

Questions on Diapering, Gloving, Hand Washing, and using Cleaning and Disinfecting Solutions

Diapering

Due to the number of germs that can be spread during the diaper changing process in a child care program, ensuring sanitary conditions and teachers following proper diaper changing procedures, will greatly reduce and hopefully prevent the spread of germs that are associated with changing a child's diaper. The following document is meant to offer information about the cleanliness of the changing area, the proper preparation and procedures for changing a diaper, addressing common mistakes and to clarify any questions that are associated with this topic.

What should be in the diapering changing area:

- A sink with warm running water. The temperature of the water should be tested monthly with a proper thermometer to ensure that it is less than 120° F.
- A poster with written instructions for properly changing a diaper.
- This sink should also only be used for washing the child's and teacher's hands or anything associated with diapering or toileting. If there is only one sink in the classroom, the faucet handles and sink should be sanitized with the disinfecting solution after the teacher and children wash their hands after diapering or toileting to prevent against cross contamination.
- Liquid or foam soap, disposable paper towels, single use gloves, and small plastic bags. The plastic bags will be used to wrap up soiled clothes. Remember that the bags should be kept out of the reach of the children in care to avoid suffocation. A child should NEVER be given gloves or plastic bags to play with in order to keep them busy during the diaper change.
- A non-absorbent pad or surface. If a pad is used, it should be inspected daily to ensure that the pad does not have holes, tears or worn spots.
- Children under the age of three years should be changed on a changing table or countertop only used for changing diapers. Children should not be changed on the floor or on a counter that is also used as a place area for the children. The counter should also be at a height that helps protect the teachers from back injuries. There should also be steps available up to the changing table in the classrooms where children are bigger to further help prevent teachers from injuring their backs.
- The diaper changing area should be free of all other supplies. NEVER use this area to store toys. The diaper changing table or counter should also not be used to prepare food or allowed to be a place where food is placed before serving.
- A foot-operated or hands free covered trashcan. The trashcan should be lined with a plastic liner and only be used to dispose of diapers and pull-ups. No Diaper Genies!
- A leak-proof covered basket for soiled linens, example soiled crib linens.
- Add a 3-D mobile or wind-sock over the changing table and/ or add pictures along the side of the changing space for child to look at during their diaper change.

Preparing for the diaper change:

- The first step is for the teacher to wash their hands.
- Next, the teacher should collect the items needed for the diaper change by taking the supplies for the diaper change out of the containers.
- Some programs use changing paper, optional. Using the changing paper does not eliminate the need to properly clean and sanitize the changing pad or surface after the diaper change.
- The teacher should remove enough wipes from the container to clean the child's bottom properly and to wipe the child's and teacher's hands after taking the soiled diaper away from the child's skin.
- The teacher should remove the child's diaper from the container and lay it on the side of the table.

Get out a small plastic bag for soiled clothes and clean clothes if soiled clothing is anticipated. Remember anytime you have a bag of soiled clothes for the parent to pick up, please advise the parent of the contents when they pick up that afternoon or provide a note on the bag for the parent.

- If you anticipate that you will need to use diaper cream and you have written authorization and instructions from the parent to use diaper cream, dispense a dab of diaper cream on a disposable paper towel or on a baby wipe.

