

HYGIENE AND PERSONAL CARE

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

Standard 2.1: Each child's health is promoted.

Standard 2.2: Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children.

Standard 2.3: Each child is protected.

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

Standard 3.1 The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service

Education and Care Services National Regulations

77 Health, Hygiene and safe food practices

103 Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair

105 Furniture, materials and equipment

106 Laundry and hygiene facilities

109 Toilet and hygiene facilities

112 Nappy change facilities

PURPOSE To protect and promote the health of all children, Educators, staff and visitors to the service, while maintaining each person's rights and dignity.

POLICY Clear procedures are in place to ensure effective hygiene practices are implemented to protect the health and safety and dignity of all children, families, educators, staff and visitors.

PROCEDURE

Handwashing

A person who shows no signs of illness can spread infections. Hand washing is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of infection. Educating and encouraging children to wash their hands effectively will help to reduce the incidence of infectious diseases.

- Educators will role model effective hand washing procedures
- Educators will discuss with children the importance of hand-washing and include hygiene practices in the program
- Educators will supervise children's hand-washing
- Parents are encouraged to practice good hand-washing techniques at home to assist in children's learning
- Children and Educators alike will wash their hands before eating and or serving food

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- Educators are aware that wearing gloves does not replace the necessity of hand-washing
- Children, Educators and visitors should use hand-washing effectively to prevent the spread of infectious disease
- Ensure safe, well maintained age appropriate facilities are available for washing hands with soap and running water in the immediate vicinity of areas where children or staff use toilets, nappies are changed, food is stored, prepared or served, pets handled or kept, near areas of outdoor play or bath tubs
- Ensure effective drying of hands with individual towels, disposable paper towel or automatic hand-dryer
- Ensure children, visitors, staff and persons normally working or visiting the service, use liquid soap
- In situations where running water is not available, non-water cleansers or antiseptics such as alcohol based hand rub, gel or foam are adequate, and ensure children do not mouth or inhale fumes from wipe; washing with soap and running water should be done if possible
- Use disposable paper towels in preference to cloth towels. If cloth towels are used, only use once, then place in a laundry basket for washing, or each person or child has their own individual towel which is washed at the end of each day. When towels are hung to dry, they should not be in contact with each other; paper towels should be disposed of in a lined bin
- Use where practical a disposable paper towel to turn off taps. Taps, sinks and toilet flush handles should be cleaned at least once daily
- Ensure that staff with cuts, abrasions, dermatitis or open wounds on their hands cover with a water-resistant occlusive dressing, which should be changed each time it is soiled or wet
- Replace liquid soap bottles or re-fill them, and wash out the bottle and the dispenser between refills
- Children will be reminded to wash their hands at the appropriate times by Educators such as after going to the toilet, before eating, after handling animals, after messy and outdoor play etc.
- Songs may be used to help children to remember the procedure and to make it a fun part of the routine
- Display a waterproofed poster for hand-washing instructions above all hand washing basins. Translate them into the relevant community languages or display visual charts of the correct hand-washing procedure if needed for families, visitors and volunteer workers to the service.

Staff must remember that children learn by watching and then copy what they see adults doing. Therefore, staff must model appropriate hand washing practices. When children are observed to be not washing their hands or are not washing them correctly, staff will:

- Remind them to wash their hands
- Show them how to wash their hands effectively, if they do not know how or have forgotten
- Remind them that washing their hands will stop the spread of germs that cause sickness

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Ensure children, visitors and persons normally working at the centre wash hands using the following method;

Hand Washing Method

- Wet hands with running water
- Use liquid soap and spread over hands, rubbing vigorously all over. Pay particular attention to wash the palms and backs of hands, in between fingers, under nails and around wrists. (Hands should be rubbed together for at least 15 seconds)
- Rinse hands thoroughly to remove all suds and germs
- Turn off tap with a piece of paper towel (if practical)
- Pat dry hands with a fresh disposable paper towel/ or individual hand towel

Children, Educators, visitors, and persons normally working at the service, must wash hands:

- Before and after eating or handling food
- Before preparing or cooking food
- After changing a nappy, or checking a nappy to see if it is soiled
- After removing gloves
- After going to the toilet
- After cleaning up or any contact with urine, faeces, vomit, blood or other body fluids
- After handling garbage
- After wiping nose or contact with nasal or salivary secretions
- Before and after giving a child medication
- After playing outside or in a sandpit or wading pool
- After patting or touching animals or pets

Children, Educators, visitors, and persons normally working at the service, are encouraged to wash hands:

- On arrival at the children's service (parents can help with this)
- Before leaving the children's service

Nappy change

Nappy Change and Toileting transpires at designated routine times and when meeting children's individual needs.

Educators will collaborate with parents to develop consistency with their child's nappy change and toileting practices. Educators must be responsive to special requirements related to culture, religion or privacy needs.

Having their needs met quickly and in a caring responsive way builds children's sense of trust and security. Children also benefit from having the pleasant sensory experience of being free of a nappy and the comfort of having a fresh, dry nappy.

