Every day a child is absent from school, they miss out on opportunities to learn, grow and thrive. Now that we’re in the midst of cold and flu season, it’s time to be even more conscious of the germs that are prevalent in classrooms this time of year, and how to prevent their spread.

**Know the difference between cleaning and disinfecting.**
The flu virus can live on hard surfaces for 48 hours, and kids and touch and retouch more than 300 surfaces in just 30 minutes. It’s important to both clean and disinfect commonly-touched surfaces in the classroom each day, such as door knobs, desk tops and keyboards. According to the CDC, cleaning and disinfecting are part of a broad approach to preventing infectious diseases in schools. But what is the difference?

- **Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects.** Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

- **Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects.** Disinfecting works by using specialized products to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

**Remember to request Box Tops eligible Lysol® Disinfecting Wipes on your back-to-school lists for parents.**
Lysol® Disinfecting Wipes can be used to eliminate germs on commonly-touched hard surfaces in the classroom, and they are Box Tops eligible to earn money for your school!

**Encourage your students and their parents to take these four simple steps during flu season. These steps can help stop germs from spreading—and students from missing school due to illnesses like cold and flu.**

1. **Get a flu shot.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone six months and older. It’s the first and most important way to prevent flu.

2. **Help prevent the spread of germs.** Help students to protect themselves from contagious illnesses. Reinforce that students:
   - Cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when they cough or sneeze.
   - Wash their hands with soap and warm water.
   - Avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

3. **Stay home and rest when sick.** To stay healthy, it’s important for children to avoid contact with other students who are coughing or sneezing, and to stay home if they’re sick.

4. **Reinforce healthy habits at in the classroom.** As a teacher, you can help fight the spread of germs by diligently cleaning and disinfecting desk tops and frequently-touched surfaces, like light switches, tables, and faucet handles, with products such as Lysol® Disinfectant Spray to help prevent germs from spreading to other surfaces in the school.

---

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). How to Clean and Disinfect Schools to Help Slow the Spread of Flu, July 31, 2018

*All of the data in this document was sourced from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Learn more at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov). This document was published in collaboration with Lysol, Proud National Sponsor of the National Education Association. National Education Association does not endorse any commercial entity, product, or service. No endorsement of Lysol is implied.*