

ENP/Germ City success stories for 1st quarter FY2004

Becky has spent this quarter presenting Germ City to 3 of the schools in Benewah County. It has been a big hit. She partnered with the 4-H program assistant in Benewah County. Their first stop was Upriver Elementary in Fernwood where kindergarten through 8th grade were able to learn about proper hand washing. They then took the unit to Worley for 3 days at Lakeside Elementary, and then finally 5 days at Heyburn Elementary in St. Maries. At all the schools Becky was amazed by how much the kids already knew about germs and illness—even the younger children. At each class they would talk to the group about germs, where germs can be picked up, how they are spread, and what germs can do to our bodies. They would then get some volunteers to act out proper hand washing in front of the class. After this they were all ready to enter germ city. Around 25% of the kids did an excellent job, 50% did an ok job, and the other 25%— you couldn't even tell they had washed. However, when given the opportunity to try again they did much better, and they truly learned what it takes to wash their hands properly.

Tonya participated in a health fair in Lewis County where along with another Nutrition Advisor and Extension Educator they presented Germ City. It was quite a popular community event, even entire classes from the school walked over to attend the fair. Needless to say many more people in Lewis County are aware of how important handwashing is and how to properly do it.

After taking "Germ City" to Butte View Elementary I met a friend whose little girl was in kindergarten there. She recounted a funny story to me. The night after Abby had visited Germ City at school, her mother sent her to take a bath. She heard Abby singing the ABC song over and over again. She wondered what that was about and went to check on Abby in the bath. She discovered that Abby was singing the ABC song for each body part she washed! It's just my guess, but I think Abby got the Germ City message!

GERM CITY Success Stories January through March 2004

In October I finished the "Germ" lesson and Germ City. One of the teachers in New Meadows came up with a great art project to follow up on what I taught. I liked it so much I am sharing with my co-workers. The teacher felt like these art projects could hang on the wall as a reminder for the kids.

Because of the incidence of hair lice, fleas, colds, and poor hand washing skills Germ City is becoming popular in District II, and many principals and health professionals have requested it to come to their schools. We have been able to reach over 1,000 students and their teachers over the last two months. And we are not finished yet!

The town of Weiser just had its annual PTA/School Carnival, and we had Germ City set up and our 'magic lotion' ready for all those willing hands. What a turn out! This annual function draws people from a 50-mile radius. We had around 751 students and 800 adults go through the tent. Many also watched and listened from the outside. I was really surprised to have high school boys interested in having their hands clean. We had about 10 boys come back several times to see if they got the 'magic' lotion off their hands.

On March 1st we brought Germ City to Marsing Elementary School in Owyhee County. We taught the Kindergarten through 2nd grades the how, when, and why of washing hands. Before we began the counselor told me there was an outbreak of impetigo in the 2nd grade classes. We both agreed how timely it was to have Germ City during this particular time. A few weeks later I happened to see the counselor and asked about the impetigo cases. He explained that new instances had dramatically dropped. How nice to hear the Germ City made an impact and gave such quick results.

In March we did "Germ City" in Weiser. The response we received was amazing. The adults and children were many, and the questions asked were good. The comments I received from adults was very positive that we were in the school teaching this to the children.