



MEDIA RELEASE

DIRTY HANDS COULD BE MAKING AUSSIE KIDS ILL

Half of mums unaware of optimum time for handwashing;

86% unconcerned about the toys that harbour germs

A survey out today¹ reveals that half of Australian mums are unaware of the optimum time that should be spent on handwashing, resulting in children not being taught proper handwashing techniques. The survey, conducted by [Lifebuoy](#), shows that whilst many mums are increasingly worried about germs impacting on health, over 50% do not realise that experts² recommend washing hands for a minimum 20 seconds to kill germs effectively. In fact, Lifebuoy found a staggering 77% of children are not washing their hands for long enough to achieve optimum protection.

Lifebuoy, the world's number one-selling, germ-killing cleanser, which launched in Australia this month, commissioned the survey of over 1,000 mums as part of a campaign to get Australian families to wash their hands properly. Experts agree that proper handwashing is one of the easiest and most effective ways of preventing illness.

"The hands are a common way to spread germs," says family doctor and medical broadcaster Dr. John D'Arcy. "It's also important to understand that germs are carried on every day household items, like a favourite toy. To remove them from our hands a good [anti-bacterial handwash](#) is great for the job to be done properly. Germs are more active in the winter so parents shouldn't underestimate how important it is for kids to wash and dry their hands properly."

¹ 1,024 mums with children aged under 18 surveyed by PureProfile, April 2010

² Food Safety Information Council tips on washing your hands

The Lifebuoy survey showed that the majority of mums see school as the place where children are most likely to pick up germs. However mums across the country seem to be unaware of germ threats which are found in the home, with a mere 3% perceiving their place of sanctuary as a high risk to children.

Furthermore, only 14% of those questioned encourage their kids to wash their hands after playing with toys, despite areas such as playrooms, nurseries and doctors' surgeries providing toys that are shared by many children every day, increasing the likelihood of transferring germs.

The results also show that, whilst almost all mums encourage their children to wash their hands after using the toilet, only 1 in 7 prioritise washing hands before eating, a habit which, when properly exercised, can dramatically decrease the risk of ingesting germs.

Dr. Myriam Sidibe, Lifebuoy Global Social Mission Manager, comments: "Millions of mothers across the world already use Lifebuoy to help prevent the spread of germs in their family and we wanted to offer the same protection to Australians. At Lifebuoy we know that kids won't spend long enough washing their hands so we've formulated Lifebuoy handwash to kill 99.9% of germs in just 10 seconds – there's nothing faster on the market! With over 1 million microbes reaching our hands every day, we're hoping to encourage kids to adopt a simple regime with anti-bacterial handwash to help give Aussie mums greater peace of mind."

Other results from the survey include:

- 4 in 10 mums are concerned their children do not wash their hands properly when away from their supervision.
- 80% of mums stated that, at times, their child uses only water to wash their hands, whilst 7 in 10 mums admitted to occasionally using only water themselves
- 90% of mums find it harder to encourage boys to wash their hands than girls.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors

The new Lifebuoy range is available in stores now and comes in four great-smelling variants in both 200ml pumps and 500ml refill packs. Lifebuoy hand sanitizer comes in a 190ml pump bottles and 55ml handypacks.

For more information, images or an interview request with Dr. John D'Arcy or Dr Myriam Sidibe please contact:

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