Hand Washing Policy

**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.

Educating and encouraging children to wash their hands effectively will help to reduce the incidence of infectious diseases.

- Educators will role model 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
- Children will be reminded to wash their hands at the appropriate times such as after going to the toilet, before eating and after handling animals
- Songs will be used to help children to remember the procedure and to make it a fun part of the routine
- 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.
- 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, and:
  - 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, 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 centre, use liquid soap or individual soap sheets in preference to germicidal solution or soap bars as microbial contamination is less likely to occur.
  - Replace liquid soap bottles or re-fill them, and wash out the bottle and the dispenser between refills.
• Make available moisturising lotion for centre staff for use after hand washing. Moisturiser lotion should be kept out of children’s reach.

• 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.

• 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; if hands are visibly soiled, 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, otherwise each person or child has their own individual towel which is given to the parent at the end of each week for washing. 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 daily.

Ensure children, visitors and persons normally working at the centre wash hands in the following way:

Use liquid soap and running water  
Rub hands vigorously, counting to 10  
Wash hands all over, including the backs of hands, wrists, between the fingers, and under the fingernails  
Rinse hands well counting to 10  
Do not touch the tap after washing, turn taps off with a paper towel  
Press dry hands with a new paper towel or an individual cloth towel

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 centre.

Ensure children, visitors, persons normally working at the centre wash hands;

• On arrival at the children’s centre (parents can help with this)
• Before and after eating or handling food
• Before preparing or cooking food
• After changing a soiled child or checking to see if it is soiled
• After going to the toilet

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• After cleaning up or any contact with urine, faeces, vomit, blood or other body fluids
• 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 (including fish, birds, reptiles)
• Before leaving the children’s service

This policy was made with consideration to Staying Healthy in Childcare 4th edition, Health & Safety in Children’s Centres: Model Policies & Practices 2003, Educational and Care Services National Regulations, National Quality Standard

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