

# Making Your Childcare Centre a *Healthy Environment*

A Fact Sheet for Childcare Operators and Staff



## Sandbox Safety

### *Is your sandbox safe?*

#### **Do you keep your sandbox covered at all times when not in use?**

Keeping your sandbox covered with a heavy impermeable material will prevent entry of other children or animals. It will also ensure there is no contamination of the sand by solids or liquids.

#### **Do you have clean sand in your sandbox?**

Using clean sand (and silica free) in the sandbox ensures that there are no harmful organisms in the sand that may affect your children while they are playing. Spraying the sand with a bleach and water solution does not effectively disinfect it.

#### **Do you check your sandbox daily?**

Do a visual check of the sandbox daily before use. This ensures that there is no contamination of the sand by animal or other people. Rake the sand weekly to ensure there are no buried articles that may pose a hazard (i.e. feces, syringes, choking hazards).

#### **Did you know?**

The consumption of soil and sand by children can lead to a serious health hazard known as *Toxoplasmosis*. Symptoms of this disease can range from brain injury to pneumonia and death. Discourage children from consuming or placing any articles contaminated with sand in their mouth. Ensure that pregnant staff are not changing the sand or removing feces from the sandbox.

#### **Are you allowing the consumption of snacks/food while children are playing in the sandbox?**

This can lead to children ingesting the sand and other contaminants. Ensure that the children wash their hands thoroughly after playing with sand.

Following these tips will keep playtime in your sandbox not only fun for your children, but also safe.



This fact sheet has been produced by York Region Health Services,  
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Questions? Call *Health Connection* 1-800-361-5653

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