

Appendix C: Hand Hygiene Procedures



Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene is the single-most important way to prevent the spread of germs and infection in child care facilities and schools. Ongoing hand hygiene education, encouragement, and supervision are important to stop the spread of germs. Staff, children, and students must perform hand hygiene as often as is necessary to keep clean.

There are two methods of performing hand hygiene:

- handwashing with soap and warm running water
- using alcohol-based hand sanitizer

Handwashing with soap and water is the preferred method of hand hygiene. If soap and water are not available, or if there is not enough time to complete a handwashing procedure, alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used under the following conditions:

- young children must be supervised when using alcohol-based sanitizers
- alcohol-based sanitizers should be stored away from young children
- the alcohol strength should be at least 60 percent
- alcohol-based sanitizers should always be used as per manufacturer's instructions
- if used, rub hands together until they are completely dry
- do not put any amount of hand sanitizer into mouths
- do not rub eyes when hands are wet with hand sanitizer
- do not use hand sanitizer after diapering, toileting, or during food preparation, handling and service

Hand sanitizer is dangerous when ingested. Ingesting only a small amount of hand sanitizer can cause alcohol poisoning. If you suspect a child has ingested hand sanitizer, call Manitoba Poison Centre toll-free at 1-855-7POISON (776-4766) immediately. Do not wait for symptoms to develop.

Hand Hygiene Supplies

- Monitor all hand hygiene supplies (e.g., soap, single-use towels, paper towels, alcohol-based sanitizer) and areas (e.g., handwashing sinks) to ensure they are well stocked at all times.
- The use of paper towels for drying hands is preferred; however, single-use cloth towels may be used in a child care facility but must be laundered after each use.
- Hot-air hand dryers are not recommended. Hand dryers can release germs remaining on your hands into the air.
- Hand hygiene product dispensers can become contaminated with germs if they are reused without proper cleaning procedures in place. The following practices will help to prevent contamination:
 - It is preferred to dispense liquid hand soap and alcohol-based hand sanitizers from a disposable pump/squirt container rather than a reusable dispenser.
 - If reusable dispensers/containers are used, do not add product to a partially empty dispenser (topping up), as they can become contaminated.
 - If there is a decision to reuse, the dispensers/containers must be emptied, washed, and completely air-dried prior to refilling.

When to Perform Hand Hygiene

Children/students should perform hand hygiene

- upon arrival at the child care facility or school
- after using the toilet, after having a diaper change, and after blowing/wiping nose or coughing/sneezing
- immediately before and after eating meals and snacks
- after outdoor play
- before and after shared sensory play (e.g., water and sand tables)
- before and after caring for or playing with animals
- whenever hands are considered contaminated or visibly dirty
- before leaving the child care facility or school, or upon arrival at home

Staff should perform hand hygiene

- immediately upon arrival at the child care facility or school
- after using the toilet, after performing a diaper change, and after assisting a child/student with toileting or diapering
- immediately before preparing, handling, or serving food (including setting tables)
- before and after eating food
- after touching/wiping nose (a child's/student's or your own), handling dirty tissues, coughing, or sneezing
- before and after shared sensory play (e.g., water and sand tables)
- before applying sunscreen (to a child/student or themselves)
- after cleaning/sanitizing/disinfecting tasks
- after handling garbage, unclean equipment/work surfaces, or soiled laundry
- before and after using PPE (e.g., disposable gloves)
- after contact with blood or other body fluids (e.g., nose or mouth secretions)
- before and after treating a cut or wound
- before and after caring for a sick student/child
- before preparing, dispensing, or applying medication or ointment
- whenever hands are considered contaminated or visibly dirty, or after cleaning up a child/student or items considered contaminated (e.g., bathroom items)
- after coming in from outdoors
- before leaving the child care facility or school, or upon arrival at home

Hand Hygiene Posters

The following printable posters are free to be used in appropriate areas to promote hand hygiene.

- Adult Handwashing Procedure
- Child Handwashing Procedure
- Use of Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer

They are available at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/routine_practices/index.html.