

## INFECTIOUS AND VIRAL DISEASES

**AIM:** To minimize the risks to children's and staff health whilst at this preschool.

The Nominated Supervisor of the preschool must ensure all members of staff observe strict health practices, and be aware of their responsibility for their own and the children's health.

Viral and other infectious diseases are transmitted in three ways:

1. Through bodily fluids, i.e. saliva, urine, blood, fecal matter and vomit.
2. Through airborne droplets, i.e. coughing and sneezing.
3. Direct contact

Some germs can spread directly from person to person: others can spread from the infected person to the environment. Many germs can survive on hands, and on objects such as toys, door handles and bench tops.

Emerging infectious diseases are newly identified and previously unknown infectious agents that cause public health problems either locally or internationally.

### Procedures:

**Listed below are some strategies to control the hazard of infectious diseases:**

Have an adequate supply of soap, hand sanitizer and gloves on hand at all times. Ensure these are stored safely around children.

When washing your hands, ensure that you do so thoroughly with soap or a medical wash. Make sure you wash between your fingers and all the surfaces of your hands.

Promote the washing of hands to children through example and with posters.

Ensure that you wash your hands, particularly before handling food or between going from one child to another (particularly when assisting with toileting) and blowing of noses.

Promote the covering of nose and mouth when anyone sneezes or coughs, (coughing into their elbow is a useful strategy).

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth before washing hands.

When assisting toileting, cleaning up vomit or blood ALWAYS WEAR DISPOSABLE GLOVES. Many serious diseases such as Hepatitis A and B and HIV are transmitted through bodily fluids. Remember to always wash hands after removing disposable gloves.

Clean surfaces and disinfect them regularly. These include taps, all sinks, and kitchen surfaces, including refrigerator and all doorknobs and equipment.

Ensure robust infection control and cleaning procedures are in place in response to an outbreak of an infectious disease.

Promote the annual influenza vaccine for staff, children and their families.

Check your own immunization status. Ensure that you have been immunized against common childhood infections. Note that immunization against Hepatitis is generally not required except in exceptional circumstances and/or an identified high-risk area. Women working with under three-year olds check their status regarding cytomegalovirus CMV, refer to Staying Healthy in Child Care 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2013).

During an outbreak of an infectious disease, cancel any planned activities outside the preschool and any large gatherings at the preschool.

No one (staff or children) who is sick with influenza-like symptoms, even with mild symptoms, should attend the preschool.

Children and staff need to be symptom free for 24 hours and fever reducing medication free for 24 hours before they return to the preschool.

No one (staff or children) who has a temperature of over **37.5** should attend the preschool.

Staff and children will have their temperature taken daily upon arrival should there be an outbreak of an infectious disease.

If a child or staff member becomes ill while at the preschool, they will be sent home as soon as possible. While awaiting collection by their carer, the symptomatic child will be cared for in an area that is separate from other children, to prevent the spread.

The Nominated Supervisor will contact the public health unit immediately on 1300 066 055, if notified that a child or staff member at the preschool has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or any other infectious disease.

If directed to close by NSW Health, notify the Regulatory Authority as soon as possible via NQAITS or call 1800 619 113.