

Training

You are required to provide yearly disaster/crisis training for your staff. You, your health consultant, or other qualified professionals can provide this training. It is important to document any training that takes place. Quarterly disaster drills and monthly fire drills must be held and documented. Documentation of the drills must be on file for the current year plus the previous calendar year.

Sample Disaster/Crisis Plan

A sample Disaster/Crisis Plan is included in Appendix B. The model plan was developed by the Snohomish County Health District Partners in Child Care. Its purpose is to give child care center personnel step-by-step procedures for responding to emergency situations during the first 30 minutes of the disaster. If staff are able to follow the instructions in the order they are written, it will help them to know what to do in each type of disaster or crisis. Check with your licenser for more information about developing a Disaster Plan. Additional resources include the American Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and your local public health department.

Note: Licensing requires you to train your staff annually on your disaster plan. You are also required to have written documentation that parents have read and reviewed your disaster plan upon enrollment.

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How do I maintain a clean and sanitized environment?

- Surfaces must be easily cleanable. A cleanable surface is one that is:
 - Designed to be cleaned frequently
 - Moisture-resistant, and
 - Free from cracks, chips or tears.
- Examples of cleanable surfaces include linoleum, tile, sealed wood, and plastic.
- You must maintain the building, equipment and premises in a clean and sanitary manner that protects the children from illness including but not limited to:
 - Ensure that floors around sinks, toilets, diaper change areas and potty chairs are moisture resistant and easily cleanable for at least twenty-four inches surrounding the surfaces, and
 - Take measures to control rodents, fleas, cockroaches, and other pests in and around the center premises such as:
 - Keep all trash and garbage cans tightly sealed
 - Screen open windows and doors
 - Seal and store food properly, and
 - Keep floors and other areas free from crumbs and food debris.
- Surfaces can be cleaned:
 - With any cleaning solution such as soap and water, cleanser or cleaning spray
 - With a concentration according to label directions, and
 - Rinsed as needed per label directions.
- You may use a bleach solution to sanitize the following areas:
 - Diapering areas
 - Surfaces exposed to body fluids
 - Bathrooms and bathroom equipment
 - Table tops
 - High chairs
 - Toys
 - Dishes
 - Floors, and
 - Sleeping mats.

- You may use a bleach solution or another solution intended for sanitizing if the department approves it. When you use a product other than bleach to sanitize, you must:
 - Follow the label directions for use including concentration, contact time and rinsing, and
 - Be sure that if you use the product on food contact surfaces and items that children might put into their mouths, the label states the product is safe for food contact surfaces.
- The following are surfaces that need to be cleaned and sanitized and a minimum schedule for that cleaning:
 - Tables and counters used for food serving and high chairs are cleaned and sanitized before and after each meal or snack
 - Sinks, counters and floors are cleaned and sanitized daily or more often if necessary
 - Refrigerators are cleaned and sanitized monthly or more often as needed
 - Bathroom (including sinks, toilets, counters and floors) are cleaned and sanitized daily and more often if necessary
 - Floors are swept, cleaned and sanitized daily.
 - Carpet is vacuumed at least daily and shampooed as needed but at least every six months
 - Toys that children place in their mouth are cleaned between use by different children
 - Infant and toddler toys are cleaned daily
 - Sleeping mats, cribs and other forms of bedding are cleaned between use by different children and at least weekly.
- Your health policies and procedures must describe your frequency for general cleaning, dusting, cleaning toys, toy shelves, and equipment.

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Cleaning and sanitizing equipment and toys

Cleaning and sanitizing are important steps in ensuring a healthy environment and in preventing the spread of illness. You need to have policies and routines for maintaining sanitary conditions at the center, and you need to train staff to follow your guidelines.

The younger the children in care, the more likely an object will go into their mouths. This means you clean and sanitize their objects and surfaces often. All mouthed toys must be cleaned and sanitized between uses. One method is to put mouthed toys in a plastic tub until they can be cleaned and sanitized as required as well as having sufficient mouthing toys for replacement and use.

It is important that you clean before you sanitize. Cleaning means washing with soap and water, then rinsing with clear water prior to applying a bleach solution. Do not apply a bleach solution to a soiled surface or a surface that has soap residue on it. If you do, it will not adequately sanitize the surface.

Formulas for Bleach Solutions

Disinfecting solution is a more concentrated solution and is used for diapering areas, bathrooms, kitchens, handwashing sinks, floors, and surfaces contaminated by body fluids: Use one-quarter (1/4) cup of bleach per gallon of water (or one tablespoon per quart). This solution is strong enough to kill germs quickly, but it still needs time to work. You must let the surface air-dry for a minimum of two minutes. Using a towel or sponge to dry the surface increases the chances of putting germs back on the cleaned surface. Bleach evaporates quickly, leaving no toxic residue.

Sanitizing solution is a less concentrated solution and is used for submerging dishware that has been cleaned, table tops, classroom counters and door-knobs, and toys that are mouthed by children. Use one tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water. For this less concentrated solution to do its job of killing germs, totally submerge objects in the solution for at least two full minutes. Allow the items to air dry.