Infection Control 101: Managing Illness, Outbreaks, and Hand Hygiene Stats and Facts

FACTS

- Hands are the primary vehicle for germ transmission in childcare.
- Children touch their faces an average of 15–20 times per hour.
- Shared toys and surfaces amplify exposure risk.
- Early symptom recognition reduces outbreak size.
- Consistent routines outperform reactive cleaning.

STATS

- U.S. CDC data shows handwashing can reduce gastrointestinal illness by up to 40%.
- CDC outbreak surveillance identifies childcare as a leading setting for norovirus outbreaks.
- The U.S. BLS reports higher illness-related absenteeism in education and care services than the national average.
- Public Health Agency of Canada links improved hand hygiene compliance to measurable reductions in childcare illness outbreaks.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that children in childcare settings experience significantly higher rates of respiratory and gastrointestinal infections than those cared for at home.
- Norovirus and influenza outbreaks frequently originate in group-care environments, causing thousands of reported cases annually in North America.