

# Personal hygiene

## Learning together about personal hygiene

Welcome to the unit we call **Personal Hygiene**. This unit is part of our programme of learning called Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education. When we do our RSHP education we focus on the needs of each and every learner in the classroom. We want to develop their communication, cognitive, physical and self-help and independence skills.

The unit on *Personal Hygiene* is important because children and young people need to learn about body cleanliness and maintenance of personal appearance, so that we can work with them to promote independence and good physical and mental wellbeing. We do understand that some learners will always require adult support for some tasks.

It is important for learners that there is a close relationship between school (or college) and home when it comes to learning about personal hygiene. This will help make sure everyone works together to promote independence and wellbeing.

While we can plan some of this learning a lot of learning also happens in what people sometimes call 'teachable moments', so in situations where we can help our children to reflect on and understand the how and why of personal hygiene tasks – at times like getting up and getting ready, going to the toilet, or getting ready to go to bed.

With the right level of support and resources children and young people who take part in activities about personal hygiene will learn about aspects of body cleanliness and maintenance of personal appearance. This includes:

- Hand washing, bathing or showering (all parts of the body and hair).
- The practice of oral hygiene.
- The practice of wearing clean clothing, including underwear.
- Maintaining personal appearance: hair, nails.
- Maintaining hygienic practices when going to the toilet.
- They will also learn about which adults will help them to look after their personal hygiene.

Finally, something important for us adults to remember about the support we give for personal hygiene tasks. When a child or young person needs support for personal care, for washing, or going to the toilet, we need to be aware that we are entering their personal space. We need to do this with respect and make every effort to ask and wait for understanding or permission. At school or college, personal care and support should be provided by an adult the child or young person knows, and who knows them. The key question to ask when we support a personal hygiene task is whether this support is necessary and, when it is, to make sure the child or young person is treated with the dignity they deserve.

You will find the unit about personal hygiene here: <https://rshp.scot/complex-asn-draft/>