

HAND WASHING

Having and encouraging effective hygiene practices in Happy Haven OSHC services is essential for reducing the risk of infection. Helping children to develop appropriate personal hygiene habits, such as hand hygiene, will become embedded as they grow and develop. It is important to work with families to ensure children follow simple hygiene rules by incorporating good hygiene strategies in both the OSHC service and home environment.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
88	Infectious diseases
93	Administration of medication
109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of Medication Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Control of Infectious Disease Policy	Sick Children Policy
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Management Policy	Supervision Policy
Health & Safety Policy	Work Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

Happy Haven OSHC is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all educators, staff, volunteers, families, and children by providing a safe and healthy environment. Effective hand hygiene significantly reduces the risk of infection and is therefore of the utmost importance. We aim to implement specific hand washing hygiene practices regularly to minimise the risks associated with cross infection of viral and bacterial borne diseases.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, visitors and all Happy Haven OSHC staff.

IMPLEMENTATION

Infection can be spread through direct physical contact between people, airborne droplets from coughing and sneezing or from contact with surfaces and objects. Children come into contact with a large number of other children and adults, play equipment, eating utensils and other resources whilst being cared for in our services. This high degree of physical contact with people and the environment creates a higher risk of children being exposed to and spreading infectious illnesses. Whilst it may not be possible for services to prevent the spread of all infections, we aim to create a hygienic environment to minimise the spread of diseases and infections.

Effective hand washing is a vital strategy in the prevention of spreading many infectious diseases. Research emphasises effective and frequent handwashing as the single most important way to reduce the spread of bacteria, germs, viruses, and parasites that may infect educators, staff and children in school aged care services and in our general population.

Micro-organisms such as bacteria, germs, viruses, and parasites are present on the hands at all times and live in the oil that is naturally produced on your hands. The use of soap or detergent and water remove most of these organisms and decreases the risk of cross infection.

Happy Haven OSHC will adhere to National Regulation requirements, standards, and guidelines to support the effectiveness of our hand washing policy. We aim to educate and encourage children to wash their hands frequently and effectively which will help to reduce the incidence of infectious

diseases, adhering to guidelines provided in *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* and recommendations from the Department of Health- Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) to guide best practice.

TO ENSURE THE GREATEST LEVEL OF PERSONAL HYGIENE, HAPPY HAVEN OSHC SERVICES WILL ENSURE::

- All employees, parents, children and visitors wash their hands with soap and if possible, warm water for at least 20 seconds upon arrival to the service or, use the alcohol-based sanitiser under adult supervision
- Hands are thoroughly dried using hand towel and disposed of in the bin provided
- Disposable tissues are used to wipe noses, eyes or mouths and disposed of in the bin provided immediately after use
- Hands are washed following the use of tissues
- Hands are washed thoroughly using soap and water before and after using the toilet
- Signage is provided to prompt visitors and children to wash their hands regularly and effectively when visiting our service.

THE NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL ENSURE:

- Educators and staff wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds regularly
- Educators and staff wash their hands:
 - Before and after eating and handling food
 - Before and after applying sunscreen or other lotions to children
 - After using the toilet
 - After blowing their own nose
 - After supervising children near toilet facilities
 - After touching animals
 - After cleaning high touch surfaces- (tables, light switches, door handles, computers, iPads)
 - After cleaning or mopping floors
 - After changing learning environments – outdoor play area, indoor learning
 - Whenever their hands are visibly dirty (after gardening, painting)
 - Before leaving the OSHC service at the end of the day

- Educators and staff adhere to effective food preparation and food handling procedures
- Educators and staff wash hands before and after wearing disposable gloves when:
 - Preparing food
 - Administering medication
 - Administering first aid
 - Cleaning spills- faeces, vomit or blood
 - Cleaning with disinfectant or chemicals
 - After handling garbage and/or contaminated materials

EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- Children are explicitly taught the correct process of hand washing
- Children are carefully supervised when handwashing
- Children are reminded to wash their hands frequently throughout the day
- They model effective handwashing procedures
- The required equipment and resources are easily accessible and appropriate to use- liquid soap, running water, paper towel

We believe the hygiene practices of children being cared for should be as rigorous as those of staff and educators. Our environment supports the creation of appropriate healthy hygiene habits to ensure lifelong healthy decisions and actions.

STRATEGIES EDUCATORS WILL USE TO ENCOURAGE EFFECTIVE HAND HYGIENE PRACTICES INCLUDE:

- Talking about the importance of hand hygiene
- Talking about when hand washing is appropriate and why
- Using a clear visual poster with step by step instructions
- Using positive language
- Ensuring equipment is accessible (liquid soap, hand towels)
- Ensuring adequate supervision and assistance is available when required
- Use STEM opportunities to teach about germs and prevention (ie: pepper and soap experiment)

HAND DRYING

Effective hand drying is just as important as comprehensive hand washing. Research states that wet hands can pick up and transfer up to 1000 times more bacteria than dry hands. Drying hands thoroughly also helps remove any germs that may not have been rinsed off.

Happy Haven OSHC provides children, staff, and educators with disposable paper towel to ensure effective hand hygiene. Bins are provided with foot control lids to dispose of used paper towel.

Where possible, our services aims to find sustainable alternatives to paper towel that may harm the environment.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer

Where possible, staff will use soap and water to clean their hands however, if this is not possible and hands are not greasy or visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitiser may be used.

Hand sanitiser must be kept out of reach of children at all times as it can be very dangerous if swallowed. Directions should be followed on how to use the sanitiser correctly. The effectiveness of an alcohol-based hand sanitiser to kill microorganisms or prevent their growth should be at least 60% alcohol. As per National Regulations, a safety data sheet will be kept on file for any alcohol-based hand sanitiser used in the Happy Haven OSHC service.

RELATED INFORMATION/RESOURCES

Australian Government Department of Health [Practise good hand hygiene](#)

Government of South Australia: SA Health. Hand Hygiene.

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/healthy+living/protecting+your+health/preventing+disease+and+infection/hand+hygiene/hand+hygiene>

Hand Hygiene Australia: <https://www.hha.org.au/>

Be a Soapy Hero! <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/soapy-hero>
[Teaching washing your hands with pepper experiment](#)

SOURCE

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Government of South Australia: SA Health. Hand Hygiene.

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/healthy+living/protecting+your+health/preventing+disease+and+infection/hand+hygiene/hand+hygiene>

Hand Hygiene Australia: <https://www.hha.org.au/>

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020)

KidSafe Australia: <https://kidsafe.com.au>

Model Work Health and Safety Act (2019). <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-work-health-and-safety-act>

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012) (updated June 2013). Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services.

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Work Health and Safety Act 2012. <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-work-health-and-safety-act>

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	JUNE 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	REVIEW	JUNE 2023
MODIFICATIONS	New policy using childcare desktop examples and added information from relevant hand hygiene sources. Policy transferred into Happy Haven formatting			
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE	REVIEW
Month YYYY	•		Month YYYY	
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