

## **Avoid bringing germs home from school**

The bell rings. School is over for the day. Home come: coats, backpacks, textbooks, homework assignments . . . and lots of germs.

“Children don’t always practise good hygiene habits,” says Shannon Coombs, President of the Canadian Consumer Specialty Products Association (CCSPA). “They constantly touch their eyes, noses and mouths, forget to cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze, and they may not have the mindset or the opportunity to wash their hands frequently.”

CCSPA offers the following tips to help guard your family against germs:

- Keep your children at home when they are ill. The “Perfect Attendance Award” shouldn’t be earned at the expense of anyone’s health.
- Teach your children to wash their hands with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds, especially before eating lunch, after using the bathroom and after coming home from school.
- Remind your children to cover their noses and mouths with their sleeves instead of their hands when coughing or sneezing.
- Be sure your children’s flu vaccinations are up-to-date.
- Tuck small packs of tissues into backpacks, with an extra one for your children to store in their lockers or desks. Teach your children to deposit used tissues in the wastebasket.
- Pack hand wipes or a hand sanitizer in lunchboxes and book bags.

For more information about cleaning and health, or the CCSPA’s 15-second handwashing challenge, check out the CCSPA’s website at [www.healthycleaning101.org](http://www.healthycleaning101.org).