

# Simplified handwashing steps help reduce sickness-related absenteeism for kids

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A simplified handwashing routine, with five steps instead of seven, helps to reduce sickness-related absenteeism for students with mild intellectual disability (MID), according to a study published in the September issue of the *American Journal of Infection Control*, the official publication of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC).

The study was conducted in two special education schools in Hong Kong. Researchers from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University developed a 12-week handwashing intervention which reduced the World Health Organization's seven-step handwashing technique to five steps by combining two of the steps (palm-to-palm and palm-to-palm with fingers interlaced) and omitting one (wrist-rubbing).

The researchers compared hand hygiene improvement measurements between the intervention (five-step method) and control (seven-step method) groups after the implementation of the simplified program using fluorescent stain test photos to analyze the results. The pre- to post-test difference in the intervention school (+1.03, P

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