

# INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES

Section 1 through Section 3 of this manual contains information on ways to reduce the spread of germs in childcare settings and schools. Key concepts of prevention and control:

- **Handwashing** (see Section 3) – the single most effective way to prevent the spread of germs.
- **Covering your cough** (see Section 3) – an effective way to reduce the spread of germs when coughing and sneezing.
- **Appropriate gloving** (see Section 3) – an effective way to help prevent the spread of germs. It is not a substitute for handwashing. See standard precautions below.
- **Proper diapering procedures** (see Section 2) – to reduce the spread of germs found in stool to hands, objects, and the environment.
- **Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting** (see Section 2) – to reduce the presence of germs in the environment.
- **Food safety** (see Section 2) – to reduce the spread of germs from improperly cooked and handled food.
- **Exclusion guidelines** (see Section 1) – to reduce the chance of spreading germs from ill people to others.
- **Immunizations** (see Section 9) – for list of resources for age appropriate immunizations and childcare and school requirements.
- **Avoid sharing personal items** – encourage children, students, and staff to **not share items** such as water bottles, food, utensils, beverages, straws, toothbrushes, lip gloss, lip balm, lipstick, towels, head gear, combs, brushes, etc. to prevent the spread of germs to others.
- **Promote self-care** – encourage staff and children to perform their own first aid, when age appropriate.
- **Standard precautions** are used in many settings where there is a possibility of exposure to blood or body fluids (e.g., urine, stool, secretions from the nose or mouth, drainage from sores or eyes). One aspect of standard precautions is the use of barriers. The purpose of using barriers is to reduce the spread of germs to staff and children from known/unknown sources of infections and prevent a person with open cuts, sores, or cracked skin (non-intact skin) and their eyes, nose, or mouth (mucous membranes) from having contact with another person's blood or body fluids.

Examples of barriers that would be used for childcare and school settings include:

- Gloves (preferably non-latex) when hands are likely to be soiled with blood or body fluids.
- CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) barriers – CPR mask or shield.

Other examples that most likely would *not* be needed in the childcare or school setting are:

- Eye protection and face mask when the face is likely to be splattered with another's blood or body fluids.
- Gowns when clothing is likely to be splattered with another's blood or body fluids.

Proper use of safety needle/sharp devices and proper disposal of used needles and sharps are also part of standard precautions.

