

Hand Washing

POLICY:

In accordance with School Readiness Goals, Head Start staff and volunteers working in Head Start classrooms will teach and model hygiene practices to maintain a healthier environment and to lower the risk of spreading communicable diseases. On a daily basis, every Head Start classroom will align hand washing procedures with Performance Standards and ECERS-R requirements.

This policy relates to [Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR Part 1302.47](#)

PROCEDURE:

1. Antibacterial soap will not be used.
2. Staff, volunteers, and children in the Head Start classrooms will perform hand washing with soap at the following times:
 - a. Before meals—if staff determine that children have contaminated their hands once they have reached the cafeteria, hand sanitizer can be used before they get their trays.
 - b. Before and after preparing food
 - c. After using the bathroom or cleaning
 - d. After assisting a child with toilet use
 - e. Before and after treating or bandaging a wound
 - f. After contact with bodily fluids, even if wearing gloves
 - g. After diapering
 - h. After wiping noses, mouths, etc.
 - i. Before and after giving medications
 - j. After inspection of hair/scalp for lice
 - k. After cleaning/handling soiled items
 - l. After touching animals or contaminated objects
3. The sink must be sanitized after all of the children use the toilet rather than after each child during the regular classroom schedule with the exception of meals/snacks. The sink must be sanitized before the children, volunteers, and staff begin washing for meals/snacks. A staff person needs to turn on the faucet with a paper towel, and the water needs to run until the last child, volunteer, and staff washes his hands. The last staff person will turn off the faucet with a paper towel.

4. To avoid recontamination, trash cans used to dispose of paper towels after hand washing must be hands-free (i.e., have a foot pedal or sensor) or not have a lid. Diapers must be disposed of in a hands-free trash can (trash can must have a lid).
5. Hand washing will be conducted using the following best practices:
 - a. Wet hands with warm water.
 - b. Apply soap. Soap must be available and within children's reach.
 - c. Lather hands from the front to back of hands and between fingers rubbing vigorously for approximately 20 seconds.
 - d. Dry hands with a paper towel.
6. Staff /volunteer will supervise the use of hand sanitizer.
 - a. Staff/adult volunteer will use a hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol.
 - b. The manufacturer's instructions are followed. Staff will apply sanitizer to the child's hands; the child rubs hands from the front to the back and between fingers.
 - c. Staff/ volunteer will observe the child rubbing hands together until sanitizer is completely dry to avoid ingestion or contact with the eyes and mucous membranes.
 - d. Hand Sanitizer must be locked away or kept on staff/volunteers at all times because the label states ***Keep out of reach of children.***
 - e. Hand Sanitizer Dispensers are prohibited.
7. Hand Sanitizer can be used under the following circumstances:
 - a. Upon arrival in classroom and re-entry from outdoors (if hands are not soiled)
 - b. After meals if staff & children touch food
 - c. After sand or messy play with dry materials
 - d. Before and after water play and play with wet, sensory materials.