

HEALTH REMINDERS

Based on information in
the ITERS-R, ECERS-R,
& FDCRS.

Mississippi Child Care Resource and Referral Network

Box 9746
Mississippi State, MS 39762

1-866-706-8827
Phone: (662) 325-3083
Fax: (662) 325-1805



SINKS AND SANITATION

What's the big deal about same sink? Any sink that is used for hand-washing after diapering or toileting must be sanitized 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 sanitized before:

- Other types of hand-washing occur at the same sink (e.g., hand-washing 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 sanitized 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.

What is the difference between a cleaning solution and sanitizing solution?

A cleaning solution such as soapy water is used to clean a surface by removing visible residue or debris. A sanitizing solution such as bleach water actually kills germs and disease-causing organisms. For sanitizers to be effective the solution should be used on a visibly clean surface and must be allowed to air dry before being wiped away – two minutes is the recommended amount of time.

When is sanitizer 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
- ✓ On sink faucets and basins if the same-sink is used for hand-washing after diapering/toileting and any other purpose.

When is hand-washing 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 snack
- Before/after group water play
- After messy play (e.g. sand, art, play dough, outside play)
- 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 touching contaminated surfaces (e.g. trash cans)

Do babies have to wash hands?

Proper hand-washing: 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.

Exceptions:

- Very young infants with little head/neck control can have hands wiped with a wipe.
- 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.
- When there is no water source available such as outside on the playground, waterless wash or wipes can be used but hands must be later washed when returning back inside.