

# HYGIENE IS IMPORTANT!

## HANDWASHING PROCEDURES

Wash your hands often during the session, especially:

- BEFORE . . . the session begins, preparing a bottle, holding or feeding a baby, serving snacks, leaving the room.
- AFTER . . . changing a diaper, assisting with toileting needs, removing disposable gloves, wiping a child's nose or mouth, contact with any bodily fluids.

Use warm running water and pump-dispensed antibacterial soap. Rub vigorously all surfaces:

- Back of hands
- Between fingers
- Under fingernails and rings
- Along wrists

Lather hands for 15 seconds (about the time it takes you to mentally sing "Happy Birthday.")

Rinse hands well.

Dry hands with a clean paper towel.

Use a paper towel to turn off the water faucet.

Discard used towel in a trash can (lined with plastic bag).

Use the same procedures when you assist children in washing their hands.

## DISINFECTING PROCEDURES (for Toys and Equipment)

Prepare bleach disinfecting solution (5.25% sodium hypochlorite) before each session as directed below. Wash toys in a pan of soapy water, rinse, then soak for two minutes in a pan of bleach solution. Air dry toys in a dish drainer. For items that cannot be immersed, use a pump-spray bottle of the bleach solution to disinfect surfaces children have touched. Disinfect toys after children have "mouthed" them and before they are used by other younger preschoolers.

- Use **one tablespoon bleach to one quart of water** for disinfecting toys, crib rails, and other items which children handle and place in their mouths. This mild bleach solution is effective but harmless to babies and preschoolers.
- Use the bleach solution for disinfecting diapering surfaces, bathroom fixtures, and areas contaminated with bodily fluids. Spray the cleaned surfaces (use soap and water first) with the bleach solution until the surfaces are fully wetted, allow to remain for two minutes, then dry with paper towels if needed.
- Mix bleach solution fresh for each session. Discard used solution and replace with fresh solution for sessions longer than three hours.
- Wear disposable latex (or vinyl in case of latex sensitivity) gloves when disinfecting items with the bleach solution. This will protect your hands from sensitivity to the bleach.
- Do not use bleach in combination with other cleaning solutions to prevent a chemical reaction which could produce toxic chlorine gas.
- Discard used bleach solution at the end of the session.
- Keep bleach out of the reach of children.
- Know the benefits of using a bleach solution: inexpensive, easy to obtain, easy to mix, nontoxic (when properly mixed), kills most germs, recommended by the CDC.

## **DIAPER CHANGING PROCEDURES**

Change diapers on a nonporous surface which can be disinfected after use. Assemble needed supplies, including disposable latex gloves, facial tissues, waxed paper, fresh diapers (and clean clothes if needed), moist disposable wipes, child's personal lotion or ointment if provided by parents, plastic zip-lock bags, and a covered trash can with disposable plastic liner. Talk or sing quietly to the child as you change his diaper. Never leave a child unattended.

- Put on gloves. Place a clean diaper on the diaper surface. Place a sheet of waxed paper on top of the diaper and lay the child on the paper-covered diaper.
- Clean child with tissues and moist disposable wipes. Use fresh wipes as needed.
- Remove soiled disposable diaper and any soiled clothing. (If a cloth diaper is used, seal it and any soiled clothing in separate plastic zip-lock bags to give to parents.) Wrap the disposable diaper and soiled wipes in the waxed paper. Seal this inside a plastic bag and place in a covered trash can.
- Remove and dispose of gloves. Clean hands with a fresh moist wipe or with an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Fasten the clean diaper securely.
- Dress child in clean clothes (if needed).
- Wash child's hands under warm, running water before he returns to activities.
- Wash and disinfect diapering area and all items and equipment touched. Use 1/4 cup bleach to one gallon of water for disinfecting solution.
- Wash your own hands with antibacterial soap under running water.

### **A NOTE ABOUT ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUBS**

A CDC report, "Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings," [Oct. 25, 2002 / 51(RR16); 1-44] outlines research indicating the efficacy of using alcohol-based hand rubs (commonly known as instant hand sanitizers) and defines these as: "An alcohol-containing preparation designed for application to the hands for reducing the number of viable microorganism on the hands. In the United States, such preparations usually contain 60% -95% ethanol or isopropanol."

Research cited in the report indicates that when health care workers' hands are "heavily contaminated, an antiseptic hand rub using an alcohol-based rinse can prevent pathogen transmission. . . ." The report, however, states that "alcohols are not appropriate for use when hands are visibly dirty or contaminated with proteinaceous [blood] materials."

Kay Henry, 2006

Procedures were updated and adapted from:

*Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs* (Washington, DC, NAEYC, 2002).

*Teaching in Christian Weekday Early Education* (Nashville: LifeWay, 1999) pp. 199-202.