











HEALTH REMINDERS

FOR THE ITERS-R, ECERS-R, & FCCERS-R

Questions about the health requirements for the assessment process?

This document briefly summarizes some of the health and sanitation requirements for the ITES-R, ECERS-R, and FCCERS-R. See the appropriate Environment Rating Scale referenced at the end of this document for more information. Also view other related resources such as videos, video supplements, and webcasts found at www.ncrlap.org website. When considering these requirements, remember to meet standards across the various agencies working with child care facilities such as Environmental Health and the Division of Child Development and Early Education.

When is handwashing required?

-  After diapering/toileting.
-  Immediately before meal or snack preparation and eating (remember to avoid recontamination of hands that can occur when unclean surfaces such as floors or toys are touched before eating).
-  After eating meals or snacks.
-  Before/after group water play.
-  After messy play (e.g. sand, art, play dough, outside play) Water play requires handwashing before *and* after.
-  After dealing with bodily fluids (e.g. wiping noses, coughing into hands, bandaging a scraped knee), even if gloves are used.
-  Upon arrival or re-entry into the classroom after outdoor play.
-  After touching contaminated surfaces (e.g. trash cans).

DO BABIES NEED TO HANDWASH, TOO?

Proper handwashing means washing away germs with running water and soap to effectively rid hands of germs.

- Infants are also required to have hands washed using soap and running water because even the youngest of children touch nearby objects and often put their hands in their mouths.
- Very young infants with little head/neck control can have hands wiped with a wipe.

WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES?

Children with special needs who have limited head/neck control or weigh too much for caregivers to lift them to the sink can also have hands wiped.



EXCEPTIONS?

- Handwashing is not required in *most* cases outside on the playground if a sink is not available. See the NC Additional Notes for specific details. A waterless wash or wipes can be used, but hands must be washed when returning to the room after outdoor play.
- If children eat in a cafeteria with no sink available, wash hands in the classroom and use a waterless wash or wipes in the cafeteria before children eat.

WHAT ABOUT SURFACES?

CLEANING, SANITIZING, & DISINFECTING

What is the difference between a cleaning solution and a bleach/water solution?

A cleaning solution such as soapy water is used to clean a surface by removing visible residue or debris. A bleach water solution actually kills germs and disease-causing organisms. For the bleach water solution to be effective the solution must be allowed to dry for a minimum of 2 minutes and complete air drying is ideal.

When is a sanitizing solution needed?

- As the final step after cleaning a messy surface (e.g., after wiping away crumbs or art residue with a soapy solution)
- On toys or surfaces that have been mouthed or exposed to other bodily fluids
- On tables or high chair trays before these surfaces are used for meals or snacks

When is a disinfecting solution needed?

- On sink faucets and basins if the same-sink is used for handwashing after diapering and toileting and any other purpose.
- On the diapering table surface after a change.

What's the big deal about same sink? Any sink that is used for handwashing after diapering or toileting must be disinfected BEFORE the sink is used for ANY other purpose(s). This practice prevents the germs that are associated with diapering and toileting from being spread to other classroom materials and surfaces.

Therefore, if a sink is used to wash hands after completing a diapering/toileting routine then the sink basin and faucet must be disinfected before:

- Other types of handwashing occur at the same sink (e.g., handwashing before eating a snack or meal
- after wiping a nose, after using play dough or cleaning up from easel painting, when an additional teacher
- or child arrives, etc.)
- Any classroom materials or toys are cleaned in the same sink
- Brushing teeth in that sink
- Providing drinking water from that sink

It is NOT required that sinks be disinfected between different uses or users if:

- A sink is used only for hand washing after diapering or toileting
- Separate sinks are generally used, but some routines (diapering and mealtime) occur in immediate succession. In this case children and staff should use a paper towel to turn off the faucet or leave the water running between children to minimize the need to touch the faucet or basin.

HEALTHY CHILDREN = CHILDREN READY TO PLAY & LEARN!



References

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