

Keeping Your Hands Clean and Dry

Although some people don't like using automatic hand dryers in restrooms, it may actually be argued that motion-sensing hand dryers are a practical alternative to paper towels. More and more businesses are investing in automatic hand dryers for their restrooms today. For one reason, they are more sanitary than paper towels. Secondly, they are actually cheaper than using paper towels. Lastly, automatic hand dryers keep the restrooms cleaner. I believe that our school would benefit from investing in automatic motion-sensing hand dryers in all the restrooms.

First of all, the automatic hand dryer is very sanitary. Instead of pulling on a lever that has been touched by a large number of students, users can just stick their hands under the air dryer. No germs can get on them because there is nothing to touch. Just think how the attendance rate would improve. Kids wouldn't get sick from the germ-infested paper towel dispensers we now use at our school. This would keep kids' hands germ-free.

In addition, if the school buys automatic hand dryers, we can save money that can be spent on more important things. I have noticed that there is a terrible waste of paper towels in the restrooms. Students continuously pull on the lever, dispensing towels that they do not really need. It is annoying to find the dispenser empty. Our custodian is called several times a day to bring in bundles of replacements, just because some kids are wasteful. All of these paper towels cost a lot of money. An automatic hand dryer costs approximately \$500, with very little additional cost over time. On the other hand, paper towels can cost \$25 a case, or about \$500 a year, since we use about 20 cases each year. After just one year, it would pay for itself. If we installed automatic hand dryers, we would not waste paper towels, and it would save the school a ton of money.

Finally, our bathroom is a paper towel mess! There are always piles of paper towels on the floor. Sometimes the extras fall from the dispenser unused. Many times kids bunch their used towel in into a ball and aim for a basket. But if they miss the target, the paper ball stays on the floor. Sometimes the towels are even tossed to the ceiling like spitballs. Paper towels leave so much litter in the restrooms that the restrooms are a mess - even before the end of the day!

Some people think that automatic hand dryers don't dry their hands as thoroughly as paper towels. People stand in front of the hand dryers for just a few seconds, and they are disappointed that their hands do not feel dry. However, studies have shown that when people dry their hands for at least 30 seconds, automatic dryers actually dry much better than paper towels. It is difficult to get every part of your hand dry using paper towels. The blast of air makes sure that your hands are completely dry ... if you take a few extra seconds.

Keeping kids healthy, saving money, and helping our school stay clean are strong reasons for installing automatic hand dryers. Every day that goes by without having them means that we are continuing to have problems in our restrooms because we are using paper towels. Let's install automatic hand dryers as soon as possible!

Why Not Air Dry?

Instead of paper towels, many public restrooms have installed hot-air hand dryers. I think our school would benefit by investing in automatic motion-sensing hand dryers.

First of all, this automatic hand dryer is very sanitary. Instead of pulling on a lever that has been touched by a large number of students, users can just stick their hands under the air dryer. No germs can get on them because there is nothing to touch. Just think how the attendance rate would improve. Kids wouldn't get sick from the germ-infested paper towel dispensers we now use at our school.

In addition, if we buy this automatic hand dryer, we can save the school budget and trees. I have noticed that there is a terrible waste of these paper towels. Students continuously pull on the level, dispensing towels that they do not really need. How annoying to find the dispenser empty. Our custodian is called several times a day to bring in bundles of replacements, just because some kids are wasteful.

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if they miss the target, the paper ball stays on the floor. Sometimes the towels are even tossed to ceiling like spitballs.

Saving money, keeping kids healthy, and our helping our school stay clean are good reasons for the hand dryers. Let's install them as soon as possible!

Yes, Late Homework Should Be Accepted

Don't you think everyone deserves a second chance? Yes, sometimes kids are late with homework. But kids are really busy after school, sometimes teachers give too much homework, and occasionally you just forget. That's why I am against the rule of teachers not accepting homework.

To begin, most kids have other things in their lives besides school. Sometimes kids go straight from school to sports practice, after that they eat dinner. Once dinner is finished, they go to yet another sports practice and get home at nine o'clock! After two sports practices, they are too tired to do their pile of math homework.

