

# Safety Tips

## Staying Healthy All Year Long



Everyone would love to stay healthy all year long, but this can present a challenge when you work with children and other adults. While maintaining a healthy lifestyle through rest, diet, exercise, and relaxation will go a long way to staying healthy, here are some additional tips that will help.

### Your Health is in Your Hands

- Up to 80 % of all infections are spread by the hands. So, keeping hands clean is one of the most important things you can do to keep from getting sick and from spreading germs to others.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control, hand washing is the single most effective way to stop the spread of germs and disease and stay healthy.
- When handwashing facilities are available, such as is the case in most Nassau BOCES locations, handwashing is preferred over using hand sanitizer, especially for children. Proper handwashing removes both dirt and germs from your hands. Hand sanitizers do not clean dirt off your hands; they can be toxic; and they often are flammable.
- If it is determined that it is necessary and appropriate for your job, hand sanitizer will be provided by Nassau BOCES, so do not bring hand sanitizer to work from home. If you work with students, remind parents not to send students to school with hand sanitizer. If a student comes to school with hand sanitizer, tell the student it is not allowed in school and to bring it home.
- Wash your hands often, especially when:
  - They are dirty;
  - After you cough, sneeze or blow your nose;

- Before you touch your eyes, nose or mouth;
- After you use the bathroom or assist someone else in using the bathroom (make sure students hands are washed, as well);
- Before you eat;
- Before, during, and after you prepare food;
- After handling animals or animal waste;
- After handling shared toys and other shared items in the school or office;
- After coming in from outdoors;
- When you or someone you are in close contact with is sick.

- For proper handwashing:
  - First wet your hands with warm water and apply soap. Water temperature is not critical for cleaning, but warm water will feel most comfortable;
  - Wash every part of your hands and fingers for 20 seconds (or sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice);
  - Rinse your hands well and dry with disposable paper towels;
  - Use paper towels to turn off the faucet and open the door.

### Respiratory Etiquette is More than Just Being Polite... These Manners Matter

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and put your used tissue in a waste basket; or cough or sneeze into your elbow or your upper sleeve, not your bare hands.

## More Tips for Helping Everyone Stay Healthy at Work

- Clean frequently touched common surfaces regularly, such as telephones, computer keyboards, doorknobs, etc.
- Do not use other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment. If you need to use a co-worker's phone, desk, or other equipment, clean it first.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick. Especially if you have flu-like illness. Symptoms of flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting. The CDC recommends that sick workers stay home if they are sick with flu-like illness until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
- While sick, limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Consider seasonal flu vaccination annually.

### What can you do in your school to prevent the spread of disease?

In addition to the tips above:

- Be a good role model by practicing good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette yourself and make it a fundamental part of everyday activities with students. Incorporate plenty of time into the day for students' hands to be washed as often as necessary. Provide students with easy access to tissues and wastebaskets. Teach students not to cough or sneeze on others and teach them not to share personal items like drinks and food.
- Keep an eye out for sick students and promptly send them to the school health office for further evaluation.

**To stay healthy all year long, always use good hand hygiene and good respiratory etiquette. By doing this, you will not only be protecting yourself, you will be helping everyone around you to stay healthy, as well.**

**DISCLAIMER:** This Safety Tips Sheet is being provided for educational purposes only and addresses common reasons for accidents. It is not intended to imply fault or negligence on the part of any employee. It is the law, policy, and intent of Nassau BOCES to provide a safe and healthful workplace. However, the basic responsibility for safety and health rests with all BOCES employees. The measures contained herein can help employees to ensure their safety.

Although the information and recommendations contained in this Safety Tips Sheet have been compiled from sources believed to be reliable, the Office of the Nassau BOCES Safety Coordinator makes no guarantee as to the correctness, sufficiency or completeness of such information or recommendations. Other or additional safety measures may be required under particular circumstances.

**For more information call the Safety Hotline 396-2400.**