Toy Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sensory Play Policy and Procedure

Created: March 15, 2016
Revised: October 25, 2017, October 31, 2018, June 20, 2019, May 6, 2020, September 14, 2023, April 2, 2025
Reference: Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) Toronto Public Health Guidance Document, 2019, Toronto Children Services Early Learning and Care Assessment for Quality Improvement, 2014
Approved by Board of Directors: November 15, 2017

Policy

Orde Day Care is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families staff, students and volunteers. Orde Day Care will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of injury and infectious disease within our centres.

Lack of environmental cleaning has been linked to widespread contamination of surfaces which increases the likelihood of gastrointestinal illness in child care centres, especially in programs which enroll diaper aged children. Therefore, in order to combat the already inherent increase of childhood infections in our programs, Orde Day care has developed a policy and procedure for staff, students and volunteers to comply with to ensure a clean and disinfected environment and play materials.

Procedure

Toys and play based learning are an integral part of childcare as they can enhance children's sense of touch, sight, taste, smell and hearing. Toys, however, can also be an excellent vehicle for the spread of infectious diseases. Staff must ensure the following procedures are devised and followed to reduce the risk of disease transmission among children when playing with toys:

- a written **and posted** schedule that identifies the areas and items to be cleaned and disinfected,
- how often this cleaning and disinfecting must be undertaken,
- who will be responsible for the cleaning and disinfecting;
- and accessible information regarding the cleaner and disinfectant being used.

All staff, students and volunteers must review this policy upon hiring/unpaid placement and annually thereafter, or when changes are made.

Hand Hygiene

- Before and after **playing with toys** and sensory play, children should be encouraged or assisted to perform hand hygiene
- Playrooms must have access to both hand sanitizer and a hand wash station
- Play areas must have hand sanitizer available

Toy Materials/Design

- Toys which cannot be washed easily (plush/stuffed toys) must be dedicated to a single child
- Toys that are mouthed or contaminated by body secretions shall be removed from the area and placed in a **labelled** mouthed toy bin; they should then be cleaned and disinfected before being used by another child

- Keep toys in good repair and inspect them for damage
- Toys that are damaged, broken or have missing parts must be discarded, as this will compromise the effectiveness of proper cleaning and disinfection.
- Toys must be made out of a material that can be cleaned and disinfected or laundered and should be able to withstand frequent cleaning and disinfection.
- Water toys which cause water to stay in them are not to be used. Water play toys must be able to be taken apart for cleaning, disinfecting and drying

Toy Storage

- Toy storage boxes/cupboards/shelves **must** be emptied, cleaned and disinfected as necessary.
- Toy bins/**storage must** be monitored for pest activity

Indoor playhouses/climbers

- Must have their high touch surfaces cleaned and disinfected **as required by the age group cleaning schedule**

Computers/shared electronic games/video equipment

- Must be cleaned and disinfected between users with disinfectant wipes

Dress Up Clothes (all age groups)

- Weekly
- Launder clothes in washing machine using hot water and dry clothes in clothes dryer using a hot cycle. Check manufacturer label before laundering.

Shared plush toys

- Frequency of washing dependent on age group
- Suspend use of plush toys during an outbreak
- Launder once outbreak is over

Home Made Play dough/Slime

- is more likely to harbour and allow the growth of pathogens
- if used must be discarded daily
- Unused dough/slime must be covered, and can be stored in a refrigerator for up to one week
- Store bought playdough/slime **must** be discarded as per the manufacturer's recommendations

Sensory play equipment

- Communal sensory play bins/tubs must be cleaned and disinfected after they are dumped and before replenishing
- Water play bins must be drained, cleaned and disinfected after each session
- Individual sensory bins must be used when a child is showing signs of illness (runny nose)
- **During an outbreak sensory play must be suspended and any sensory material used prior to the outbreak must be discarded**

Sand Play

- **Use only sand that is prepackaged, sealed and labelled as play sand,**
- **Sand must not be brought in from outdoors**
- **Purchased sand must be silica free**
- **If sand becomes wet from water, air dry the wet sand thoroughly overnight, before covering the table**
- **Food and animals must be kept away from the sand, if sand becomes wet or contaminated from a substance other than water, discard the sand**
- **Sad for indoor sand tables must be replaced weekly, at a minimum or more often if required.**
- **When the sand is emptied the play table must be cleaned and disinfected**
- **Outdoor childcare centres must rake and visually inspect the sandboxes for signs of contamination and safety hazards before each use.**

Food Sensory Play

- **Only dried food products should be used (flour should not be used)**
- **Dried foods must be labelled and stored in a sealed container with a tight-fitting lid**
- **These food items should not be intended for consumption and must not be stored with food for consumption**

The following sensory play materials can be used

- Water
- Dry pasta
- Purchased sand
- Playdough
- Clean snow
- Slime
- **Pine cones- assess prior to use**
- **Twigs- assess prior to use**
- **Leaves – assess prior to use**

The following items cannot be used

- Sand, gravel and other materials obtained from outdoor location
- Meat trays or **soiled** egg cartons, toilet paper rolls
- **Manure or other products containing fecal matter or chemicals**

Surfaces

- Cleaning should be done with low touch surfaces to high touch surfaces and from top to bottom.
- High touch surfaces include table tops and counters use for food prep or serving should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use
- Doorknobs, taps light switches, telephones, and sink taps should be cleaned and disinfected daily

