

4. Wash hands thoroughly before and after each nappy change (including after disposal of nappy). Use of disposable gloves is recommended
5. Dispose of nappies safely by wrapping them, before putting them in a bin liner
6. Clean the changing mat after each use
7. Clean, disinfect and rinse if the changing mat or surrounding area is soiled.

### Food Handling/Kitchen

Those responsible for preparing and handling food must maintain strict hygiene standards. Germs that cause food and water-borne diseases can be spread by consuming contaminated food or water.

Germs can be found in:

- Raw food including meat, poultry, eggs, fish and seafood
- Unwashed vegetables; soil; stools/faeces of humans and animals, untreated water; dust; and insects.

### Things to remember

1. Ensure all cooking and eating utensils and work surfaces are clean before use. Dishwashers are particularly effective
2. Baby feeding equipment should be sterilised before use
3. Use a separate area for the hygienic preparation of babies' feeds
4. Store prepared feeds in the refrigerator
5. Check use-by dates and do not use damaged food or packages
6. Use separate boards for raw meat / cooked meat / veg etc.
7. Clean and disinfect chopping boards regularly
8. Avoid contact between raw and cooked food
9. Keep the refrigerator temperature between 1-5°C
10. Keep the freezer below -18°C
11. Ensure you always wash your hands before and after handling raw meat, poultry and fish
12. Wash salads and raw vegetables well to remove all traces of soil and insects
13. Keep salads, perishable foods and eggs in the fridge
14. Cover raw meat or defrosting food.

# INFECTION CONTROL FOR CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

**Southern Health Board**  
Bord Sláinte An Deiscirt



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# Infection control for childcare providers

## Introduction

This document is intended to help all those who care for young children (parents, relatives, childminders, crèche operators etc) to prevent infection and disease. Young children are particularly at risk of infection. A clean environment (home, school, crèche etc) good personal hygiene and proper handling and storage of food lessen the risk of infection. Although germs are everywhere and some can be dangerous, e.g. *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Listeria* and *E.coli* O157, not all are harmful to us.

The risk of getting an infection is dependent on a number of factors including:

- The number and type of germs present
- The likelihood of those germs surviving in the environment
- The possibility that these germs will reach somebody who is at risk of infection in sufficient numbers to cause them harm

The sequence of events required for infection to occur is known as the **chain of infection**. Hygiene practices are based on breaking this **chain of infection** and the threat to health by:

- Reducing the level and number of germs present, e.g. cleaning and disinfecting
- Reducing the likelihood of transfer of germs from a source (e.g. person, pets, equipment) to a susceptible person (very young), e.g. by hand washing.

## Exclusion of sick children

Sick children (i.e. with diarrhoea /vomiting/ high temperature, rashes etc) should not be brought to the childminder. This is both for the sick child's comfort and to prevent other children from getting sick. Remember exclusion should also apply to staff! Understandably this may cause inconvenience to parents or childminders but it is a basic rule, which should always apply.

## Housecleaning

Make sure your home/childminding facility is clean and safe each day before the children arrive – cleaning removes dirt, disinfecting kills bacteria. When cleaning, it is important to remember that you clean first and if necessary then disinfect and rinse. Clean as you go, pay particular attention to play areas, toys, toilets, bathroom taps and door handles, kitchen and nappy-changing areas.

## Hand-washing

Germs may be transferred to our hands when we use the toilet, touch other people, animals, body fluids, (including wiping noses and discarding used tissues) contaminated surfaces and food. It is important that both childminders and children wash hands regularly to prevent the illnesses (e.g. colds, diarrhoea) caused by these germs. Handwashing must always be supervised, taking into account the child's stage of development.

## How should we wash our hands?

1. Wet hands under warm running water
2. Apply a small amount of liquid soap
3. Rub hands together vigorously ensuring soap and water is applied to all surfaces of the hands; be sure to rub between fingers, under fingernails and around the tops of the fingers, the palms and the back of the hands
4. Rinse hands under running water
5. Dry hands, preferably using disposable paper towels
6. Turn the tap off. As there is a risk of recontamination, try to avoid touching the tap directly by turning the tap off with the paper towels used to dry your hands.

## Toilets/Potties/Nappies

Items/surfaces that are handled/touched frequently such as toilet flush handles, taps, door knobs, nappy changing surfaces and waste bins are likely to be contaminated with germs and have a high risk of transferring infection. Clean and disinfect these areas regularly. Toilet training equipment/potties should be emptied, rinsed in the toilet and then cleaned after each use. They should then be dried and stored upside-down. Cloths used to clean the toilet area must never be used elsewhere. Different coloured cleaning cloths may be used for each area, e.g. yellow for the kitchen, blue for the bathroom. An individual supply of wipes/creams and lotions for each child prevents cross-infection.

## Changing a Nappy

1. Ensure the nappy changing area is away and separate from the food preparation area, in another room
2. Use a waterproof changing mat
3. Ensure you have all the equipment you need before you start