Diapering Procedures

1. The teacher should have followed the steps above for preparing for the diaper change.
2. The teacher should walk over to the child that you need for the diaper change. Speak to the child before you pick the child up. Example: "Hi Sara, it is time to change your diaper now." If the child does not particularly like having their diaper changed, you might say something like, "I know that you do not like to have your diaper changed, but Sara, you will feel so much better when you are all clean!" If the teacher needs to change a child that is in the middle of playing because they are soiled or the parents might be coming soon, the teacher might say something like, "I know that you are in the middle of building with blocks Sara, but let's change your diaper quickly so you can get back to building."
3. Gently place the child on the diapering table.
4. Put on single use gloves. Using gloves is not required, but HIGHLY recommended.
5. Remove the child's clothing to access diaper. If soiled, place the clothes into a plastic bag.
6. Remove the soiled diaper and place the diaper into a lined, hands-free covered trashcan. To limit odor, you could put the soiled diaper into a plastic bag before placing the diaper into trashcan.
7. Use wipes to thoroughly clean the child's bottom, gently wiping from front to back.
8. Remove your gloves and throw them away in the trashcan.
9. Use a wipe to remove soil from child's hands.
10. Use another wipe to remove soil from child's hands.
11. Throw soiled wipes into a lined, hands-free trashcan.
12. Apply diaper cream if needed.
13. Put a clean diaper on the child and then redress the child.
14. Wash the child's hands and wash the teacher's hands.
15. Help the child start their next activity or return them to where they were playing.
16. Spray the soap and water cleaning solution on the diaper pad or nonabsorbent surface. Completely wipe away the dirt and dry the surface with the paper towel.
17. Spray the disinfecting solution on the surface and sides of the changing pad or surface. Note: The recommended practice is to wait 2 minutes, then wipe the surface dry with a paper towel in order to allow the solution to kill germs. Some agencies will require that the surface air-dry. Simply put, the surface cannot be sprayed and immediately wiped, nor should the teacher spray so little of solution in order for it to air-dry quickly.
18. The teacher should again wash their hands. If the classroom only has one sink, remember that the teacher also needs to spray the disinfecting solution on the faucet handles and in the sink after diapering.

Other things to remember:

1. Children should be changed as needed. Teachers are to check **each** child about every ½ hour and actually change each child's diaper at least every two hours. Other key times to check to see if the child's diaper needs to be changed is when the child arrives at the program, before the child is put down and after the child has woken up from a nap, before outside time, and before the child is about to leave. If the parent picks up the child early, make sure you check the child's diaper and offer to change it if it is wet or soiled.

2. Teachers are required to provide appropriate and active supervision to the child that they are diapering and to the other children in the class. The diaper changing area should allow the teacher to see the other children in care at all times.
3. Teachers doing diaper changes should not prepare or handle food until all the diapers have been changed.
4. The diaper changing time is to be positive, pleasant and interactive. Teachers should use this time to model and talk about good health practices like washing your hands. Example: "Sara, now lets take the soap and wash the tops, and bottoms of your hands and in between those fingers to get your hands really clean."
5. The teacher's should point out and talk about displays like the mobile or pictures displayed on the side of the changing table.
6. The teacher can also provide a small toy to occupy the wiggly child while the teacher changes the child's diaper. Remember that the toy should be immediately cleaned and disinfected since it might have come into contact with germs associated with changing the diaper.
7. The teacher should speak to the child about what they are doing. Example: "Now Sara, let's change your diaper." Teacher's talk about and use this time an opportunity to foster self-help skills. "Sara, help me get your left foot into your pants. That's great! That was your left foot!"

Gloves

There are several situations in a child care program where it is necessary for the teacher to wear single use disposable gloves. Gloves are associated with using proper universal precautions in order to protect the teachers and the children from germs and diseases that can be transmitted from bodily fluids from one person to another. In a child care program, teachers should always put on gloves

before:

- Changing diapers
- Helping a child with toileting
- Dispensing medication, including lotions, creams and sunscreens
- Mixing disinfecting solutions
- Helping cleaning a wound from an accident
- Helping a child with a nose bleed
- Cleaning up urine, feces, vomit, spit-up or blood
- Cleaning pet cages
- Inspecting a rash on child or checking a child for lice or ringworm

Gloving Procedures

1. Wash your hands.
2. In some situations or emergency's you may have to skip step number one.
3. Put on a clean pair of gloves.
4. Provide the appropriate care.
5. Remove the glove carefully. Grab the first glove at the palm and strip the glove off. Touch dirty surfaces only to dirty surfaces.
6. Ball-up the dirty glove in the palm of the other gloved hand.
7. With the clean hand, strip the glove off from underneath at the wrist turning the glove inside out. Touch dirty surfaces only to dirty surfaces.
8. Discard the dirty gloves in a hands free or foot-operated trashcan.
9. Wash your hands.

Hand Washing

Some researchers state that over 70% of illnesses can be prevented by proper hand washing procedures. In order to keep the children and teachers healthy, everyone should know when to wash

their hands and how to follow the proper procedures for washing hands. This section will also discuss what should be present in the hand washing areas and answer common questions that are associated with this topic.

When should the hands be washed?

