



INTERNET ARTICLE

Educating kids of the importance of handwashing for a healthy society

30 October 2019

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Mpumalanga Provincial Office in partnership with the Victor Khanye Local Municipality and the Department of Health engaged learners at Delpark Primary School in an awareness creation and educational celebration of Global Handwashing Day on 28 October 2019.

This is part of the Department's sanitation campaign which runs from October to November.

Global Handwashing Day is celebrated to remind people of the importance of washing and keeping our hands clean at all times. Handwashing is critical to prevent the spread of diseases and untimely deaths, especially in relation to diarrheal cases in children. Handwashing, especially with soap is critical to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

Hands are the most common highways to the transmissions and spread of bacteria and viruses that cause diseases, food-borne illness, diarrhoeal infections resulting in people being hospitalized for treatment and at worst death. Hands are the most common way of transporting and spreading germs, so it is crucial to wash our hands with soap at all critical times to prevent the spread of diseases and create a brighter future for all, especially our kids.

Ms Lominah Shongwe from the Department of Water and Sanitation outlined the background and the importance of Global Handwashing Day which is celebrated annually on 15 October. She also encouraged behavioural change to reduce the mortality rate.

Ms Dikeledi Mathe from the Department of Health then took the learners through the proper steps of effective handwashing and then called upon some kids to showcase the handwashing steps to their peers.

Refiloe Matsane, a grade one learners showcased the handwashing steps to her peers and stated "today I truly understand the value of handwashing and I will go home and teach my grandmother and parents of the correct handwashing steps and its importance in preventing diseases".





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As a water scarce country and currently experiencing water supply challenges as a result of the drought, an awareness campaign is not complete with reminding people of the importance of water conservation and wise water use at all times. Ms Nomthandazo Moloja from Victor Khanye Local Municipality water and sanitation unit outlined the importance of water conservation and shared water saving tips with the learners and educators.

It was a truly exciting and educational campaign as the learners also shared some interesting tips and committed themselves to be health and hygiene and water ambassadors starting at the school.

Themba Khoza



Department of Water and Sanitation South Africa



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