It is important to remember that the way Early Childhood Educators react to soiled or wet nappies, toileting needs and accidents give children powerful messages about themselves and their bodies. All responses should be positive or conducted in a routine manner without negative or disparaging comments.

Meeting children's physical needs, nappy changing and toileting are an imperative time for Educators to:

- Engage in one to one interactions with children, and to give them your full attention;
- Build trusting and caring relationships with children;
- Interact with children using verbal and non-verbal communication, and respond to children's communication;
- Participate in age appropriate activities with children, such as singing, saying rhymes and doing finger plays;
- Build children's understanding their bodily functions and of what is happening by inviting them to the bathroom, supporting their capability to predict what will happen next in the routine.
- Help children begin to develop and extend their self-help skills, which includes handwashing and dressing, and encouraging children to identify the feeling of accomplishment and gratification that come with this.

Only Educators / assistants and staff will carry out nappy changing, Should a parent be in the bathroom helping their child a staff member must accompany any other children needing to use the bathroom at the same time.

Appropriate hygiene practices must be maintained and procedures followed to minimise any risk of infection at all times. Educators will continuously promote healthy hygiene practices and hand washing procedures; encouraging the children to follow these practices.

Educators will ensure;

- Adequate and appropriate hygienic facilities for nappy changing;
- nappy change facilities are designed and located in a way that prevents unsupervised access by children;
- that adult & children's hand washing facilities are located within the nappy change area;

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- that the nappy change facilities are designed and maintained in a way that facilitates supervision of children at all times, having regard to the need to maintain the rights and dignity of the children.
- nappy change bins have a 'hands-free' lid.
- nappy bins are located out of children's reach ie in a child proof cupboard where possible.
- that soiled clothing and soiled nappies are disposed of or stored in a location children cannot access.
- children's nappies are changed at scheduled intervals.
- nappies are regularly checked throughout the day to ensure children are not susceptible to nappy rash and discomfort.
- nappy change and hand washing procedures are displayed visually and in community languages as appropriate in the nappy change area.
- nappy bins are emptied at least once during the day and at the end of each day. This may need to be done more regularly if there are soiled nappies.
- they discuss children's individual needs professionally with families to ensure practices are reflective of their home environment and are culturally sensitive;
- they provide information to families regarding children's nappy change outlines;
- Utilise nappy change times to interact with children on an individual basis. The nappy change time will allow educators to converse, sing, play and generally interact with the child. This time allows educators and children to learn more about each other and understand each child's personality and personal strengths;
- Organise the nappy change area to promote positive interactions and promote positive learning experiences, e.g. place pictures or mobiles to stimulate children's interactions and to encourage learning.
- Ensure physical contact and direct supervision with children throughout the nappy change experience
- Ensure no child is left alone on a nappy change mat or bench
- Keep nappy change areas fully stocked with all required materials at all times.
- Nappy Change and Toileting supplies are readily accessible to staff to ensure efficiency and the health and safety of each child.
- They encourage mobile children to walk to the nappy change area.

Toilet Training

Toileting occurs at any time of the day and is specific to individual needs. Educators will communicate with parents/guardians to develop consistency with their child's toileting habits. Educators must be aware of and consider any special requirements related to culture, religion or privacy needs.

Decisions about when to begin toilet training will be made by families, or may occur through shared decision making between families and early childhood professionals. This decision is based on mutual respect and open communication, which is crucial for a good outcome. Families may have strong views and preferences about when and how their child learns to use the toilet, which may come from their cultural background or individual preferences which must be respected by Educators and Staff.

The priority of the individual child's wellbeing is paramount, and the decision to begin assisting the child to learn to use the toilet should be based on signs of readiness from the child and discussion with families. Consideration should also be given to the current weather and the effect this may have on a child's successful transition to toileting.

Early signs of readiness, will often start to appear when children are around 18-24 months old and may include:

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- Showing interest in the toilet, including having an interest in others using the toilet;
- Indicating a need to go to the toilet either before, or while they are doing it; and
- Staying dryer for longer.
- Talking to children about using the toilet, letting them pull their pants down and up again (the latter is more difficult) and letting them sit on the toilet

It is important to keep the process subdued and calling unnecessary attention and pressure on the child to prosper. Acknowledging children's successes, no matter how infrequent or small is vital for their self-esteem and confidence. Families and Educators can expect accidents, which should be treated respectfully and with a supportive manner.

Educators and families will collaborate and communicate how the toilet learning is going, both in care and at home. This will support children to become more familiar and comfortable with the toilet training process. Children should be given the opportunity to complete the toileting procedure, such as toileting, washing hands, flushing the toilet, keeping the bathroom environment clean independently, while at the same time keeping in mind the importance of hygiene and providing assistance when needed. The child's privacy and dignity must be maintained at all times.

During this milestone, children should be empowered and encouraged to be successful. Toilet training varies for individual children, as Educators we can take advantage of the child being in a group and the many opportunities that provides for learning from each other. Educators and Families need to remember that comparing children is inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour.

