

Let us teach our kids to wash their hands

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HEALTH experts say the washing of hands is one of the main tools in the fight to curb the spread of Covid 19.

Given this, the Department of Water and Sanitation has always been at the forefront through its annual Sanitation Campaign that encourages members of the public to wash their hands.

The campaign, which aims to raise awareness about the benefits of handwashing, coincides with Global Handwashing Day, observed globally on the October 15 every year.

With the coronavirus spreading like wildfire across the world, we need to take it upon ourselves to actively prevent this by regularly washing our hands.

The World Health Organization recommends 15 to 20 seconds of vigorous handwashing with soap and water in order to effectively kill and wash away viruses.

However, a health study conducted by Michigan State University states that men average just 7.07 seconds of handwashing and women 6.27 seconds.

Given the call by health professionals to improve good hygiene practice, parents need to also inculcate this practice in their little ones.

We need to start them young, especially as we are told that the pandemic is most possibly going to persist for a long time. Proper handwashing, when practised by mothers and birth attendants, can also reduce neonatal mortality rates by almost 40%. In addition, handwashing with soap as an automatic behaviour performed in homes, schools, and communities has proved to be the single most effective way to prevent diarrhoea and other hygiene related diseases .

Scaling up handwashing hygiene with soap is estimated to prevent the deaths of many children, as well as to substantially reduce the number of diarrhoea incidences. Washing our hands with soap presents us with the opportunity to have a real impact. To help save our lives and the lives of those around us, let us do what is right and teach our children to regularly wash their hands too.

MARCUS MONYAKENI | Communications specialist, Water and Sanitation, Free State Region