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Quality Care For Kids

A newsletter for Scott County Child Care Providers

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Reduce the Spread of Illness

Whenever children are together, there is a risk for the spreading of germs. Children explore the world through touch and younger children and infants often put toys and other objects into their mouth. Children may not adequately wash their hands or cover their mouth and nose when they cough or sneeze.

Germs can spread easily in the child care/school environment. Germs spread by:

- Person to person-examples include coughing or sneezing, diapering without gloves, contact with blood, poor hand-washing.
 - Person to object to person-examples include mouthed toys, coughing or sneezing on an object, rubbing nose/eyes/mouth, no disinfecting of toilet/diapering areas.
 - Animal to person-examples include poor or no handwashing after touching an animal.
- To help reduce the spread of illness it is important to do the following:
- Frequent and good handwashing for children and staff (following the steps on the HCCI Handwashing Poster).
 - Teach children (and staff) to cover their cough and sneezes.
 - Teach children to avoid touching their "T zone" (eyes, nose, mouth).
 - Stay home when ill.
 - If a child becomes ill and they are waiting to be picked up, the ill child who is being excluded should be in a location where no contact occurs with those who have not already been exposed to their infection.
 - Have separate sinks for preparing food and washing hands.
 - Clean and sanitize mouthed toys before allowing other children to play with them.
 - Clean and sanitize food prep areas, dishes, eating utensils, and trays.
 - Clean and disinfect toilet/diapering areas, door and cabinet handles, floors, cribs, cots, drinking fountains, and other surfaces.
 - Wear disposable non-latex gloves for diapering, assisting with toileting, providing medical care/first aid, and when administering medications.
 - Encourage staff and parents for children to be fully immunized, especially against the flu.

Cover Your Cough and Sneezes

Did you know that when you cough or sneeze, germs that cause illnesses like influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and whooping cough (Pertussis) can travel up to 6 feet? To help prevent the spread of illness the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reminds everyone to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you don't have a tissue handy, cough into your sleeve (inner elbow). Children can be taught this important health habit by the adults around them modeling it and by visual aids such as posters. The CDC has free downloadable "Cover Your Cough" posters available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>

December 3-9 is National Handwashing Awareness Week. The Healthy Child Care Iowa website has free handwashing posters available to download and print. Go to www.idph.iowa.gov/hcci click on "printed products" tab.

For more information about the National Handwashing Week go to: www.henrythehand.com/



Photo CDC/James Gathany

Call your Child Care Nurse Consultant (CCNC) if you have any questions about child health and safety, or any special training needs.



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