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## media release

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# STUDENT HYGIENE DOWN THE TOILET AT QLD SCHOOLS

## FEAR STUDENT TOILET HABITS SPREADING SUPERBUGS TO FAMILY & YOUNGER SIBLINGS

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Australia's largest child care organization says basic hygiene practices learnt in early childhood are being flushed down the toilet at many primary and secondary schools, putting children's health and their younger siblings and family at risk.

Childcare Queensland believes that basic cleanliness and after toilet washing facilities such as soap are not being provided at all Queensland State schools exposing students, their younger siblings and family to superbugs, infection and serious health issues.

Childcare Queensland President Gwynn Bridge says that washing hands with soap is the best known way of destroying 'community acquired bugs' but not all Queensland State schools are providing the basics such as soap.

"These bugs such as MRSA (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus) or staph are serious business and are increasingly common in places like schools due to high use of antibiotics and high social interaction," Ms Bridge said.

"Not only have experts warned these bugs can cause infection, but they have also warned it can lead to serious health implications," she said.

"Childcare Queensland's fear is that the lack of good hygiene practice at schools will lead to school age students passing the bug on to a younger sibling who is at child care, and in turn, also infect our children.

"We have strict hygiene practices and policies that we instill into our children and we believe the school system should be continuing this same level of practice once the children reach school age."

The Australian National Health and Medical Research Council through its publication *Staying Healthy in Childcare* says the best defense against germs is careful hand washing with soap and water or using an alcohol based sanitizer if soap is not available.

Childcare Queensland centres operate to strict standards and follow Workplace Hygiene Procedures - Childcare 2003.

Childcare Queensland represents over 750 long day care centres, 175,000 parents and 100,000 children throughout Queensland.

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**FURTHER INFO:** Gwynn Bridge – Childcare Queensland President -  
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