

# Making Your Child Care Centre a Healthy Environment



## A Fact Sheet for Child Care Operators and Staff

York Region Community and Health Services is mandated to inspect all child care centres to ensure compliance with food safety regulations, infection control and safe water standards. This fact sheet is provided for information and guidance to child care centre operators.

### Toy Cleaning and Disinfection

Toys are important to a child's growth and development. However, they can also provide a route for spreading common childhood infections such as pink eye, hand foot and mouth disease, chicken pox and the common cold. One of the most important steps for reducing illness and the spread of disease is regular cleaning and disinfection of surfaces. Toys that are frequently handled or mouthed are those most likely to be contaminated and therefore must be cleaned and disinfected daily. During an outbreak, all toys must be cleaned and disinfected daily and plush/cloth toys should be removed from circulation.

Step 1	Only toys that can be cleaned and disinfected are permitted for use (see Step 7 for plush/cloth toys).
Step 2	Inspect all toys to ensure there are no loose small parts or broken jagged edges that can pose a safety hazard.
Step 3	Minimize the sharing and mouthing of toys between children. Once a child has mouthed a toy, it must be taken out of circulation and then cleaned and disinfected.
Step 4	All toys must be cleaned by scrubbing with soap and water. A brush must be used when cleaning toys that have small crevices.
Step 5	Rinse toys in potable water.
Step 6	Apply a low-level disinfectant solution according to the manufacturer's recommendations. During an outbreak, a high-level disinfectant must be used.
Step 7	Only plush/cloth toys that are washable are permitted for use. These toys are to be laundered weekly or when visibly soiled.

*Note:* When choosing toys for your centre, it is important to regularly check for product recalls on the Health Canada Product Safety website at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/advisories-avis/index-eng.php>. Please avoid old, donated toys or other objects that are painted as they may contain lead.



For more information, please call  
**York Region Health Connection 1-800-361-5653 TTY: 1-866-252-9933**  
[www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)

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