

HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

Supervision

The safety of children is the number one priority at Mrs. Melgar's home. In order to ensure their safety, the children are supervised at all times. We are responsible for safety in all areas including the playground, the classroom, and hallways (areas where children may be walking from one place to another). Supervision means physical presence, knowledge of children's needs, accountability for the care of the children, and intervention when needed.

Minimizing the Spread of Germs: Handwashing

Hand washing is the single most effective practice in preventing the spread of germs. It is important that we wash our hands often, using the proper procedure and assuring that the children do the same.

All **ADULTS** at Mrs. Melgar's home MUST Wash Their Hands:

- When arriving at work.
- Immediately before handling food or feeding children.
- After using the toilet, helping a child use the toilet or after changing soiled clothing or diapers.
- After coming into contact with any bodily fluid, such as a wet or soiled diaper, runny nose, spit or vomit.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- After cleaning a child, the room, toys, or bathroom.
- After removing gloves.
- Before giving medication or applying ointment.
- Before leaving work.

Children MUST Wash Their Hands:

- When they arrive at Mrs. Melgar's Home.
- Immediately before and after eating.
- After using the toilet or having soiled clothing or diaper changed.
- Before and after using water tables.
- After using clay or other substances.
- After playing on the playground.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Before going home.

Toileting and Toothbrush

Parents, we are more than happy to assist in potty training. Each of the children will have their own potty chart and will be given a sticker every time they go potty. At the end of the week we will reward them with a little prize. You can bring your own potty. Please bring 3-4 extra underclothes and pants. Also please do not have them wear suspenders, overalls, or one *piece outfits during this time. Sweats or anything with an elastic waist band is best. It is hard to say when a child will be "ready" to be trained, but some signs are willingness to sit on the toilet, excited about real underwear, and dry during naps and/or nighttime. A fully trained child doesn't have to be asked or reminded to use the bathroom.* Please send a tooth brush or finger brush for your child. They are here about 8 hrs or more and it is important to teach them how to keep their teeth clean and healthy.

Routine Cleaning and Disinfecting

Routine cleaning with soap and water is what we will do to remove germs from surfaces. Good mechanical cleaning (scrubbing with soap and water) physically reduces the numbers of germs from the surface, just as hand washing reduces the numbers of germs from the hands

Keeping the child care environment clean and orderly is very important for health, safety, and the emotional well-being of both children and providers. One of the most important steps in reducing the number of germs, and therefore the spread of disease, is the thorough cleaning of surfaces that could possibly pose a risk to children or staff. Surfaces considered most likely to be contaminated are those with which children are most likely to have close contact. These include toys that children put in their mouths, crib rails, food preparation areas, and surfaces likely to become very contaminated with germs, such as diaper-changing areas.

However, some items and surfaces should receive an additional step, **disinfection**, to kill germs after cleaning with soap and rinsing with clear water. Items that can be washed in a dishwasher or hot cycle of a washing machine do not have to be disinfected because these machines use water that is hot enough for a long enough period of time kill most germs. The disinfection process uses chemicals that are stronger than soap and water. Disinfection also usually requires soaking or drenching the item for several minutes to give the chemical time to kill the remaining germs. Commercial products that meet the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) standards for "hospital grade" germicides (solutions that kill germs) may be used for this purpose. One of the most commonly used chemicals for disinfection in child care settings is a homemade solution of household bleach and water. Bleach is cheap and easy to get. The solution of bleach and water is easy to mix, it's nontoxic, it's safe if handled properly, and kills most infectious agents. (Be aware that some infectious agents are not killed by bleach. For example, cryptosporidia is only killed by ammonia or hydrogen peroxide.)

Recipe for Bleach Disinfecting Solution (For use in bathrooms, diapering areas, etc.)

1/4 cup bleach
1 gallon of cool water

OR

1 tablespoon bleach
1 quart cool water
Add the household bleach (5.25% sodium hypochlorite) to the water.

Recipe for Weaker Bleach Disinfecting Solution (For use on toys, eating utensils, etc.)

1 tablespoon bleach
1 gallon cool water

- We have to disinfect the table and toys being used in the table with a chlorine bleach solution before filling it with water.
- We will avoid using sponge toys, because they can trap bacteria and are difficult to clean.
- Children will wash their hands before and after playing in the water table.
- We will not allow children with open, uncovered sores or wounds to play in the water table.
- We will carefully supervise the children to make sure they don't drink the water.
- We will discard water after play.

Washing and Disinfecting Toys

Toys that children put in their mouths are washed and disinfected between uses by individual children.

Hard plastic toys are washed and disinfected using the following procedure:

- Scrub the toy in warm, soapy water; use a scrub brush to reach into the crevices.
- Rinse the toy in clean water.
- Immerse the toy in a mild bleach solution (recipe provided in previous section) and allow it to soak in the solution for 10-20 minutes.
- Remove the toy from the bleach solution and rinse well in cool water.
- Air dry.

Some toys and equipment, such as blocks, dolls, tricycles and trucks should be cleaned at least weekly and when obviously soiled. For these types of non-plastic toys, a soap and water wash followed by clear water rinsing and air-drying should be adequate.

Handling Exposure to Bodily Fluids (Universal Precautions)

Universal precautions, as those recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, require treating all blood and fluids that may contain blood or blood products as potentially infectious. The instructions for implementing universal precautions from the Centers for Disease Control are:

1. Spills of body fluids, feces, nasal and eye discharges, saliva, urine and vomit should be cleaned-up immediately.
2. Wear nonporous gloves such as latex or vinyl, unless the material being used to clean it up can easily contain the fluid.
3. Be careful not to get any of the fluid being handled in eyes, nose, mouth or any open sores.
4. Clean and disinfect any surfaces, such as countertops and floors, onto which body fluids have spilled.
5. Discard fluid contaminated material in a plastic bag that has been securely sealed.
6. Mops used to clean up body fluids should be cleaned, rinsed with a disinfecting solution, wrung as dry as possible, and hung to dry completely.
7. Be sure to wash hands after cleaning any spill using the hand washing procedures included in this manual.

Administration of Medication

State regulations states that prescription medications or aspirin shall not be given to a child, except as authorized by a licensed Physician, and with a written daily request from the parent or guardian. Non-prescription medication may be given to a child only with a written daily request from the parent or guardian. The medication should be in the original containers, with your child's name and current exp. date.

Children with Food or Other Allergies

We will be very careful of children who may have food allergies. We will offer substitute foods as needed. It is important to be aware that some children may be extra sensitive to being different in any way, so maintain a matter-of-fact attitude about this difference.

Children with special needs related to allergies should have an individual allergy plan. foods (or other materials), and suggested substitute foods, where applicable.

Toys, Equipment and Indoor Furnishings

All furniture, toys, equipment and materials to be used by children must be safe. Equipment must be inspected for safety on an ongoing basis. No toy, piece of furniture or equipment should have sharp corners, protruding nails or bolts, loose or rusty parts, or small parts that could be swallowed. Toxic finishes, such as lead-bases paint, may never be used.

The following objects will be kept out of reach of young children:

- Toys with sharp points and edges
- Plastic bags
- Styrofoam objects
- Coins
- Safety pins
- Marbles
- Rubber or latex balloons

Playground Safety

We will monitor the safety of playground equipment and surroundings. Periodically walk around the playground area, ensuring there are no hazards that would be harmful to children.