Clean Hands are Strong Hands!

Hands that look clean may have germs that cause diseases, like diarrhea, cough and cold. Hands can spread the germs easily by carrying them from one place to another. Hands carry germs from many places, like the toilet or the fields to your food, and into your mouth when you eat. One of the main source of germs is poop or excreta. Just one gram of poop can contain: 1 crore viruses, 10 lakh bacteria and 1,000 parasite cysts and eggs.

Yucky germs from poop are everywhere, but they are too small to be seen. Washing hands with soap makes the germs go away. So, when you wash your hands with soap, you make them clean — clean from germs. And these clean hands help you to not fall sick. They make you STRONG!

And remember, the best way to keep excreta and the yucky germs out is to always use a toilet.

You often wash your hands with water. But do you use soap?

Be sure you wash your hands regularly. But how? Washing hands with water alone is not enough. When you use soap for washing hands, the soap breaks down the grease and dirt on your hands. The soap makes the rubbing of hands easier and makes them smell nicer.

No matter what soap you use, they all work.

**The five easy steps of handwashing!**
*Remember, you need only one mug of water to wash your hands.*

1. Wet your hands with water and use soap.
2. Rub your palms together.
3. Rub your palms front and back, and in between your fingers.
4. Scrub your finger-tips and nails with your palm... do this for both hands.
5. Rinse your hands with water.

These steps make a very nice rhyme!

First of all you should wet your hands,
Then on your hands, the soap does a dance,
One hand then meets the other,
The hand then does a front-back number,
Then its time to play in between the fingers,
And make the nails move around in circles,
Then the water splashes on to your hands,
Because clean hands are strong hands.

When you MUST wash your hands:

- There are many times when you wash your hands throughout the day. But remember:
  - Always wash your hands with soap once you use the toilet and after you clean yourselves post defecation
  - Always wash your hands before you eat or touch food
  - Wash your hands after you blow your nose or sneeze
  - Wash your hands with soap after you touch cow dung or any animal excreta

What are we going to do on 15th October?

On 15th October 2008, all over the world, children like you will celebrate ‘Global Handwashing Day’ and show how they can wash their hands with soap. This is the day we promise to ourselves, and to our friends, and to our brothers and sisters, that we will keep our hands clean so that we can be STRONG.

On 15th October, we will all wash hands with soap before we eat our meal by following the five steps of handwashing. Show your skills on 15th October and be a part of the following activities together with your friends and teachers in school,

1. Join the Child Cabinet meeting and plan hygiene activities in your school for the whole year.
2. Clean your classroom and the school compound.
3. Wash your hands with soap following the five steps before the mid-day meal.
4. Take a pledge and promise to stop open defecation, and wash your hands with soap before eating and after defecation.
5. Participate in a march/procession in the village to tell people about handwashing with soap and the use of toilets.