

# Hand Washing Policy

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Under the National Law and Regulations, early childhood services are required to obtain written authorisation from parents/guardians, and authorised nominees in some circumstances, to ensure that the health, safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child are met.

## National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety	
2.1	Each child’s health is promoted
2.2	Healthy eating and physical activity is embedded in the program for children
2.3	Each child is protected

Education and Care Services National Regulations	
77	Health, Hygiene and safe food practices
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
109	Toilet and hygiene facilities

## PURPOSE

To ensure that all educators, staff, volunteers, families and children of the Service perform specific hand hygiene practices required minimising the risks associated with infection.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Handwashing is a vital strategy in the prevention of spreading many infectious diseases. Research emphasises handwashing as the single most important task you can do to reduce the spread of bacteria, germs, viruses and parasites that infect yourself, other staff and children being cared for.

Micro-organisms such as bacteria, germs, viruses and parasites are present on the hands at all times and live in the oil that is naturally produced on your hands. The use of soap or detergent and water remove most of these organisms and decreases the risk of cross infection.

Our Service will adhere to National Regulation requirements, standards and tools to support the effectiveness of our hand washing policy. We aim to educate and encourage children to wash their hands effectively which will help to reduce the incidence of infectious diseases.

### To ensure the greatest level of personal hygiene, it is a requirement of the service to wash your hands

- On arrival at the Service
- Before and after toileting or changing nappies
- After going to the toilet
- After wiping a runny nose or blowing your own nose
- Before and after administering first aid
- Before and after administering medication
- After using chemicals
- Before eating, preparing and serving food
- Making bottles

- After cleaning up bodily fluids
- After removing protective gloves
- Before going home

Children will be encouraged to follow educators modelling and wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the day. Educators will ensure all required equipment is easily accessible and appropriate for use.

**Strategies Educators will use to encourage effective hand hygiene practice include**

- Talking about the importance of hygiene
- Singing a song or reciting a poem (singing happy birthday twice is a sufficient time frame)
- Using a clear visual poster with a step by step instructions
- Using positive language
- Encouraging and using positive reinforcement
- Ensuring equipment is accessible
- Provide clear simple routines
- Give children sufficient time to practice and develop their skills
- Ensure adequate supervision and assistance is available when required

We believe hygiene practices of children being cared for should be as rigorous as staff and educators. Our hygiene environment supports appropriate practice.

**Hand Drying**

Effective hand drying is just as important as comprehensive hand washing. Research states that wet hands can pick up and transfer up to 1000 times more bacteria than dry hands. Drying hands thoroughly also helps remove any germs that may not have been rinsed off. We provide children, staff and educators disposable paper towels to ensure effective hand hygiene.

**Source**

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015,
- ECA Code of Ethics.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard.
- Staying Healthy in Child Care 5<sup>th</sup> Edition

**Review**

Policy Review Date
October 2018

# Wash Your Hands!



wet your hands with running water



cover your hands with soap and rub your hands vigorously



wash your hands all over, being sure to clean in between fingers, under fingernails, around wrists and both the palms and backs of hands



Rinse your hands thoroughly to remove all soap and germs



use a paper towel to dry hands & turn off the tap



Place paper towel into the bin