Toy Cleaning and Disinfection

- When cleaning and disinfecting toys you must wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE):
    - When mixing bleach wear rubber gloves and a mask
    - When using Optimum 33 wear rubber gloves
    - When cleaning and disinfecting: rubber gloves and mask (if you have scent sensitivities)
- Toys must be cleaned and rinsed prior to disinfection
- Outdoor Play Equipment requires cleaning once annually and when visibly soiled or as necessary

Frequency of Toy Cleaning and Disinfection

Please follow the Toy Washing Schedules and instructions for each age group when cleaning and disinfecting toys:

Infants: All used toys must be cleaned and disinfected daily and as needed
Toddlers/Preschoolers: All used toys must be cleaned and disinfected weekly and as needed
Kindergarten: All used toys must be cleaned and disinfected monthly and as needed, or weekly during Christmas Break, March Break and Summer Camp program.
School Age: All used toys must be cleaned and disinfected monthly and as needed

Note: Toy cleaning and disinfecting should increase during an outbreak and/or suspected outbreak (refer to the Management of Outbreaks Policy and Procedures).

Toy Cleaning and Disinfecting Routine

To disinfect toys, always clean and rinse prior to disinfection. Use the three-compartment sink method.

- The two-compartment sink method is also acceptable. If using a two-compartment sink method, washing and rinsing must be done in the 1st sink. Disinfection must be done in the 2nd sink.
- If no sinks are available, then the three-bin method is acceptable.
- Hard plastic toys may be cleaned and disinfected using a mechanical dishwasher, provided that it is in compliance with (O. Reg. 493/17).
- Mouthed toys must be rinsed thoroughly with water following disinfection

When toy cleaning or disinfecting, in a 2-compartment sinks.

Step 1: Clean
- First, clean toys in a bin or sink of detergent and water.

Step 2: Rinse
- Use clean water to remove detergent residue (either in a bin or sink).

Step 3: Disinfect
- Immerse the toys into a bin or sink of disinfectant. Let the toys sit for the appropriate contact time.

Step 4: Rinse
- Rinse toys with clean water, then air dry.

Toy Washing Procedures- Using Bleach

1. Perform hand hygiene, then put on gloves (see Hand Hygiene Procedure for glove use)
2. Clean toys in a bin of detergent and water
3. Remove any detergent residue using clean water
4. Fill a bucket/bin/sink with diluted disinfectant (bleach).
5. Immerse the toys into either a bucket/bin/sink of diluted disinfectant (bleach) let the toys sit in the solution for 5 minutes
6. Once the 5-minute contact time is complete, remove the toys and rinse with clean water and let air dry
7. Once complete, hang gloves to dry and perform hand hygiene
8. Initial and date the toy washing chart every time
9. All bleach products must be kept away from children in a locked non-accessible area

Toy Washing Procedures- Using Optimum 33

Please follow the same steps as above, use the pre-mixed Optimum 33 spray bottle or to disinfect the toy surface. Please ensure that 1 minute of contact time is met, then air dry the toy(s).
Optimum 33 must be kept away from children in a locked non-accessible area

Toy Washing Procedures- Using the Dishwasher

If using the dishwasher for toy washing you must ensure the following:

- The rinse cycle must meet a minimum of 82 degrees Celsius
- **Only use the dishwasher in the kitchen when it is not being used for any other purposes (i.e. washing dishes, food preparation, serving)**
- Toys are placed evenly on the dishwashing racks and are an appropriate size to ensure they will not fall into the basin
- Toys are removed carefully once the wash cycle is complete as they may be hot or contain hot water
- Toys are air dried
- The kitchen is clean and tidy when you have completed toy washing
- **Toys are not left in the kitchen overnight and must be picked up by the program staff the next day in Room 28**

How to wash:

1. Perform hand hygiene, then put on gloves (see Hand Hygiene Procedure for glove use)
2. **Toys must be cleaned and rinsed prior to disinfection**
3. Place toys in the dishwasher rack ensuring they are evenly distributed and will not fall through the dishwasher rack
4. Run a normal cycle- to ensure the toys are properly sanitized, the rinse cycle temperature must be at a minimum of 82 degrees Celsius
5. When the full cycle is complete, carefully remove the dishwasher rack from the dishwasher. Place the toys in clean, disinfected basins to be brought back to the rooms.

Disinfectant – Kitchen Staff responsibilities

- Date of expiration is checked upon delivery of disinfectant
- The stored disinfectant is within the predetermined shelf life

- Testing strips are available for testing potency of Optimum 33
- Logging of test is undertaken and posted
- SDS sheet is available for staff reference

Policy and Procedure Review:

The organization reserves the right to review and modify the policy at any time based on the operational needs of the centre. This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees before commencing employment, annually, and at any time changes are made.

I acknowledge receipt of Orde Day Care Centre **Toy Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sensory Play Policy and Procedure**

I understand it is my responsibility to read, understand, and comply with the **Toy Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sensory Play Policy and Procedure**

I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding the **Toy Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sensory Play Policy and Procedure.** I will consult with my immediate supervisor.

Please read the **Toy Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sensory Play Policy and Procedure** carefully to ensure that you understand the policy and procedures before signing

Staff Name	Supervisor Name:
Staff Signature:	Supervisor Signature:
Date:	Date: