

Dear Educator,

No job is more important than caring for children, and part of that care is making sure that they are protected against serious vaccine-preventable diseases such as pertussis (also known as whooping cough), measles, and influenza (flu).

This free teaching kit is designed to help you inform and educate the parents, grandparents, and/or other caregivers of every child in your care about the key role they play in achieving this objective. It provides you with take-home handouts that raise awareness of the need for family members of all ages to keep their vaccinations up to date in order to help prevent these serious diseases.

We hope that you will share this program with other teachers at your center. The materials are copyrighted, but you may make copies as necessary to meet your needs.

Please let us know your opinion of this program by returning the enclosed reply card, or you can comment online at ymiclassroom.com/feedback-vyf. We depend on your feedback to continue providing free educational programs that make a real difference in students' lives.

Sincerely,



Dominic Kinsley, Ph.D.
Editor in Chief, Young Minds Inspired



Questions? Contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by e-mail at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.

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It's important to remember that vaccines aren't just for children. Tdap vaccine, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough, and flu vaccine can help prevent disease in both children and adults. These diseases are highly contagious and can cause serious illness. Infants are not recommended to begin vaccination against whooping cough until two months of age and against flu until six months of age, and they are at higher risk for these diseases until they receive all of the recommended doses.

For more information, talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist, and visit VaccinateYourFamily.org.

Audience

This program is designed for parents, grandparents, other family members, and caregivers of children through five years old.

Program Objectives

- To educate parents, grandparents, other family members, and caregivers about the importance of vaccinations in order to help keep themselves and their family members healthy.
- To motivate parents, grandparents, other family members, and caregivers to help keep their vaccinations up to date, especially Tdap and flu vaccinations.

Program Components

- This one-page teacher's guide
- Reproducible take-home letter for parents and other caregivers
- Reproducible take-home letter for grandparents
- Reproducible children's activity sheet
- Wall poster for your center
- Reply card, or you can comment online at ymiclassroom.com/feedback-vyf

How to Use This Program

1. Photocopy this teacher's guide and the reproducible components before putting the poster on display at your center.
2. Position the poster near the front door where it will be seen by parents and caregivers when they drop off and pick up their children. Keep the poster on display year-round.
3. Distribute the reproducible take-home letters to parents, grandparents, or other caregivers when they drop off or pick up their children. Note that although the letters are designed for parents and grandparents, they can be distributed to any caregiver.

Activity 1: Glitter Germs

This activity is a fun way to teach children that they need to wash their hands thoroughly, for at least 20 seconds, to get rid of germs.

Materials Needed: Glitter

Gather children together and talk about germs, those invisible critters that can make us sick. Explain that hand washing is one important way to protect ourselves from germs. Take the children through the steps: Wet the hands, add soap, wash the palms, scrub between the fingers, wash the back of the hands and fingers, the fingernails, and the wrists. Have the children practice without water. Then sprinkle some "germs"—glitter—on each child's hands. Have them try to wash the germs off with water alone, then with soap and water. Point out that soap and water work much better than water by itself!

Also show the children how the glitter that was on their hands has spread to the sink and other surfaces, to reinforce the idea of how easily germs can spread. Talk about other ways we stop the spread of germs such as covering our noses and mouths with a tissue or using the inside of our elbow when we cough or sneeze, keeping our hands, which may have germs on them, away from our noses and mouths, and wearing a mask (if the children are over 2 years old).

Activity 2: Happy and Healthy Hands

Use this art project activity to send the hand washing message home, along with a reminder for both adult family members and caregivers to visit the website at VaccinateYourFamily.org for more information on how to help keep young children safe from germs.

Materials Needed: Activity sheets, crayons or markers

Distribute the activity sheets and tell the children that they are going to make a special hand washing reminder to share with their family. (If possible, prepare a finished activity sheet so that the children can see what they are working to create.) Read the title of the sheet and teach the children the hand washing rhyme at the bottom of the sheet by reading it aloud. Then help the children trace their hands and color them. Display their hand-art at your center before sending it home.



Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We have been teaching the children about the importance of proper hand washing to help keep germs from making them sick. The children have learned that washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the best way to wash off the “glitter germs” that the teachers sprinkled onto their hands.

As a parent, you know that although hand washing helps to stop the spread of germs, vaccines are one of the best ways to help protect your child from serious diseases such as pertussis (also known as whooping cough), and influenza (flu). But did you know that it is also important for you and every member of your family, including grandparents, to keep your own vaccinations up to date?

