

DEAR PARENTS

WHY A HYGIENE GUIDELINE?

Various infections are the most common health issue for under school-age children. Children spending time together in a child group setting spreads a number of illnesses to children, their families, day care staff and their families.

Normally germs spread from one person to another via their respiratory tract, but for largely also on their hands. Many diseases are spreading before the onset of symptoms. In other words, there may be a number of germ carriers in a day care centre well before the illnesses are diagnosed.

Children under school-age, and particularly the under 3-year-olds, are more susceptible to infections. With the use of antibiotics, the number of bacteria resistant to antibiotics is increasing. It is a threat to all people. If we can reduce the number of infections in children at day care centres, use of antibiotics is also reduced thus slowing down the development of antibiotic-resistant bacterial strains. Day care staff have their instructions for boosting the hygiene protocol.

The primary duty of early childhood education and care is to promote holistic well-being and health of a child. A child, who is healthy and well, is able to engage in day care activities, which promotes his or her development, growth and learning.

Handwashing is the singular most important and effective method of reducing infections. When enhancing hygiene practices, we increase the amount of handwashing as well as pay attention to the actual handwashing technique.

The effects of good hygiene in reducing infections and illnesses in children will be further improved when day care staff and families work together to maintain the good health of their children by enhancing their daily routines and agreeing on mutual practices.

PRACTICAL MEASURES AT HOME

Hand washing technique

- use running water and soap
- wet your hands before applying liquid soap
- wash your hands always with washing liquid, not with water alone
- rub your hands thoroughly for at least 15 seconds, scrubbing between your fingers, palms, fingertips, the backs of your hands, thumbs and wrists
- rinse your hands under running water and dry them
- hand washing technique will be taught also to children
- if you see no visible dirt in your hands, you can use also a handrub

Handwash / Handrub for Children

- in the morning on arrival to day care (parents help)
- when children come home from day care
- every time after using the toilet
- before and after eating
- after blowing your nose
- short and clean nails help to maintain proper hand hygiene
- you can use handrub if there is no visible dirt on your hands

Toys



- wash your child's bed toy at home once a week at 60 degrees
- before the Toy Day, wash your child's toy at home before taking it to the day care centre and also on returning it back home.
- if the toy can not be washed, it can be put away for a few days or weeks to reduce the amount of bacteria on the toy.

Nappy Practices

- discuss your child's nappy practice with the staff
- the nappy practice is entered in your child's early childhood education and care plan (ECEC plan)
- if you prefer reusable nappies, they need to have moisture-proof cover
- if the child uses disposable nappies, bring a pedal bin for soiled or wet nappies to the day care centre

Soother

- discuss soother practices with the staff of your child's group
- write your child's name on every soother
- soothers are to be cleaned at home by boiling them twice a week
- bring soothers to the day care centre in a container with a lid; they will be also kept in that container
- we hope your child would have his or her soother only at nap time as it tends to fall off a child's mouth when busy playing and another young child might easily pop the same soother into his or her mouth

When Your Child Is Ill

- home is the place to be for a child, if he or she is unwell
- let your child recover at home until he or she no longer has a temperature and is fit to engage in the normal activities in the day care centre
- if he or she falls ill in the middle of the day, we will ask the parents to come and take their child home to rest
- if necessary, you will get a note for your employer about your child being unwell
- in the early stage, an illness is at its most contagious and if a child stays home, the risk of infecting other children will be much lower.

The mutual target of the early childhood education provider and home is to promote a child's holistic well-being and health, growth and development. More intensive daily hygiene protocol reduces not only infectious diseases in children attending day care but also need for antibiotics.

