Activities of the School Health Club

Definition of the School Health Club

- This is a voluntary club for learning, participation and empowering children to be agents of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) behavior change, for the school community.

Purpose of the School Health Club

- To pass hygiene and sanitation messages to the school community;
- To monitor sanitation and hygiene practices of the school community;
- To be a role model for hygiene and sanitation behavior change for the school community;
- To supervise the cleanliness of WASH facilities and the school compound.

Monitoring of WASH Facilities

Members of the SHC monitors the status and cleanliness of the WASH facilities in the school with the help of a checklist. Together with their patron they then discuss how to further improve the WASH conditions in their school.

Mapping of WASH Facilities

SHC members map the WASH facilities in school to understand where they will access safe water for drinking, where to wash their hands and where the toilets are.
To do the mapping, the members of the SHC walk around the compound and visit all relevant facilities:-

- Water sources;
- Latrines;
- Hand washing facilities.

Afterwards they draw a map of all the facilities and display it to the rest of the pupils.

Environmental Walk

SHC members go for an environmental walk around the school compound and to the surrounding areas of the school. The topic of the environmental walk is choosen from the list below:

- To observe open defecation free (ODF) sites;
- To visit the water sources in and nearest to the school to assess safe and unsafe water for drinking;
- To collect waste in and around the school;
- To visit the food stalls in and around the school to assess if the food is hygienically prepared.

Hand Washing Exercise

Members of the SHC exercises proper hand washing with soap during their meetings or lead the other pupils in practising proper hand washing. This is done during and after classes or during assembly sessions.
In addition to proper hand washing, the same exercise should also be done with tooth brushing, toilet use or face washing.

Visits to the Community

Members of the SHC visit adjacent villages to pass hygiene messages to the community, namely the children who do not come to school. They can use dramas, songs, poems and practical demonstrations such as proper hand washing, collection of waste or to demonstrate the construction of a tippy-tap and how it is used.

School Garden

Members of the SHC start a school kitchen garden to grow vegetables that will be used for school kitchen or can be sold. To water the school garden, the members should harvest waste water from the hand washing facilities, for instance by installing a basin, or channelling water from school kitchen to their garden. In addition, the members can compost organic waste from the school kitchen to manure their garden.

Drawing Contest

Members of the SHC illustrates the most important hygiene messages such as:-

- Always use a toilet - stop open defecation!
- Always wash your hands with soap after using the toilet and before eating!
- Always drink safe water!

The drawings are then presented to all pupils and the best artist awarded in a small ceremony, preferably together with the parents. The drawings can also be displayed in the school and the winning drawing can be used for talking walls.

Photographic Documentation

Members of the SHC take pictures of the WASH facilities in regular intervals to document the changes in the conditions of the facilities. The pictures are then printed and presented to all children in the school and the best photographer awarded in a small ceremony, preferably together with the parents. With these pictures, the SHC can then discuss what actions are needed to further improve the facilities and show the change in condition to their fellow pupils.

Soap Workshop

SHC looks for someone in the community who knows how to make soap from local materials to come and teach it's members on how to prepare soap. The soap will be used for hand washing in the school. It can be used as a bar or liquid soap filled in a small plastic bottle with a hole in the top. Extra soap can also be sold to generate funds for other WASH items such as tissues or sanitary pads.

Songs and Dramas

Members of the SHC develop songs, dramas, poems or a quiz on H&S and present them to the other pupils before, during or after classes to sensitize them on good hygiene practises.
The songs, dramas and poems are also performed during:

- Celebrations of global WASH days: World Water Day 22/03, Menstrual Hygiene Day 28/05, Global Hand Washing Day 15/10, World Toilet Day 19/11;
- Parents' days;
- Interclass or interschool competitions;
- Visits to the adjacent villages.

Methods of Household Water Treatment

Members of the SHC learn different methods of household water treatment. Treatment depends on the level of contamination of source water and the circumstances. This include:

- Solar disinfection (SODIS);
- Water filtration;
- Chlorine solution treatment e.g. Waterguard;
- Disinfection through boiling.

Water Quality Testing

To know if water is safe, it should be tested. A simple test should be done is the H2S* method. The H2S method comes with little glass bottles containing a reddish powder. To test the water, fill the water sample in the bottle, gently shake it and keep the bottle at ambient temperature for 24-48 hours. If the water stays reddish, it is safe to drink. If it turns black, it is contaminated with faecal bacteria and unsafe to drink. To make the exercise more fun, take two samples at a time to compare, for example a sample of treated drinking water and a sample of untreated water from the river.
*) The H2S test kits can be purchased from a chemist.

Outreach to other children

Members of SHC uses child-to-child approach to link their learning with taking action to promote hygiene and sanitation to their siblings and their families at home. They uses practical demonstration e.g. latrine use and cleaning, proper handwashing, cleaning compound etc.

Construct Tippy-Taps

A tippy-tap is a simple and hygienic hand washing facility using local materials. Members of the SHC can learn how to construct it in school and afterwards teach their families.
Materials needed to build a tippy-tap:-

1. Two pieces of 2 metre forked sticks;
2. Two pieces of 1m straight sticks ;
3. One water container;
4. One nail;
5. One candle/matches;
6. Two strings.

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