- Every time a staff person or child enters any classroom. Hands are washed before they touch anything!
- Before and after the child or teacher eats meals or snacks.
- Before and after the teacher prepares or serves food or bottles.
- After handling the garbage or diaper pail.
- After coughing or sneezing.
- After helping wipe a child's nose or your own nose.
- After the child blows their nose or puts their hands in their mouth.
- After checking to see if a child needs a diaper change.
- After being exposed to any bodily fluid, urine, feces, vomit, spit-up or blood.
- Before and after diaper changes and toileting.
- After coming indoors from playing on the playground.
- Before and after sand or water play.
- Before and after messy play like painting, play dough or activities that include gluing.
- After handling pets.

Simply put, if you question whether or not you should wash your hands or have the children wash their hands, WASH THEM.

What should be in the hand washing area:

- A sink with warm running water but the temperature of the water should be tested monthly to ensure that it is less than 120° F.
- This sink should also only be used for washing the child's and teacher's hands or anything associated with diapering or toileting. If there is only one sink in the classroom, the faucet handles and sink should be sanitized with the disinfectant solution diapering or toileting.
- Liquid or foam soap, paper towels or a hand dryer, a trash can, and a mirror for the children to see their own face in order to encourage self-help skills. All supplies should be easily accessible to the children.
- There should also be a hand washing sign or poster displayed that describes and shows in pictures of how to follow the proper steps to washing hands.
- If the sink counter is not "child-size", there should be a wide, non-slip stool provided for the children to reach the faucet.
- A mat or rug in front of the sink to help prevent slipping accidents.

Hand Washing Procedures:

1. Turn on the faucet.
2. Run the hands under the water moisten hands.
3. Dispense liquid or foam soap in to the palm. Avoid using bar soap.
4. Rub hands together for 20 seconds. Ensure that you are rubbing the hands together, wash the tops and palms of the hands, in between the fingers and around the wrists.
5. Have the children sing the Alphabet or the Happy Birthday Song to ensure that they are washing for the appropriate amount of time.
6. Hold the soapy hands down in the water to rinse away the soap.
7. Remove the paper towel from the dispenser and dry your hands completely.
8. Take the paper towel and use it to turn off the faucet, instead of the hand.
9. Throw the used paper towel into the trashcan.

10. If an air dryer is present, after you are done washing off the soap, turn off the faucet and use the air dryer to dry your hands.

Other things to remember:

- With very young infants that have very little head control, it is appropriate to use baby wipes on the child's hands to clean them.
- For an infant that can support their heads but not stand at a sink, the teacher should use their knee to help hold the infant at the sink and physically help the child wash their hands. Be careful **not** to push the infant's belly into the sink.
- For children at any age, the teacher should **constantly** talk with and remind children about how important it is for everyone to follow good health practices including properly washing their hands.
- The teachers should encourage the children to look at their face in the mirror to ensure that their face is clean. Some important times to remind the children to clean their face is after meals and snacks, after outdoor play, after messy play and before the child is about to leave. The teacher is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the child's face is clean. The teacher should get down and look at the child's face at those key times.
- Hand-sanitizers are **not** a substitute washing your hands. Hand sanitizers can also be dangerous for very young children. While on the playground or while on a field trip where hand washing facilities are not available, it is appropriate to use hand wipes and an alcohol-based sanitizer to help kill germs. The **teacher** should apply a small amount of sanitizer in the child's hands. Remember that when you return inside or back from the field trip, everyone should wash their hands.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Solutions

Disinfecting solutions are very important to the overall health of the child care environment. Some procedures require disinfecting the area with a properly mixed "bleach and water" solution. This section is designed to answer the questions of how to mix the disinfecting solution, when and how often to use the solution and how to store the solutions properly.

Remember that there should always be a cleaning step to remove dirt and soil **before** disinfecting anything. The cleaning step refers to a soap and water mix. Most other cleaning solutions have strong fumes or are dangerous to the touch and should not be used as a general cleaning agent around children.

In order to ensure that the correct concentration is used, close attention should be given to the mixing and labeling of these solutions. It is recommended that all solutions be mixed in the kitchen, not in the classrooms or while children are in care. Also, **NEVER** mix bleach with any other cleaner or detergent. This could produce a toxic and hazardous gas!

Before the person mixes the solution, they should be wearing gloves, wearing safety goggles and be able to read the directions and measure out the contents correctly. All solutions should be mixed in a larger bucket and after the solution is mixed, the solution should be poured into the correctly labeled spray bottles using a funnel.

