

Cloth Diapers: Infection Control Considerations

Requirements for Child Care Centres:

- Child care centres must have an infection control policy and procedure for the handling and use of cloth diapers onsite. The policy and procedure should address:
 - Requirements for child care staff as well as parents
 - Storage of clean and used cloth diapers
 - Hand hygiene for staff handling used cloth diapers
 - Procedure to follow if diapers are not picked up at the frequency agreed upon with parents
 - Procedure to follow if diaper pails/bags are not maintained in a clean and sanitary condition by parents (not cleaned and disinfected daily)

- Child care staff should designate a frequency for parent pick up of used diapers and diaper pail/bag. It is strongly recommended that the used diapers and diaper pail/bag be sent home with each family on a daily basis for cleaning/washing at home.

- Considerations for child care staff handling cloth diapers include:
 - Staff must wear single use disposable gloves when handling used diapers.
 - Provide adequate storage space for used cloth diapers awaiting pick-up by parents
 - Used diapers must be stored away from food storage/preparation/service areas and play areas and must not be accessible to children
 - Store clean cloth diapers in a sanitary manner and separately from used diapers
 - Label the parent supplied diaper pail/bag (one per child) designated for storage of used diapers
 - Used cloth diapers (outer covering and liner) must be handled as little as possible to limit and prevent exposure to body fluids. Do not shake, scrape, or rinse the cloth diapers.
 - If excess fecal matter must be removed from diapers, ensure this is disposed of in the toilet and not in the sink.
 - Staff must wash hands using liquid soap and hot and cold running water after assisting with toileting/diapering. Alcohol based hand rub should not be used as hands may be soiled.
 - Used cloth diapers must be stored out of reach of the children and in a diaper pail with a childproof lid or in a leak proof bag.
 - Cloth diapers should not be laundered at the child care centre.

Requirements for Parents:

- Parents should supply a diaper pail/bag with tight fitting lid or one that is able to be covered/closed to prevent access.
- Diaper pails must be:
 - Childproof (e.g., have a locking lid, stored out of reach of children)
 - Able to be cleaned and disinfected – items that are porous or absorbent are not acceptable
 - Leak-proof to prevent exposure of body fluids and minimize contamination of the environment
- Diaper bags (“wet bags”) must be:
 - Able to be stored out of reach of children
 - Able to be laundered. Items that are porous or absorbent are not acceptable
 - Water/leak-proof – made of nylon or laminated/PU: (polyurethane laminate: waterproof fabric with laminate applied to the back to prevent contents from leaking)
 - Intended for the purpose of holding used cloth diapers (plastic grocery or non-waterproof bags are not acceptable)
- Parents should clean and disinfect the diaper pail/bag at least daily once the used diapers have been removed and laundered.