Hygiene Behaviour Change & COVID-19

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Handwashing with Soap (HWWS)

Long tradition of handwashing promotion in public health
• Incorporated into many health campaigns
• May have materials and communication strategies ready

What this means for COVID-19:
• High “exposure” in the general population
• Need to adapt messages and targets and delivery
• Large body of knowledge to inform our strategies
Hygiene behaviours in previous outbreaks?

- Increased exposure and messaging
- Perceptions of risks change
- New norms emerge
- Preventive hygiene behaviours increase

https://psyarxiv.com/y38m9
What does experience tell us about changing hygiene behaviours?

A recent systematic review of hygiene and sanitation interventions

adapted from De Bruck et al. 2017

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<th>Adherence</th>
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Hygiene Promotion for COVID-19

Key moments

Traditional promotion
- Before food preparation
- Before eating or feeding a child
- After using the toilet
- After cleaning a child / changing diapers

For COVID-19
- After coughing or sneezing
- When entering or leaving the household or any other building
- After physical contact with individuals outside the home
- After touching high contact surfaces (door handles, rails, money)
- After visiting public spaces
- After caring for a sick individual
Hygiene Promotion for COVID-19

Target populations

Existing approaches for handwashing promotion focus on caregivers of young children
Determinants of HWWS

Broad range of determinants used to promote HWWS behaviour change

- Norms
- Knowledge
- Planning
- Emotions
- Senses
- Habits
- Reactions
- Competencies
- Cues
- Roles

- Access to soap and water
- Availability of a handwashing facility
- Perceived risk
- Social influence
- Social support
- Dirtiness of the environment
- Climate
- Culture and religion
- Institutional support

Some Key Principles of HWWS Promotion: *Adaptation is necessary*

- Hygiene promotions strategies should evolve over the course of the pandemic

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Disaster response cycle:
- Preparedness
- Mitigation
- Response
- Recovery
Some Key Principles of HWWS Promotion: *Grab and keep attention*

- Messages that surprise and engage more likely to be effective

Keep messages surprising and engaging
Some Key Principles of HWWS Promotion: No "one size fits all" approach

- Different population groups will have different constellation of determinants
- Tailor your messages and delivery to the population you are trying to reach

Define your target group(s) and appropriate touchpoints
Some Key Principles of HWWS Promotion:

*Make messages specific and actionable*

Specific and clear messages are more effective at changing behaviour.
Some Key Principles of HWWS Promotion: Create an enabling environment

- Households with access to a dedicated location for handwashing with both soap and water are more likely to HWWS.

- Infrastructure requirements outside of the home - new WHO guidelines on provision of infrastructure for HWWS at public spaces.

- Requires systems and processes for maintaining and ensuring supplies (soap and water) are regularly available.
Key Principles of HWWS Promotion: *Use cues, reminders and triggers*

- Make HWWS automatic, hard to ignore, and socially visible

Cues & reminders can be effective triggers for HWWS
Some Key Principles of HWWS Promotion

Make handwashing aspirational

- Nurture, disgust, affiliation (belonging to a group), and respect have been used to improve HWWS
Some Key Principles of HWWS Promotion:

*Build on new norms*

Make handwashing normative
• Peer-reviewed resource documents in multiple languages
• Real-time support in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic
• Share information about your own research projects and connect with other organizations
• Opportunities for sustained, dedicated support from global panel of technical and creative experts