The "**Bleach and Water**" solution will be mixed as follows:

- Use a gallon bucket and fill it to the fill line with water.
- Add a cup of regular household regular bleach that contains 5.25% of sodium hypochlorite. Read the label!

Below are the items that require using a bleach and water solution dispensed from a spray bottle labeled "**Bleach and Water**":

- When disinfecting the diapering changing pad or surface after cleaning the area after EACH diaper change.
- When disinfecting the sink in the bathrooms or the sink in the classroom that is used to wash hands after diapering or toileting.
- When disinfecting the toilets in the bathroom. The bathrooms should be cleaned and disinfected multiple times a day.
- When disinfecting a portable potty chair or child seat that is placed over a toilet, after each use.
- When disinfecting a surface after any object has been exposed to urine, feces, vomit, spit-up or blood.
- Tables and high chairs are cleaned and disinfected after an individual child has eaten, not after the entire group has eaten. Note: Do not attach pictures or name tags on the tables that the children eat on. Attaching those items with tape or contact paper will allow food particulars to collect under the edges and the teacher will not be able to properly clean and sanitize the surface.
- Toys that have been in a child's mouth

Once a day:

- Tumbling mats
- Infant vinyl play mats
- Soft vinyl play equipment used by children of any age
- Crib mattresses
- Water tables toys and the water table
- Headphones
- Telephones
- Door knobs
- Light plate switches
- Computer keyboards
- Drinking fountains
- Furniture

Once a week:

- All other classroom toys*
- Sand box or sensory table
- Tricycles, riding toys, balls and other outside toys
- Cots and resting mats
- Furniture
- Window ledges

*For plastic toys that do not have batteries, you can use a mesh bag to collect the toys and run them through the dishwasher to disinfect them and leave them to air-dry.

Notes:

- Using a bleach and water solution is the most cost effective and effective way to sanitize/ disinfect in a child care program.
- The disinfecting solution is to be prepared daily and discarded down the sink at the end of the day. The teacher should pick up their classroom's disinfecting solution before they open the classroom for the day.
- The disinfecting solution should be out of the reach of the children while the teacher is using the solution. The disinfecting solution should be locked while not in use!

- A disinfecting solution should never be sprayed around the children. After you spray or dip the items, the items should be left to air-dry.
- Do not use sponges for daily cleaning and disinfecting.
- Using paper towels or a small wash cloth is recommended for cleaning surfaces and wiping after a disinfecting solution has been left on a surface for at least two minutes. If cloths are used, only use them once. The cloth should not be put back into a standing bucket of disinfecting solution. After the cloth is used, put it in the laundry to be machine washed.

Other cleaning recommendations:

Cribs sheets should be changed and washed daily even if there is not any signs of obvious dirt. Children should never share cots, mats, cribs or linens. Lines for cots and mats should be washed weekly, but should be changed and washed if they become soiled.

Items in the classroom such as dress-up clothes, pillows, puppets, throw rugs, and other cloth items should be machine washed once a week.

Carpets and curtains should be cleaned at least every six months.

The buildings air vents and filters should be changed per maintenance recommendations, typically monthly. Baseboards, blinds and ceiling fans should be cleaned monthly.

Do not forget that the dryer lint catch should be cleaned after each load and the hose cleaned every six months.

It is important to mention that local and state agencies will often use the words disinfecting and sanitizing to mean the same thing. Please refer to your agency to ensure that using the following document will keep you in compliance with laws and regulations in your state. A lower concentration of bleach and water is required for the kitchen, plates, utensils and food preparation. Please refer to your local health department for proper consultation and training in food preparation.

This document is meant to be a guide to help child care providers maintain sanitary conditions in their program in order to cut down on the spread of common germs and allergens found in child care programs. The information presented is based on the most current ideas and opinions in the child care community. Information does change and this information will be changed as needed.

Some information was adapted from parts of *Caring for Our Children: The National and Safety Performance standards for Out-of-Home Care*, 2nd Edition, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Childcare (2002) and from *All About the ECERS-R*, by D. Cryer, T. Harms, and C. Riley (2003).

Gloving procedures referenced were adapted from the California Department of Education. *Keeping Kids Healthy: Preventing and Managing Communicable Disease in Child Care*. Sacramento CA (1995).