Besides this, some kids don't have time to finish their homework because their teachers give too much homework. You might start your homework in class, go home and work on it non-stop and not finish till eight o'clock. School isn't the only thing in our lives. We too want time to relax, talk with friends and be social.

Because of that many kids will not finish and have to turn it in late. If teachers were to not take homework late, then the kids grades would drop. Another reason to accept late work is that some kids just forget. I almost always get my homework in on time, but one day the sun was shining and everyone was outside but me. I decided to wait and instead go outside. But I ended up forgetting all about my homework!

Remember, people do deserve a second chance. You need to think about how students lives are busy. Don't take away a second chance for busy students. Keep the privilege to turn their work in late.

Parties Are Simply A Waste!

I have never understood the importance of parties in the classroom. As a mother of two school age children, I do believe that the public schools should no longer allow classroom parties during the school day.

Time is precious to the students in school today. Our school year is already too short. Teachers can barely get all the basics of the curriculum into the required instructional minutes of the day. Certainly, there is no time for the impractical or silly. School time is best spent focusing on the primary goal---learning.

And what about food? For health and safety reasons, schools often require that foods for these celebrations be purchased from a store. This is a real difficulty for many families. Cookies for 30 students, plus drinks and napkins can add up to what it costs a family to eat a meal at home. The cost of a classroom party is easily a problem for many people, particularly in these difficult economic times. And we all know that our children consume enough sugar and junk food without the school promoting such unhealthy choices.

All the waste that a party can create is overwhelming! I remember those birthday parties when I would just buy the disposable plates, cups, silverware and napkins so that I didn't need to do any clean up! But even squeezing and pushing, I barely managed to fit all the party time rubbish into the trashcan. Multiply this by an average school of 16 classrooms and over 400 students. Such unnecessary waste only adds to the problem of our ever-growing landfills.

I am not sure when our public schools decided that classroom parties needed to become a part of the school calendar, but I do not see the importance. Children are watching adults all hours of the day and looking up to these adults for guidance. Showing an interest in homework and volunteering in classrooms should be our PTA responsibility, not preparing for parties. Therefore, I do believe schools should ban classroom celebrations. Our tax dollars must be focused on the learning of our children.

Three Cheers For Audio Books!

A lot of people don't like audio books. The thought of enjoying a cup of cocoa, sitting and holding a new book in their hands is such a wonderful experience. As a life-long book worm I understand that. But, I've also heard people say audio books are "*not real reading*." I agree that audio books are not the same experience, but to suggest that they are *less valuable* annoys me. I believe audio books are a worthwhile and meaningful reading experience.

The main advantage with audio books is the gift of time. Audio books are the multi-tasker's dream. Often I am unable to take the time to sit down and read. Audio books make it possible to read while doing almost anything. While completing household chores, knitting, or exercising on the treadmill, I can listen to a good book. I can even 'read' with my eyes closed! No more straining my eyes, I can fit in a wonderful time of peace and enjoyment at any time of the day.

Hearing the words pour musically from a disc is just as thrilling as reading the text. Audio books offer the advantage of being able to experience the rhythm and the tempo of the language. I especially enjoy listening to poetry. When reading *Harry Potter* and *Because of Winn Dixie*, the dialogue fascinated me. I felt I was able to enjoy the proper pronunciation of an unfamiliar dialect, and this increased my understanding and pleasure.

Then there is the pure delight of being read to. One fond memory of our family vacations is listening to a book together as we traveled across the highway. We were all sobbing together at the end of *Where The Red Fern Grows*. My children are now young adults, but we all sigh with pleasure at the memory, and the book remains a family favorite. Listening to authors read their own books is another special experience. It feels like a conversation with a cherished, old friend.

Yes, the smell and feel of a new book will always capture me. But, I've grown to like audio books over the last few years. Both are enjoyable and valuable opportunities for adventure! Readers, I encourage you to try an audio book and please, never reject it as not 'real reading'!