Toilet and potty use

During this transition, some children / families may prefer the use of a potty prior to using the big toilet. If this is the case, it is important that the potty is used only in a suitable area of the care environment ie the bathroom where privacy, dignity and hygiene are maintained.

Toilet and potty cleaning

Potty- this must be done after each use: empty contents into the toilet and clean the potty with suitable cleaning product/ method.

Toilet seat inserts / toilets and handwashing facilities – wipe over using chosen cleaning product/ method daily, or more frequently as required.

Bathing and showering

There may come a time when a child in care, may require to be bathed or showered. This may include overnight care, illness, hygiene and the comfort of the child.

- The personal rights and dignity of the child must be maintained at all times. No child should bath or shower with another child or adult.
- Water must be discarded and bath tub cleaned after single use
- Only the registered educator, assistant or staff are permitted to assist the child.
- Liquid soap or body wash to be used.
- Individual wash cloths and towels to be used for each child
- Permission for bathing and showering will be obtained from family at enrolment

Body Fluids

Any open sore must be covered with a dressing

In the instance of spills of body fluids (urine, blood, vomit and faeces), educator adopts the following procedures:

- ensure children do not have access to spills
- wash any blood urine or faeces off the skin and wash with warm water and soap
- put on disposable gloves and clean up any spilt blood, faeces, vomit or urine by first removing the bulk of the spill with paper towels
- clean the surface with suitable cleaning product
- dispose of gloves and any other disposable cleaning materials in a secured plastic bag and wash hands thoroughly

Nose wiping

- disposable gloves can be worn if necessary
- individual disposable tissues to be used to wipe each child's nose and face
- tissues and any used gloves will be disposed of immediately after wiping a child's nose
- children should be encouraged to wipe their own noses , dispose of their tissues and wash their hands
- clean both adult and child's hands after nose wiping with either running water, moist towelette or non-water cleanser if hands are not visibly soiled

Application of Sunscreen

- Be aware of infection control practices when applying sunscreen
- If required it is recommended that children's noses be wiped before applying sunscreen
- When applying sunscreen to children, adults must follow one of the following procedures:
 - 1) Wash hands between each child's application
 - 2) Change gloves between each child
 - 3) Use a disposable cotton wool ball or equivalent to apply each child's sunscreen
- Children over the age of 3 years are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen – educator to check application and reapply if necessary.
- Please refer to 'Sun Safety' policy for more information

Cleaning

Cleaning products and procedures;

- It is recommended that non-toxic cleaning products are used in the care environment
- any use of hot water, steam cleaners and toxic chemicals in an educator's environment should take place outside of children's care hours
- educators should choose an appropriate cleaning product or method that is suitable for their environment and the needs of themselves and the children- for example steam cleaners, enj cloths, vinegar, warm soapy water, commercially purchased products etc
- cleaning products used and procedures followed must be documented by the educators in the appropriate section of the 'Educator Compliance Folder'
- it is recommended that educators and staff source MSDS 'Material Safety Data Sheets' for each chemical product used in the care environment.
- If washable cloths are used, it is recommended to have a colour coded system to guard against cross contamination. These should be laundered daily. Alternately single use paper towel can be used.

Recommended cleaning schedule;

- Bathrooms-clean daily, including toilets and basins, bins emptied, floor swept and mopped (may be required more frequently)
- Care environment floors – swept / vacuumed daily and mopped weekly or as required
- Tables, benches ,food prep surfaces and high chairs – cleaned after each meal/ use, including craft activities
- General waste bins to be emptied daily- these should be lined and be fitted with a lid to discourage unnecessary access
- children's dress-up clothes and hats- laundered after use
- Toys and equipment cleaned weekly after use (some toys may need more frequent cleaning is mouthed etc)
- Bedding provided by educator to be laundered between use by different children or weekly where used by one child. If being reused by the same child, bedding must be stored to prevent contact with clean linen or linen used by another child
- Soft furnishings ie cushions, sofa covers etc to be cleaned weekly
- Paths, pavers and cement areas swept weekly, or more frequently if a safety hazard is identified (ie sand)
- All bins to be sanitised weekly
- Lawns to be mowed weekly or as required
- All outdoor toys and equipment to be cleaned monthly or more frequently as required
- Sand pits- sand should be raked weekly and sanitised regularly. Sand level should be maintained to allow for appropriated use.
- Windows should be cleaned monthly or more frequently as required. Windows and glass doors at the children's level, may require daily or weekly cleaning.
- Cobwebs should be removed monthly or more frequently as required to maintain pest free / safe environment
- Outside of the building should be cleaned every 6 months or more frequently as required to maintain a safe, clean and welcoming environment

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- All indoor surfaces including, furniture, walls, skirting boards, doors and architraves to be cleaned 6 monthly, or more frequently as required
- Educators will document their cleaning schedule and compliance in the 'Educator compliance Folder'

Source

- Staying Healthy in Childcare 5th edition
- Health & Safety in Children's Centres: Model Policies & Practices 2003
- Educational and Care Services National Regulations
- National Quality Standards
- WH&S Processes and procedures

Associated Forms/information:

- Educator Compliance Folder

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action or termination of employment or registration as an educator