

More than three million children under five years old will die from infectious diseases next year

November 3 2016

5 STEP PLAN

Global Hygiene Council

SMALL STEPS FOR BIG CHANGE

FOLLOW THESE 5 SMALL STEPS TO HELP REDUCE PREVENTABLE INFECTIONS IN CHILDREN

- 1** MINIMISE THE RISK OF ILLNESS BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN BABIES
2.7 MILLION NEW BORN DIE WITHIN THE FIRST MONTH OF LIFE¹
- 2** PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTIONS THROUGH IMPROVED HAND HYGIENE
A CHILD DIES EVERY MINUTE FROM DIARRHOEA²
- 3** MINIMISE THE RISK OF BACTERIA CONTAMINATED FOOD BEING CONSUMED
220 MILLION CHILDREN FALL ILL EVERY YEAR FROM FOODBORNE DIARRHOEAL DISEASES³
- 4** SURFACES AT HOME AND SCHOOL TO BE HYGIENICALLY CLEAN
COLD & FLU VIRUSES ON SURVIVE ON HAND SURFACES FOR UP TO 48 HOURS⁴
- 5** BREAK THE CHAIN OF TRANSMISSION TO STOP CHILDREN BECOMING UNWELL AND REDUCE THE NEED FOR ANTIBIOTICS
10 MILLION DEATHS A YEAR ARE PREDICTED BY 2050 DUE TO ANTIBIOTIC⁵ RESISTANCE

1. www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs178/en/ 2. World Health Organisation - Diarrhoea: Why children are still dying and what can be done. Available at: http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/documents/9789241598415/en/ 3. www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2015/foodborne-diseases/estimate/en/ 4. Boone, Stephanie, A. and Gebra, Charles P. Significance of Fomites in the Spread of Respiratory and Enteric Viral Disease, 2007 American Society for Microbiology 5. Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, O'Neill Commission, May 2016.

The Five Steps infographic. Credit: Global Hygiene Council

The "Small Steps for Big Change" report, commissioned by The Global

Hygiene Council (GHC) is published today, highlighting the alarming burden of preventable infectious diseases in children worldwide and calls for a simple 5-step plan to be implemented by families, communities and healthcare professions to improve everyday hygiene practices and stop children dying from preventable infections.

There has never been a greater focus on the health and wellbeing of children, yet every day, the health of the world's children is under attack from common [infectious diseases](#) which could be prevented through improved hygiene practices. According to Professor John Oxford, Emeritus Professor of Virology at the University of London and Chair of the GHC, "It is unacceptable that largely preventable infections such as diarrhoea are still one of the biggest killers of children globally."

The report states that more than 3 million children under the age of 5 years die from infectious diseases each year, almost a million children die from pneumonia each year,¹ and more than 700,000 children under the age of 5 years die as a result of diarrhoea. The report also demonstrates the current complacency regarding hygiene practices with over half of families (52%) not increasing surface disinfection at home during the cold and flu season and that 31% of reported foodborne outbreaks occur in private homes .

"Poor personal hygiene and home hygiene practices are widely recognised as the main causes of infection transmission for colds, influenza and diarrhoea," explains Professor Oxford. "Handwashing with soap has been shown to reduce diarrhoeal deaths by 50% and by developing this 5-step plan, we want to deliver a clear and consistent message about how small changes in hygiene practices could have a big impact on the health and wellbeing of children around the world."

The 5-step plan has been developed by GHC experts, spanning paediatricians, infectious disease specialists, and public health experts

from the UK, France, the USA, Nigeria, and South Africa. The 5-steps focus on making small changes such as improved hand hygiene and preventing the spread of infection causing germs in the home and wider community. The potential big changes that might result include halving the incidence of diarrhoea and reducing the incidence and burden of common infections such as, gastroenteritis, colds and influenza in babies and children.

Professor Oxford adds; "Families, communities and healthcare professionals need to acknowledge that improved hygiene is effectively a first line of defence and that adopting better [hygiene practices](#) could have a dramatic and positive impact on the lives of young [children](#) worldwide."

More information: To review the full "Small Steps for Big Change" report see: www.hygienecouncil.org/our-work/

Provided by Global Hygiene Council

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