

Shoulder the Door!

Communicable diseases come in a lot of varieties: chicken pox, common cold, MSRA, measles, pink eye, tuberculosis...and the list goes on. Especially in a youth setting, these diseases can spread rapidly.

We often unknowingly sabotage our efforts to teach and practice good hygiene. Follow this scenario: you wash your hands in a public restroom, and then with your clean hands, push open the bathroom door which is loaded with germs. If disinfecting bathroom doors is not already part of your program, it is recommended that you include it. Another good idea is to "shoulder the door open" instead of touching it with your clean hands.

Let's take this a step further: do you wipe down computer keyboards, mice, or telephones with disinfectant? Particularly if shared with other people, office equipment makes an excellent transmitter for disease. Vehicle door handles and steering wheels fall into the same category. An easily accessible box of disposable hand wipes by a computer or in the vehicle might prevent or slow the transmission of many communicable diseases.

The American Camp Association (ACA) has a new online course based on findings from the Healthy Camp Study (funded by Markel Insurance Company), entitled *Reducing the Spread of Communicable Diseases in Camp: Why We Should Do It In Our Sleeves*. This course is available to both ACA and non-ACA camps and can be accessed at www.acacamps.org/einstitute/healthycamp.