



FACT SHEET

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Child Care: Toy Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning is the process of physically removing matter (e.g. dust, soil, etc). Cleaning is accomplished with water, detergents, and mechanical action (e.g. scrubbing). Disinfection is the process of killing microorganisms. **Disinfection is only effective if the surface has been thoroughly cleaned first.**

When purchasing toys, ensure they can be washed or laundered. Toys and surfaces should be smooth, non-absorbent and easily cleanable. Fabric surfaces must be able to be laundered.

Surface	Minimum Disinfection Frequency	Special Instructions
Toys		
Mouthed toys	After each use	
Infant and toddler toys	Daily	
Preschooler toys	Weekly	
Dress up clothes	Weekly	If there is lice or scabies in the centre, clothes should be laundered and not used until the problem has resolved
Soft, stuffed toys	Weekly	If there is lice or scabies in the centre, clothes should be laundered and not used until the problem has resolved
Water Play		
Wading pools	After each use	Do not leave pool unattended. Must be drained immediately after use
Water play table	After each use (session)	Do not leave table unattended. Must be drained immediately after use
Water play toys	After each use (session)	
Sandboxes and Sensory		
Sandboxes		Cover when not used. Cover must be tight fitting to prevent animals from entering. Rake sand in box and the immediate area prior to use
Sandbox toys	Weekly	
Sensory tables	Weekly	

Sources: Grenier, D. and Leduc, D. *Well Beings: A Guide to Health in Child Care Centres*. (2008). Canada: Canadian Paediatric Society
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. *Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Infection Prevention and Control in All Health Care Settings*. (2009).