

SOPE SUDS Spring, 2002



We are not simply building an organization. We are creating an electronic grassroots community of everyday people who together will have a great influence on children of all ages and on the health of this nation!

1,200 and counting...

Since The SOPE Project began in summer 2000, SOPE Project handwashing posters have been placed in more than 35,000 locations in all 50 states, in Argentina, Costa Rica, Japan and Spain. We couldn't have done that without the generous activity of our more than 1,200 volunteers who have spotted us in interstate rest areas! Many thanks to the volunteers who placed SOPE posters in public spaces. **You** are the links to healthier communities!!!

Community Infusion Model launched

Last fall we pilot-tested the Community Infusion Model (**CIM**) whereby we assist local agencies, led by school systems and health departments, in a collaboration to implement The SOPE Project throughout an entire community. The test was so successful that we are now launching **CIM** in four Tennessee counties, with others waiting in the wings. In each case, because we know that funding is always an obstacle, we assisted interested communities not only in implementing the Model but also in finding third-party funding sources. Boy, are we popular! If you would like to talk about bringing **CIM** to your community, email info@sope.net

Volunteer Extraordinaire!

A special thank you goes to board member Dr. Sharon Barkdoll for donating many hours implementing the **CIM** in communities through out TN. **We couldn't do this without her!**

Recent grants

BlueCross BlueShield TN Community Trust gave us a big boost in January. They awarded a grant to The SOPE Project that enabled us to invite counties throughout Tennessee to apply to implement the Community Infusion Model (**CIM**). As a result of that process, in addition to BCBST's support for two counties, we have managed to secure funding from St. Mary's Health System, Home Federal Bank, HealthSouth Knoxville, Sun Coke Company, Jim and Lindsay McDonough, Doug and Kay Overbey, Dr. Steven Kilpatrick, Ray Proffitt, Sr., Dan McGehee, and Creative Solutions of Michigan. We greatly **THANK** you all!

Keep those letters and emails coming...

A Monroe County (TN) school health coordinator wrote to tell us about her experience with The SOPE Project in 11 schools that had been made possible by a grant from Sweetwater Hospital Association. She said, "**The program was a great success.** The teachers state that students are washing their hands so much that they had to put a time limit on it! Everyone loved the colorful books and posters and the fun projects. The Spanish instructors...reported their 2nd year Spanish student's lesson plans went right along with their teachings. It seems that everyone in our system knows who SOPE is! We plan to continue using this program for many years to come."

And then there was the truck driver who insists that we have increased the use of soap consumption by truckers across the nation by 70%!! Yay SOPE! We LOVE feedback!

Did we change your behavior?

If everyone who washed their hands because of a SOPE Poster donated just one dollar we could print more posters and spread this word instead of germs! We are a tax deduction!

Epidemic! spreads

In last summer's SOPE SUDS we reported that our book *Germs on their fingers!/¡Gérmenes en tus Manos!* was included as a resource in the exhibit EPIDEMIC! at the San Diego Natural History Museum. Guest curator Chisun Chun was also a kindergartner Mom who wanted to introduce The SOPE Project into her child's school. We contacted the Children's Hospital of San Diego and, sure enough, they sponsored the Project in the six kindergarten classrooms in that school. If this story gives you an idea that you would like to discuss with us, please email us at info@sope.net and we will work together to reduce the spread of infectious disease!

County Extension Agents love SOPE!

We're delighted with the number of agents who are using SOPE materials - literally from Maine to Alabama to Oregon. The County Agent in Alabama who first spotted a SOPE poster and recommended that all Agents in the state participate in The SOPE Project wrote to say, "I just received an email from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Nutrition Education Program saying that all NEP agents, agent assistants and program assistants throughout the state of Alabama will be receiving several copies of your SOPE posters and the book *Germs on their fingers!* ... I would like to encourage other Extension educators who work either with adults or children to help spread the word that Handwashing is Hands Best Friend!"

And then there's Laurel...

This past January a school nurse supervisor from Tucson, Arizona, emailed The SOPE Project requesting information. The same day another school nurse from Tucson emailed. The next day it was clear that we had been discovered by hundreds of school nurses across the country! Then we found out how word had spread...someone had posted us on a school nurse list-serve! Yay! A school receptionist said, "I just bet it was Laurel. She is a real go-getter." And it was. In March we met with Laurel and the School Health Director and were thrilled with their enthusiasm for the SOPE posters, book, activity guide and other materials. They want these materials in all of the more than 100 schools in the Tucson Unified School District. Now we just have to find the money. Thanks, Laurel, for starting this ball rolling!

Write your own SOPE Opera!

In the early days of television, daytime dramas were written around the use of soap products thus becoming known as soap operas. We have heard so many wonderful stories about the use of our SOPE posters and now we want to hear yours! We were recently told about a young bilingual student who has gone from hiding his language of origin in order to fit in, to reading *Germs on their fingers!/¡Gérmenes en tus manos!* in Spanish to all of the school classrooms. How proud he is of his mother tongue thanks to his schools newly adopted pet, "SOPE"! Enclosed in this mailing you should find a sheet entitled "SOPE OPERA" with a space for you to tell us of your wonderful stories related to SOPE Posters. We can't wait to hear from you! **ARE WE BOTHERING YOU?** If you don't want to get this newsletter anymore, please let us know. Please tell friends about The SOPE Project: <http://www.sope.net> and Thank you for reading this newsletter to the end!

Edited by Wendy Wakefield Ferrin

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