Two vaccines that are particularly important to discuss with your healthcare provider are the Tdap and flu vaccines.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

Whooping cough is a very contagious and serious disease that can be deadly for babies. In recent years, there have been large outbreaks of whooping cough in the United States. There are between 15,000 and 40,000 cases and up to 20 deaths due to whooping cough each year in the U.S. And unfortunately, adults and adolescents often spread whooping cough to vulnerable infants and young children without even knowing they have the disease. In fact, when study researchers were able to identify how a baby got whooping cough, they determined that in most cases, someone in the baby’s household, including parents, siblings, grandparents, and caregivers, got the child sick.

Tdap Vaccine

The Tdap vaccine helps protect older children, teens, and adults against tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that all children receive a Tdap vaccine when they are 11-12 years old. Adults 19 years and older should get a Tdap vaccine once if they did not receive it when they were younger. If you are pregnant, it is very important to get a dose of Tdap during the third trimester of your pregnancy. The vaccine, recommended during every pregnancy, will help protect both you and your baby from whooping cough.

Influenza (Flu)

Flu can be serious, particularly for pregnant women, young children, older adults, and those with chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and asthma. Even healthy people can get a serious case of flu, leading to hospitalization or even death. During the 2019-2020 season, the flu killed tens of thousands of people, including over 190 children, here in the U.S.

Flu Vaccine

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for all members of your family 6 months of age and older. This includes adult family members such as grandparents, older brothers and sisters, close family friends, and babysitters. Remember, it’s important to get vaccinated against the flu **every year**. It usually takes about two weeks after getting the vaccine for protection to begin. If you are pregnant, getting vaccinated against the flu will help protect both you and your baby. You may hear that the flu vaccine doesn’t work and may think to yourself, “Why should I bother to get vaccinated?” The truth is that even though the flu vaccine varies in how well it works each season, it is still the best protection against flu and it can reduce your family’s risk of flu-related complications, hospitalizations, and even death.

VACCINATE YOUR FAMILY

We understand you may have questions about vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines that are being developed to prevent the new coronavirus. Visit **VaccinateYourFamily.org** to find answers and to learn about vaccines for your entire family. There you will also find links to the CDC’s recommended vaccination schedules, so you can make sure everyone in the family is up to date with their vaccinations.



Dear Grandparent,

Staying healthy and active is essential so that you can spend quality time with your grandchildren. This is especially important with a new grandchild or with one on the way. Vaccinations aren't just for children. Keeping everyone's vaccinations up to date is an important way to help keep you, your family, and your community healthy.

Here in the United States, vaccination is an important way to protect people of all ages from dangerous diseases. While many of these diseases are no longer as common as when you were growing up, they still exist in the U.S. and around the world (and can be brought into the U.S. by travelers). That is why it is important that all family members receive all of the recommended vaccines on time.

Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist about which vaccines are right for you, and encourage everyone in your family to do the same.

Did You Know?

- Diseases such as pertussis (also known as whooping cough) and flu can be dangerous for young children.
- Whooping cough is a very contagious and serious disease that can be deadly for babies. In recent years, there have been large outbreaks of whooping cough in the United States. There are between 15,000 and 40,000 cases and up to 20 deaths due to whooping cough each year in the U.S.
- Whooping cough may appear as a common cold in many teens and adults, and many people who are contagious with the illness may not even know they have it. In fact, when study researchers were able to identify how a baby got whooping cough, they determined that in most cases, someone in the baby's household, including parents, siblings, grandparents, and caregivers, got the child sick.

- One dose of Tdap, the vaccine that helps protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough), is recommended for all adults age 19 and older if they did not receive the vaccine when they were younger.
- To help protect newborns from whooping cough, pregnant women should get vaccinated during the third trimester of every pregnancy. In addition, anyone who is going to be around an infant or young child should make sure they have received their one-time dose of Tdap at least 2 weeks before coming in contact with the child.
- Flu can be serious particularly for pregnant women, young children, older adults, and those with chronic medical conditions. Even healthy people can get very sick from flu, leading to hospitalization or even death. During the 2019-2020 season, the flu killed tens of thousands of people, including over 190 children, here in the U.S.
- Everyone 6 months of age and older is recommended to get the flu vaccine **every year**.

We understand you may have questions about vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines that are being developed to prevent the new coronavirus. Visit **VaccinateYourFamily.org** to find answers and to learn about vaccines for your entire family.

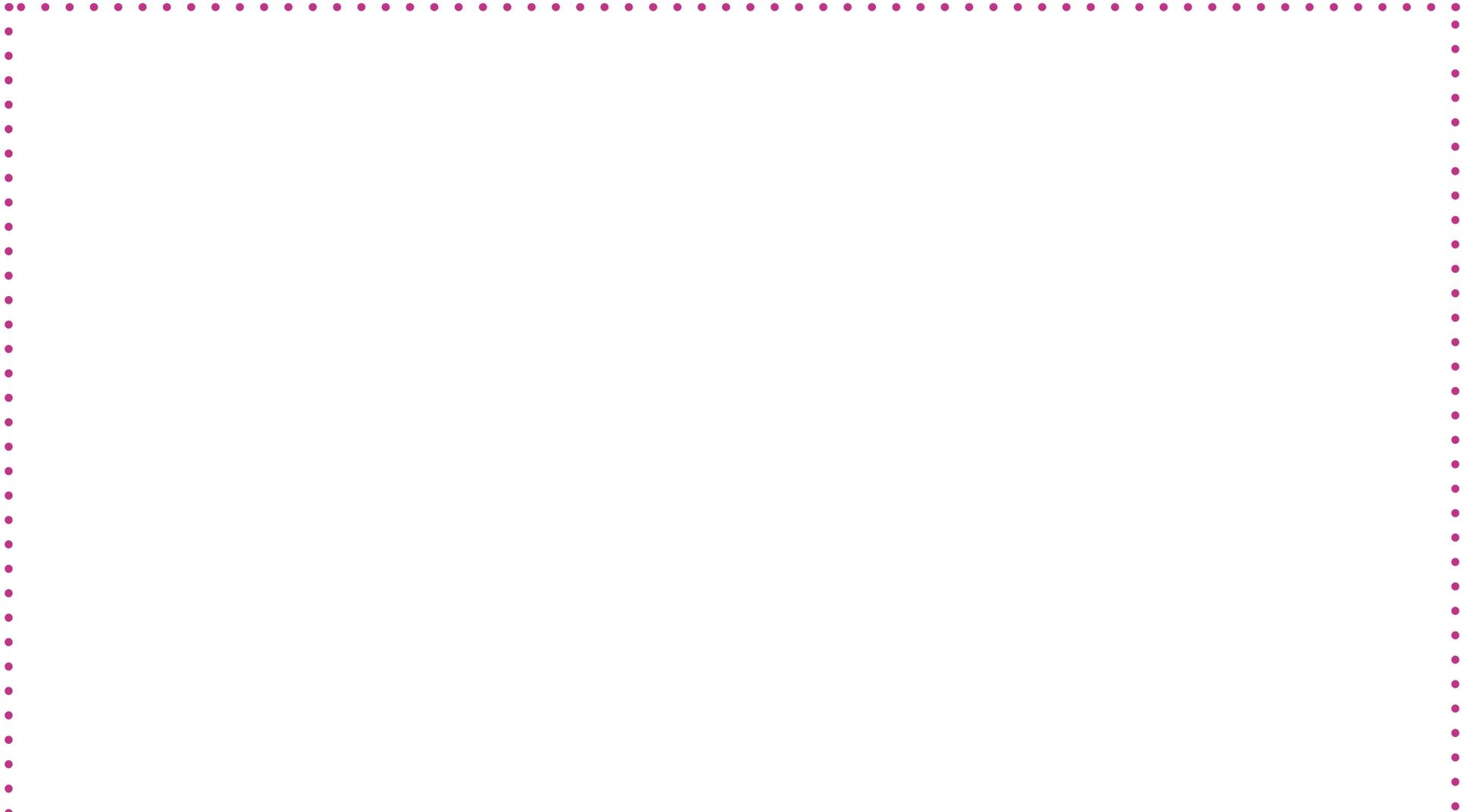


Happy and Healthy Hands



Reproducible Activity Sheet

Trace your hands and color them.



• Help me wash my hands each day so we can keep the germs away! •



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Learn more about how you can help your family stay healthy at [VaccinateYourFamily.org](https://www.vaccinateyourfamily.org).



Vaccines are one of the best ways to help keep infants and young children protected against serious vaccine-preventable diseases.



To help us keep your family healthy and strong...

Keep your own vaccinations up to date.

It is very important that adults, particularly older adults and those with chronic medical conditions, stay up to date on recommended vaccinations. Visit [VaccinateYourFamily.org](https://www.vaccinateyourfamily.org) to learn about the importance of vaccines at every age, and during pregnancy, and to find out which vaccines you may need.

Make sure *everyone* in your family is up to date with their vaccinations.

When all members of the family are vaccinated, including older children, parents, grandparents, and other caregivers, you help reduce the risk of serious and potentially life-threatening diseases like whooping cough and flu.

Follow these additional steps to help stop the spread of germs:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, and keep sick children at home.
- Wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet away from people who are not in your household, in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow when you sneeze or cough.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects regularly.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If you don't have soap and water, use hand sanitizer made with at least 60% alcohol.

Visit [VaccinateYourFamily.org](https://www.vaccinateyourfamily.org) for more information.