

Hand Washing 101 for Licensed Child Care Centers



Proper and frequent hand washing is the easiest and most effective way to prevent the spread of illness and disease in child care.

Hand Washing is Required!

Indiana state licensing regulations require that child care providers and the children in their care wash their hands before and after certain duties and activities.

Child Care Staff Must Wash Hands...

- Before and After
 - Preparing meals and snacks
 - Eating
 - Feeding infants and children
 - Bathing infants and children
 - Wiping noses
 - Diapering and assisting children with toileting
- After
 - Toileting
 - Handling bodily fluids
 - Coughing into hands
 - Handling pets

Children Must Wash Hands...

- Before and After
 - Assisting with meal and snack preparation
 - Eating
- After
 - Toileting or a diaper change
 - Handling bodily fluids
 - Coughing into hands
 - Handling pets

When is Hand Washing Recommended?

Indiana state law covers the hand washing basics, but there are numerous other instances when hand washing is recommended for health and safety purposes. It is recommended that staff and children wash hands:

- After touching contaminated surfaces. A surface is contaminated if there is reason to believe that the surface has been or could be exposed to contaminants. This would include washing hands after taking out the trash.
- After coming in from the outdoors.
- Upon arriving at the child care center and before leaving.
- After sensory play involving sand, water, etc.
- It is also recommended that staff wash hands before and after administering medication.

The Proper Procedure

The “proper” procedure is the hand washing process that has been proven most effective at eliminating germs. **Staff and children must wash hands using the proper procedure.**

- Wet hands under running water;
- Use plenty of soap to make a good lather;
- Keep fingers pointed toward the drain;
- Scrub fronts and backs of hands;
- Remember to wash wrists, scrub around fingernails and rings;
- Scrub between fingers;
- Scrub for at least 20 seconds;
- Rinse well with running water;
- Dry hands with a clean disposable towel or wall-mounted drying device

Using the proper procedure and washing hands frequently can prevent the spread of the common cold, flu, and food borne illness as well as many other germs. Children mimic behavior, so staff who wash their hands using the proper procedure at the appropriate times are setting a great example for the children in their care.