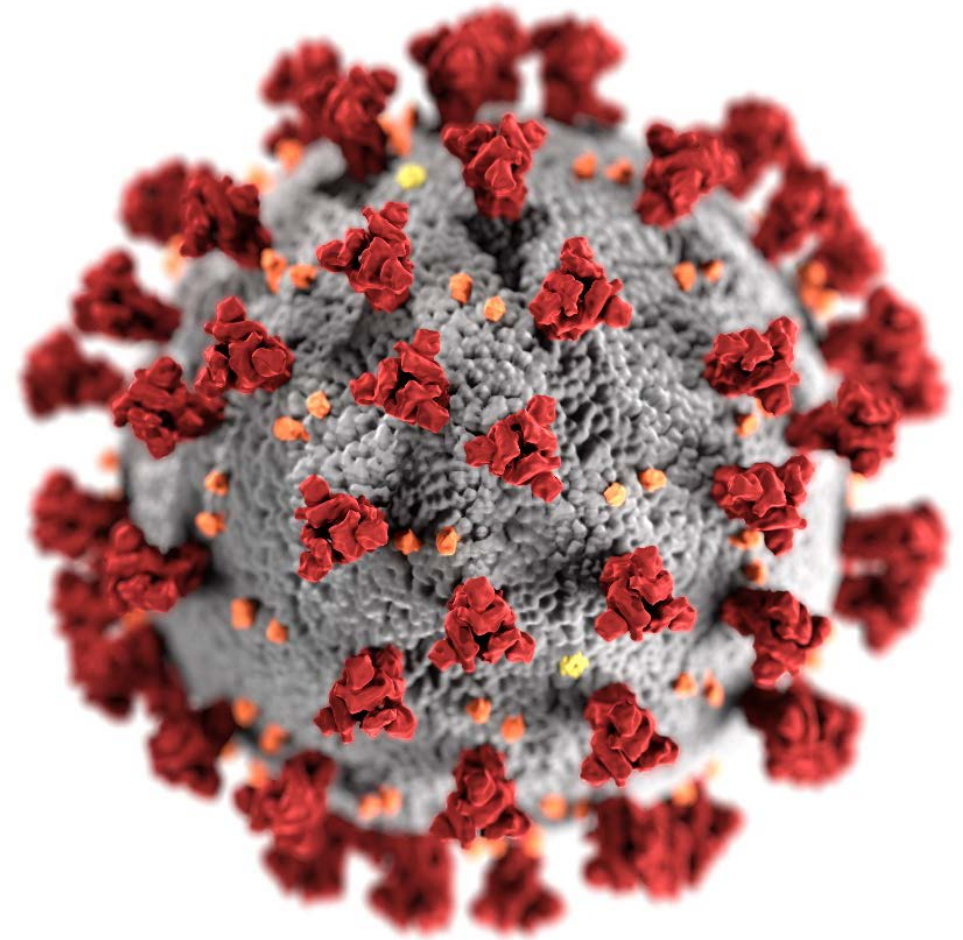


# The Continued Role of Hand Hygiene and Cleaning and Disinfection in Schools

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**American Cleaning Institute Webinar**  
**September 9, 2021**



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

# COVID-19 Spread



# How it spreads

- COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:
  - By breathing when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus
  - Having these small droplets and particles that contain virus land on the eyes, nose, or mouth, especially through splashes and sprays like a cough or sneeze
  - Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have the virus on them

