laden surfaces like office desks and shared equipment.

2. Sharing is not caring

Dr Charles Gerba from the University of Arizona conducted a study in 2002 which concluded that the average desk harbours about 400 times more bacteria than the average toilet seat. Dr Gerba's study found that - on your desk at the office - the top 3 bacteria infested areas were telephones, followed by your desk then keyboard. Now consider how many times have you borrowed a pen, quickly used your colleague's telephone or lent your stapler to an office buddy. So even though sharing office equipment seems harmless, you are picking up bacteria from multiple sources, spreading them, and taking them home to your family.

3. Bacteria can make you ill

Contaminated hands can transfer germs to up to seven separate surfaces; including telephones, desks and keyboards, and these germs can live on a surface for up to 48 hours. This cross-contamination increases your risk of contracting illnesses such as respiratory infections, diarrhoea and Corona.

4. Handwashing saves lives

By washing your hands with soap and water for 30 seconds you are eliminating potentially harmful bacteria and preventing it from spreading. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that 5.9 million children under the age of 5 died in 2015. More than half of these deaths could have been prevented or treated if there was access to simple affordable interventions. Handwashing is one such intervention as it eliminates harmful bacteria.

5. Handwashing saves you money!

By washing your hands you are minimising cross-contamination in your home and office which means that you and your family are less likely to get sick. This means there are less costly trips to the doctor and the pharmacy. If you are an employer, promoting good handwashing habits in the office could also reduce absenteeism, which will keep your productivity constant and reduce work-days lost.



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