

Pen Pals:

A Hand Hygiene Activity

Purpose:

Assess hand-to-hand transmission of germs. Staff will discover how easily germs can spread. This activity is best suited for a staff meeting or training with a sign-in sheet.

Materials:

- GloGerm powder (or other bioluminescent product)
- UV/black lights
- Pens
- Sign-in sheet
- Hand wipes

Instructions:

1. Before the staff meeting or training, rub GloGerm powder on the pens that staff will use to sign-in. Ensure that the powder is rubbed in enough that it is not visible on the pen. Also, rub powder into the sign-in sheet.
2. When staff arrive, instruct them to sign-in using the pens.
3. At the end of the meeting or training, or at a point during, turn the lights off and use the UV/black lights to see where the “germs” went. Shine the UV/black lights not only on their hands, but also the table top, their clothing, and any belongings.
4. When the activity is over, have staff use hand wipes to remove the GloGerm powder from their hands.

Suggested Script:

This time we're lucky the “germs” are just bioluminescent product, but imagine if this were a multidrug-resistant organism. Touching the pen is like touching the IV pole or bedside table in a resident room. You can pick up germs on your hands or gloves and spread them to yourself, other residents, and other surfaces.