

CATEGORY: Sanitary Policies and Procedures

DATE: July 2017

SUBJECT: Toy Cleaning and Disinfecting

REVIEWED: March 2023

APPROVED BY: Shemina Ladak, Executive Director



Policy Statement

Centennial Infant and Child Centre (CICC) is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and employees. CICC will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of injury and infectious disease within our centre.

Purpose

To ensure that all staff are aware of and adhere to the directive established by Toronto Public Health (TPH) regarding the acceptable types of toys, and cleaning/disinfecting of toys in early learning and childcare centres.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and students at CICC.

Procedures

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

Hand Hygiene

- Before and after 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 must be nonporous and able to withstand rigorous cleaning and repeated exposure to disinfectants.
- Toys that cannot be easily washed (plush/stuffed toys) must be dedicated to a single child.
- To facilitate cleaning, smooth/non-textured toy surfaces are preferred.
- 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:

- Toys that are mouthed or contaminated by body secretions shall be removed from the area and placed in a mouthed toy bin; they should then be cleaned and disinfected.
- Toy storage boxes/cupboards should be emptied, cleaned, and disinfected as necessary. Toy bins should be monitored for pest activity.

Indoor playhouses/climbers:

- Must have their high touch surfaces cleaned and disinfected daily.

Computers/shared electronic games/video equipment:

- Must be cleaned and disinfected between users.

Play dough:

- Homemade play dough is more likely to harbour and allow the growth of pathogens; therefore, homemade play dough that is used must be discarded daily.
- Homemade play dough that is not used must be covered and can be stored in a refrigerator for up to one week.
- Store bought playdough should 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 cleaned and disinfected after each session (i.e., normally AM and PM programs would count as a session)
- Remove any toys that come into contact with a child's mouth during sensory play and place in the mouthed toy bin for disinfecting.

Toy Cleaning and Disinfection:

- When cleaning and disinfecting toys, you must wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE):
 - o When mixing bleach solution: rubber gloves, mask, and goggles
 - o When cleaning and disinfecting: rubber gloves and mask (if you have scent sensitivities)
- Toys must be cleaned and rinsed prior to disinfection.
- Toys must be inspected for damage, cracked or broken parts, as these may compromise cleaning. Any toy that is found to be damaged, cracked or broken should be discarded.
- Toys that are mouthed or are otherwise contaminated by body secretions must be cleaned with water and detergent, and then disinfected before handling by another child.

Frequency of Toy Cleaning and Disinfection

All used toys must be cleaned and disinfected weekly 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

When toy cleaning or disinfecting, use either 2-compartment sinks or 3 bin method.

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 the Dishwasher

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

- The rinse cycle must meet a minimum of 180 degrees F/82 degrees C.
- 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 removed carefully once cycle complete – may be hot.
- Toys are air dried.
- The kitchen is clean and tidy when toy washing completed.
- Toys are not left in the kitchen overnight.

How to wash:

1. Perform hand hygiene, then put on gloves (see Hand Hygiene Procedure for glove use)
2. Place toys in the dishwasher rack ensuring they are evenly distributed and will not fall through the dishwasher rack.
3. Run a normal cycle to ensure toys are properly sanitized, the rinse cycle temperature must be at a minimum of 180 degrees F/82 degrees C.
4. 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.

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all staff and students prior to commencing employment/unpaid placement at CICC and annually thereafter and at any time where a change is made.

The review will be documented on the CICC Policy Review form, a hard copy will be retained in the individual's file for a minimum of 3 years.

Reference(s): *Toronto Public Health Guidance Document 2017*