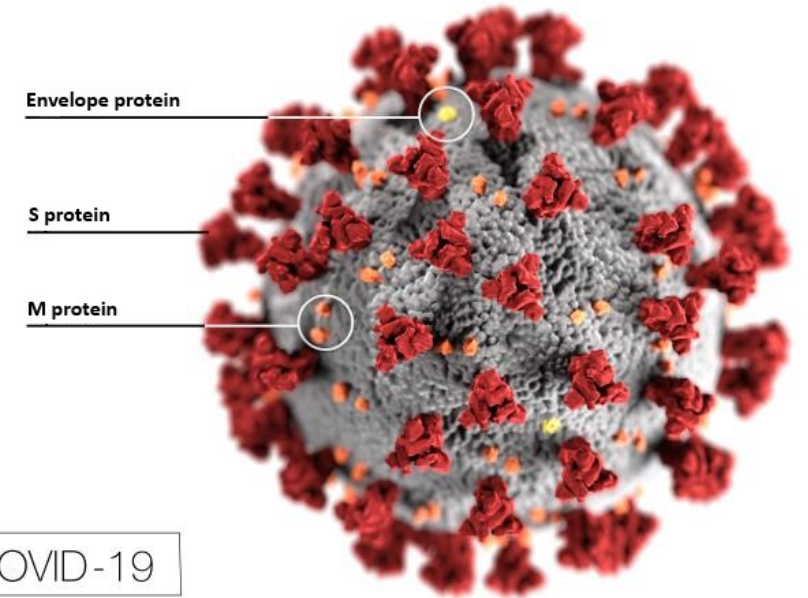


# The role of surfaces in transmission

- Direct contact and inhaling aerosols and droplets are more common ways for COVID-19 to spread than through surfaces.
- Respiratory viruses [e.g., coronavirus, influenza virus, and rhinovirus (colds)] have an outer layer (envelope) that can be damaged relatively easily in the environment, especially outdoors.
- Covering coughs and sneezes and cleaning hands are effective for preventing respiratory illness.



Getty Images



COVID-19



<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/science-and-research/surface-transmission.html>

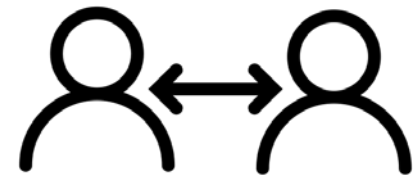
CDC/ Alissa Eckert, MSMI; Dan Higgins, MAMS

# Prevention



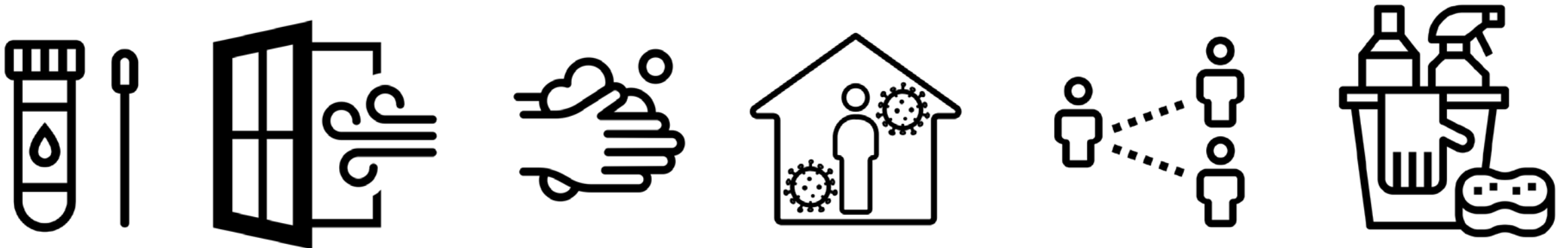
# Key prevention strategies in schools

- Promoting vaccination among people 12 years and older
- Universal, consistent and correct mask use indoors among all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of their vaccination status
- Maintaining at least 3 feet of physical distance between students in classrooms



# Additional layered prevention strategies in schools

- Screening testing to promptly identify cases, clusters, and outbreaks
- Improved ventilation
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Staying home when sick and getting tested
- Contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine
- Cleaning and disinfection



# Hand Hygiene





# 5 Steps of Handwashing



- **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
- **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

# Teach and Reinforce Hand Hygiene



- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
- To prevent the spread of germs during the COVID-19 pandemic, wash hands at key times:
  - Touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
  - Touching your mask
  - Entering and leaving a public place
  - Touching an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people

# Encouraging Handwashing and Maintaining Adequate Supplies

- Provide **opportunities** for students to wash hands.
- Ensure **adequate supplies** are available:
  - Soap and running water
  - Paper towels or air hand dryers
  - Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
  - Tissues
  - No-touch/foot pedal trash cans
  - Disposable masks for those who forget or if one gets dirty



# Reinforcing Preventive Messages

Post signs and share messages on how to:

- Slow the spread of germs
- Properly wash hands and use hand sanitizer
- Wearing and removing masks
- **Share materials digitally** by email and on school websites or social media.
- CDC offers **free communication resources** such as images, videos, PSAs, and print ready signs and fact sheets at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.html>



# Cleaning and Disinfection



# Cleaning versus disinfection

- Clean with surface cleaning products containing soap or detergent
  - To remove dirt and germs
- Disinfect with product registered with EPA's List N when needed
  - To kill germs
- Both cleaning and disinfection can reduce risk of surface transmission





# Risk of surface transmission is low

- Risk of infection from touching surfaces is low
- Can further reduce the low risk with:
  - Routine cleaning
  - Hand hygiene
- Disinfection after cleaning is recommended with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 24 hours



# General cleaning recommendations for schools



In most situations, cleaning surfaces using soap or detergent (and not disinfecting) is enough.



Mask wearing and practicing hand hygiene also reduce surface transmission.



# Cleaning and disinfecting in schools

- In most situations, **cleaning once a day is enough** to reduce any virus present
- If a facility has had a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, **clean AND disinfect** the space
- You may choose to either clean more frequently or disinfect (in addition to cleaning) in high-traffic areas or when certain conditions apply:
  - High transmission of COVID-19 in the community
  - Infrequent hand hygiene
  - People at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19



# Cleaning and disinfecting in schools

- Focus your cleaning (or disinfecting, if needed) on high-touch surfaces.
- Ensure cleaning staff are trained and have appropriate personal protective equipment for the products they are using.
- When disinfecting, use EPA List N disinfectants according to the directions on the product label.



# Recent Findings





# Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Needs Assessment



# PTA Needs Assessment Overview

- Web-based survey on implementing recommended hygiene-related activities
- Conducted in July and August 2020 with 2,614 adults affiliated with the National Parent Teacher Association
- Included close-ended and open-ended questions

# PTA Needs Assessment Results

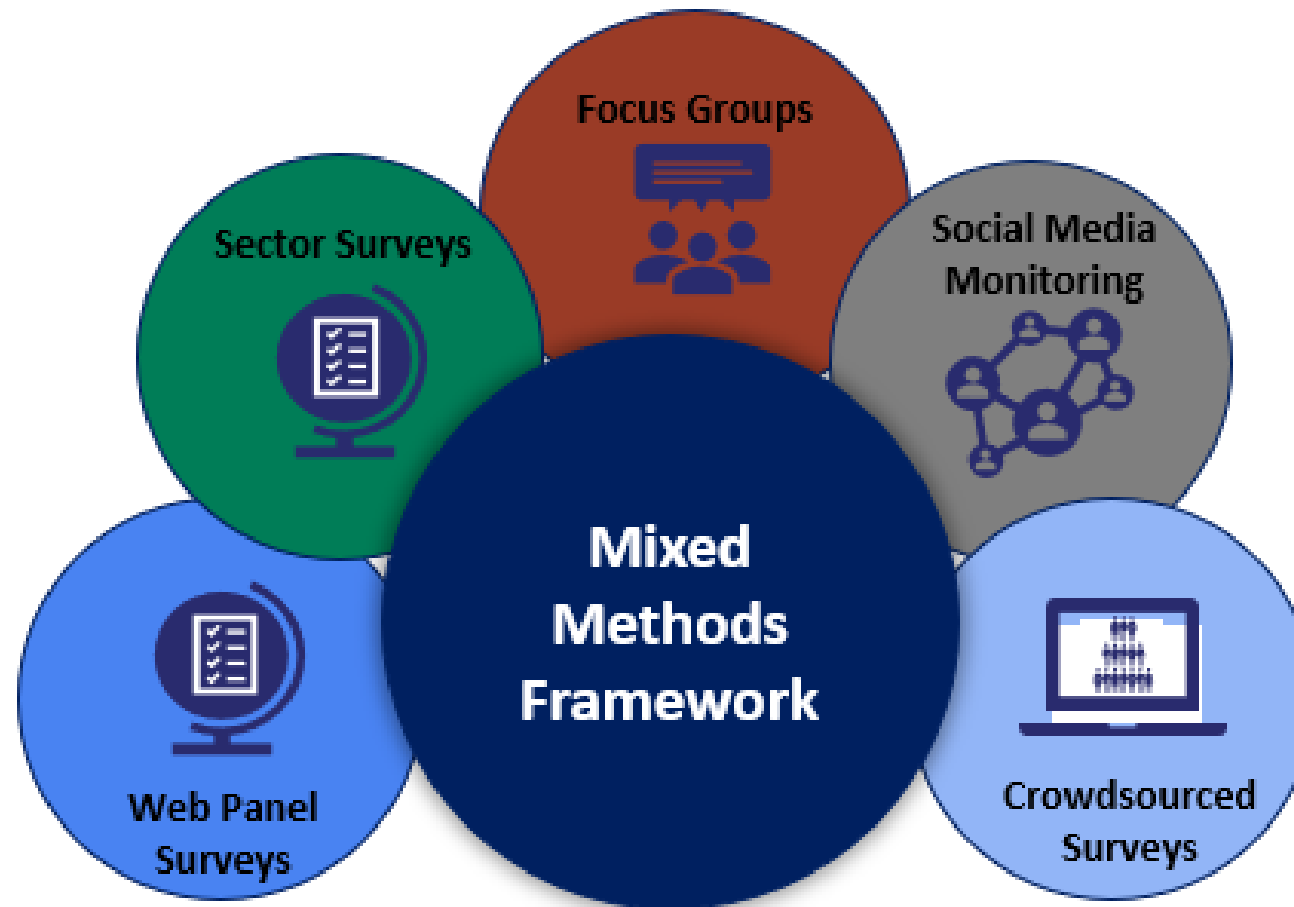
- Main barriers to **hand hygiene**:
  - Difficulties monitoring students and enforcing hand hygiene
  - Lack of time / scheduling difficulties
  - Lack of funding
  - Lack of training on how to teach hand hygiene
- Main barriers to **cleaning and disinfection**:
  - Staff capacity
  - Lack of time
  - Lack of funding
  - Perception that the activity was unnecessary



# **Rapid Monitoring and Evaluation of School Mitigation Measures**



# CDC Foundation Launches Project To Collect Near Real-Time Data On School Mitigation Strategies



Respondents include **teachers**, **school nurses**, **parents**, **students** and **administrators**



# Facilitators



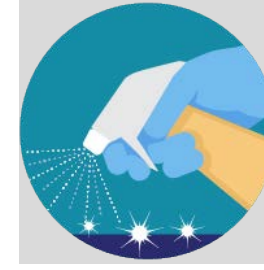
## Hand hygiene

- Availability of hand hygiene supplies located at key points
- Signs, public service announcements, and other print and verbal reminders
- Creative lessons to encourage proper hand hygiene among students
- Modeling by peers and teachers



## Respiratory Etiquette

- Formal education and verbal reminders helped teach students to cough or sneeze into their elbows or use a tissue
- Signs, PSAs, and other print and verbal reminders
- Modeling by peers and teachers



## Enhanced Cleaning

- Availability of cleaning and disinfection supplies

# Barriers



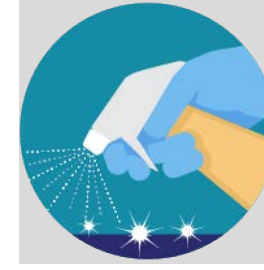
## Hand hygiene

- Staff oversight and involvement often needed to ensure students practice hand hygiene (some reported that this interfered with their ability to teach effectively)
- Transition times between classes too short to allow for hand hygiene
- Hand hygiene supplies inconveniently located



## Respiratory Etiquette

- Staff oversight and involvement often needed to ensure students practice respiratory etiquette
- More guidance needed for parents, teachers, and students



## Enhanced Cleaning

- Lack of time – teachers often expected to clean and disinfect their own classrooms



# Promoting Hygiene – Study Findings



# Addressing Study Findings

- Potential actions for **schools** and **early childhood education centers**:
  - Encouraging creative lesson plans to teach hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
  - Making sure hand hygiene supplies are located at key points
  - Using verbal and print reminders
  - Allowing for adequate time in schedule for hand hygiene
- **CDC activities** to address study findings
  - Using the findings to guide its communication, messaging, and further research on mitigation practices
  - Developing training modules and tools to help schools better integrate hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfection practices into daily activities
  - Sharing findings with stakeholders to identify ways to overcome barriers

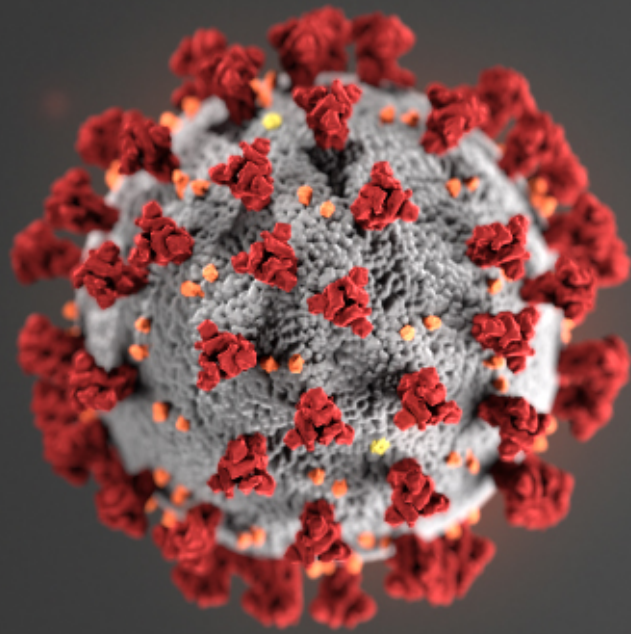
# Resources



# CDC Resources

- [Latest COVID-19 Information](#)
- [CDC's Handwashing Website](#)
- [Hand Hygiene at School](#)
- [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfecting at Home](#)
- [EPA's List N](#)
- [Free handwashing materials](#)
- [CDC Science Brief: SARS-CoV-2 and Surface \(Fomite\) Transmission for Indoor Community Environments](#)





For more information, contact CDC  
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

