



# DIAPERING RECOMMENDATIONS

Changing diapers in a sanitary way is essential to prevent infectious organisms present in the stool from spreading. If the organisms, which cause infectious diarrhea, hepatitis-A, giardiasis and other illnesses, are accidentally ingested, the disease may be transmitted. You can help prevent illness by remembering the following guidelines as you diaper children.

## Equipment Concerns For Diapering:

### **Changing area and surface**

Children should be discouraged from remaining in or entering the diaper changing area. Keep the changing surface away from children, preferably at least 36 inches from the floor. Cover it with a smooth, moisture-resistant, easily cleanable material. For extra protection, use disposable single-service covers for each child. A changing table should be nonporous, kept in good repair, and cleaned and sanitized after each use to remove visible soil, followed by wetting with an approved sanitizing solution. Diaper changing should not be conducted on surfaces used for other purposes, especially not on any counter that is used during food preparation or mealtimes.

### **Hand washing sink and towels**

The best hand washing sink is one equipped with both hot and cold running water mixed through one faucet (with a minimum water temperature at least 60-degrees and not greater than 120-degrees). Ideally, water controls should be foot, knee or wrist operated to avoid contamination of or by hands. The sink should be in the same room as the changing surface. Keep soap and towels nearby. Use single-service towels (e.g., paper towels) instead of cloth towels.

### **Disposable gloves**

Although gloves are not necessary for diaper changing, they may reduce contamination of the caregiver's hands and reduce the presence of infectious disease agents under the fingernails and from the hand surfaces. Even if gloves are used, caregivers must wash their hands after each child's diaper changing to prevent the spread of disease-causing agents. Caregivers must remove the gloves using the proper technique otherwise the contaminated gloves will spread infectious disease agents.

### **Potty chairs**

Use of potty chairs should be discouraged. If potty chairs are used, they should be emptied into a toilet, cleaned in a utility sink, sanitized after each use, and stored in the bathroom. After the potty is sanitized, the utility sink should also be sanitized. Potty chairs should not be washed in a sink used for washing hands. If potty chairs are used, they should be constructed of plastic or similar nonporous synthetic products. Wooden potty chairs should not be used, even if the surface is coated with a finish. The finished surface of wooden potty chairs is not durable and, therefore, may become difficult to wash and sanitize effectively.

### **Diapers**

Use of disposable diapers is recommended to best reduce the risk of infections. Cloth diapers require more handling than disposable diapers (the more handling the greater chance of infection). When cloth diapers are used, no rising or dumping of contents of the diaper shall be performed at the childcare facility. Clean diapers should be stored away from dirty diapers. A child's diaper should be checked for wetness and feces as least hourly, and whenever the child indicates discomfort or exhibits behavior that suggests a soiled or wet diaper. Diapers should be changed when they are found to be wet or soiled.

# **DIAPERING RECOMMENDATIONS (cont.)**

## **Diapering Procedures:**

The following diaper changing procedure should be posted in the changing area and should be followed for all diaper changes.

### **Step 1: Get organized. Before you bring the child to the diaper changing area, wash your hands and bring what you need to the diaper-changing table:**

- a) Non-absorbent paper liner large enough to cover the changing surface from the child's shoulders to beyond the child's feet;
- b) Fresh diaper, clean clothes (if you need them);
- c) Wipes for cleaning the child's genitalia and buttocks removed from the container or dispensed so the container will not be touched during diaper changing;
- d) A plastic bag for any soiled diapers;
- e) Disposable gloves, if you plan to use them (put gloves on before handling soiled clothing or diapers);
- f) A thick application of any diaper cream (when appropriate) removed from the container to a piece of disposable material such as facial or toilet tissues.

### **Step 2: Carry the child to the changing table, keeping soiled clothing away from you and any surface you cannot easily clean and sanitize after the change.**

- a) Always keep a hand on the child;
- b) If the child's feet cannot be kept out of the diaper or from contact with soiled skin during the changing process, remove the child's shoes and socks so the child does not contaminate these surfaces with stool or urine during the diaper changing;
- c) Put soiled clothes in a plastic bag and securely tie the plastic bag to send the soiled clothes home.

### **Step 3: Clean the child's diaper area.**

- a) Place the child on the diaper change surface and unfasten the diaper but leave the soiled diaper under the child;

- b) If safety pins are used, close each pin immediately once it is removed and keep pins out of the child's reach. Never hold pins in your mouth;
- c) Lift the child's legs as needed to use disposable wipes to clean the skin on the child's genitalia and buttocks. Remove the stool and urine from front to back and use a fresh wipe each time. Put the soiled wipes into the soiled diaper or directly into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered can.

### **Step 4: Remove the soiled diaper without contaminating any surface not already in contact with stool or urine.**

- a) Fold the soiled surface of the diaper inward;
- b) Put soiled disposable diapers in a covered, plastic-lined, hands-free covered can. If reusable cloth diapers are used, put the soiled cloth diaper and its contents (without emptying or rinsing) in a plastic bag or into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered can to give to the parents or laundry service;
- c) If gloves are used, remove them using the proper technique and put them into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered can;
- d) Whether or not gloves are used, use a disposable wipe to clean the surface of the caregiver's hands and another to clean the child's hands, and put the wipes into the plastic-lined, hands-free covered can;
- e) Check for spills under the child. If there are any, use the paper that extends under the child's feet to fold over the disposable paper so a fresh, unsoiled paper surface is now under the child's buttocks.

### **Step 5: Put on a clean diaper and dress the child.**

- a) Slide a fresh diaper under the child;
- b) Use a facial or toilet tissue to apply any necessary diaper creams, discarding the tissue in a covered, plastic-lined, hands-free covered can;
- c) Note and plan to report any skin problems such as redness, skin cracks, or bleeding;

# **DIAPERING RECOMMENDATIONS (cont.)**

- d) Fasten the diaper. If pins are used, place your hand between the child and diaper when inserting the pin.

**SOURCE:** Caring For Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-Of-Home Childcare Programs.  
<http://cfoc.nrckids.org/>

## **Step 6: Wash the child’s hands and return the child to a supervised area.**

- a) Use soap and water, no less than 60 degrees F and no more than 120 degrees F, at a sink to wash the child’s hands, if you can.
- b) If the child is too heavy to hold for hand washing or cannot stand at the sink, use commercial disposable diaper wipes or follow this procedure:
  - I. Wipe the child’s hands with a damp paper towel moistened with a drop of liquid soap;
  - II. Wipe the child’s hands with a paper towel wet with clear water;
  - III. Dry the child’s hands with a paper towel.

## **Step 7: Clean and sanitize the diaper-changing surface.**

- a) Dispose of the disposable paper liner used on the diaper changing surface in a plastic-lined, hands-free covered can;
- b) Clean any visible soil from the changing surface with detergent and water; rinse with water.
- c) Wet the entire changing surface with the sanitizing solution (e.g., spray a sanitizing bleach solution of ¼ cup of household liquid chlorine bleach in one gallon of tap water, mixed fresh daily);
- d) Put away the spray bottle of sanitizer. If the recommended bleach dilution is sprayed as a sanitizer on the surface, leave it in contact with the surface for at least two (2) minutes. The surface can be left to air dry or can be wiped dry after two (2) minutes of contact with the bleach solution.

## **Step 8: Wash your hands using proper technique.**