

7.8 (c) Hygiene Practices – Nappy Changing Policy

Policy number: 7.8 (c)
Date last reviewed: February 2025
Reviewed by: Child Care Team

This policy relates to Family Day Care/Venue Care/In Home Child Care	
National Quality Standards Early Childhood Education & Care	2.1 Health Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted 3.1 The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service 3.1.1 Fit for purpose

Purpose

Educators should ensure that children’s nappies are checked and changed frequently, hygienically and respectfully. Nappy changing should be used as an opportunity for communication, interaction and developing relationships with children.

Policy

Nappies should be changed frequently to ensure infants and toddlers health, hygiene and comfort is maintained.

Nappies should be changed on a needs basis as well as certain times during the day when each child’s nappy is checked.

Nappy changing areas and potties must be away from food preparation areas. Hands should be washed using a different sink from the food preparation area sink.

Educators should ensure that their own reactions to nappy changing are always positive and reassuring to the child.

Nappy changing and toileting rituals are also valuable opportunities to promote children’s learning, meet individual needs and to develop strong relationships with children. Having their needs met in a caring and responsive way builds children’s sense of trust and security - which relates strongly to the Early Years Learning Framework.

Educators should use nappy changing as an opportunity to:

- Have one on one interaction with children;
- Build trusting and caring relationships;
- Interact using verbal and non-verbal communication and respond to children’s communication.

- Engage in simple play activities with children such as singing, rhymes and finger play;
- Build children's understanding of what is happening and promote their ability to predict what will happen next;
- Help children begin to develop self-help skills e.g. handwashing and dressing.

Procedure for Hygienic Nappy Changing

- Educators should have a designated space for changing nappies with supplies ready and within reach, including pre-moistened towelettes or damp paper towels, disposable gloves, plastic bags, fresh nappies, clothes and a lined, hands free rubbish bin. Children should never be left unattended on a nappy change table and physical contact should always be maintained with the child;
- Educators are encouraged to speak respectfully with children about what they are doing, for example seeking permission from or advising children that their nappy is being checked and talking to them about what is happening as their nappy is being changed. Children who are walking should be encouraged to walk to the change area;
- Educators are required to use gloves when dealing with bodily fluids including blood, vomit, urine and faeces.

Steps to change a nappy (*refer to the **Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th Edition – Nappy Changing Procedure flow chart below***):

Note: *The bin needs to be inaccessible to children.*

- (1) Wash your hands;
- (2) Place paper on the change table;
- (3) Put disposable gloves on both hands;

Remove the child's nappy and put it in a hands-free lidded bin, or a tied plastic bag ready for disposal. Place any soiled clothes in a plastic bag;

Note: *Gloves worn during nappy changing can be used to effectively contain faeces within the nappy for disposal. To do this, hold the soiled nappy in the palm of one hand, and invert and stretch the other glove over the entire glove/nappy ball. This will make the nappy safe to handle and contain odour.*

- (4) Clean the child's bottom wiping from front to back;
- (6) Remove the paper and put it in a hands-free lidded bin;
- (7) Remove your gloves now. Put the gloves in the bin;
- (8) Place a clean nappy on the child;

- (9) Dress the child;
- (10) Take the child away from the change table;
- (11) Wash your hands and the child's hands;
- (12) Clean the change table with detergent and water, paying particular attention to the mat, at the completion of each nappy change;
- (13) If the child has used a cloth nappy or any clothing is soiled, rinse soiling off and put the nappy and any clothes into a plastic bag to be taken home. Solids should be flushed into the toilet, and soiled nappies should be either soaked in an effective germicidal cleaning solution in a container with a close-fitting lid (out of the reach of children), or placed in a sealed bag to be returned to parents.
- (14) Wash your hands.

Change Mats

- Change mats/the surface of the nappy change table need to be impervious/vinyl and need to be smooth and in good condition as germs can survive in cracks, holes, creases, pleats, folds or seams;
- Replace the paper on the change table ready for the next use. Any paper, without print, can be used for this; paper towel is easy to use.

Steps to clean the change mat or nappy change table:

- (1) After each nappy change (including if faeces spill on to the change table or mat), thoroughly wash the table or mat well with detergent and water. Use paper towel for cleaning and drying the surface;

Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care 4th Edition states “disinfectants are usually unnecessary. Most germs do not survive for long on clean surfaces when exposed to air and light. Effective cleaning with detergent and warm water, followed by rinsing and drying removes the bulk of germs from surfaces”

- (2) At the end of the day, thoroughly wash the table or mat well with detergent; remove the mat and leave to dry, preferably in the sun.
- (3) Wash your hands.

Flow Chart – Staying Healthy in Childcare (5th Edition) – Nappy Changing Procedure

Nappy Changing Procedure					
Preparation		Changing		Cleaning	
1	Wash your hands	4	Remove the child's nappy and put it in a hands-free lidded bin. Place any soiled clothes in a plastic bag	12	Clean the change table with detergent and warm water after each nappy change
2	Place paper on the change table	5	Clean the child's bottom	13	Wash your hands
3	Put disposable gloves on both hands	6	Remove the paper and put it in a hands-free lidded bin		
		7	Remove your gloves and put them in a hands-free lidded bin		
		8	Place a clean nappy on the child		
		9	Dress the child		
		10	Take the child away from the change table.		
		11	Wash your hands and the child's hands		

Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
 National Quality Framework 2011

Key Resources

National Health and Medical Research Council: (2006) *Staying Healthy in Child Care Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care 5th Edition*
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/>
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch55>
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/subject/General%20Health%20Information>
http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43poster2.pdf
 The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne: Childcare and Children's Health Vol 11 No 3 (2008)
Hygiene and Infection Control
http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/CCH_Vol_11_No3_Sept_2008.pdf
http://www.rch.org.au/ecconnections/publications/index.cfm?doc_id=11283
 Family Day Care Australia
www.fdca.com.au