

Why Parents Should Think Twice Before Giving Baby Birds to Young Children for Easter

[Announcer] This podcast is brought to you by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC - safer, healthier people.

[Kaya] Hi kids! Welcome to CDC Kidtastics Radio! I'm Kaya Kidtastic. Go get your parents, because today, we're going to do our first ever Kidtastics PSA or Parental Service Announcement.

You got them? Okay. Hey parents! When I got home from school today, my mom and I talked about baby birds, like chicks or ducklings, and a nasty germ called *Salmonella*. I want to tell you about it, so you can help your kids be safe and healthy this Easter. This is how it went....

[Kaya] Hi Mom! I'm home.

[Mom] Hi honey. How was school?

[Kaya] It was fine, Mom. I know what I want this year in my Easter basket!

[Mom] What?!?!

[Kaya] A baby bird ... maybe a chick or duck. They're sooooo cute and a bunch of my friends at school are getting them for Easter.

[Mom] Honey, I don't think that's such a good idea. Baby birds can make you very, very sick with something called *Salmonella*.

[Kaya] *Salmonella*!?!? What's that?

[Mom] *Salmonella* is a germ and it can give you diarrhea, a fever, a headache, or an upset stomach. You might even have to go the hospital.

[Kaya] Ewwww, I hate being sick!

[Mom] Everyone does. *Salmonella* is no fun.

[Kaya] How can something so cute and fuzzy make me so sick?

[Mom] Baby birds can carry around the germ *Salmonella*, but it doesn't make them sick, like it does you or me. You can't tell if a baby bird has *Salmonella* just by looking at it because germs are invisible. The germ can be on the bird *and* on anything the bird touches, like your toys, hands, or clothes.

[Kaya] If I'm around birds, like at school or my friend's house, what should I do to make sure I don't get sick?

[Mom] ALWAYS wash your hands right after touching the bird or anything the bird has touched or been around, like its cage or food and water dishes. Use lots of soap and water and rub your hands together for as long as it takes to sing the 'Happy Birthday' song twice. Also, don't ever kiss a bird or put it in or near your mouth.

[Mom] If you don't wash your hands, you might spread *Salmonella* germs to anything you touch, like food, toys, or clothes. Then, if your family or friends touch the same things, they could get sick. It's important to do a really good job cleaning everything the bird touches to keep the germs from spreading.

[Kaya] Wow, that sounds like a lot of work!

[Mom] It is. They may look cute, but they can make you really sick and it takes a lot of work to try and keep the germs from spreading. Do you see how a baby bird might not be such a good Easter present?

[Kaya] Yeah. I'm going to have my friends tell their parents about this.

[Mom] Tell them that if they touch a bird, they should wash their hands immediately. If your friends have brothers and sisters younger than five, tell them to make sure their brothers or sisters don't touch the bird at all. They could get even sicker than you or I can because they're so young!

[Kaya] Ok, mom! Thanks! You sure are smart!

[Mom] Thanks honey. I love you and just want to keep you safe and healthy.

[Kaya] Hey parents, The Kidtastics want you to help your kids be safer *and* healthier this Easter. The best Easter present you can give your kids is the gift of good health. Give them toy stuffed baby birds for Easter, instead of live baby birds. And, if they are around baby birds, teach them to stay healthy by washing their hands with soap and water and by cleaning anything the animal touches to keep from spreading *Salmonella*!

Thanks for listening to CDC Kidtastics Radio. We'll talk to you again soon. Until then, be a safer, healthier kid!!

[Announcer] For more health information, go to www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.