COVID-19 Quick Guide

Critical Areas of Daily Hygiene for ECD Services
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Please note: to obtain a comprehensive guide to Covid-19 you can visit your local Department of Social Development or access the full report on Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines for ECD services online or see the Department of Health website for Covid-19 guidelines.

❤️ General: Preparation of learning spaces prior to opening

- De-clutter your classroom.
- Covid-19 awareness posters in school and class.
- Ensure physical distancing by spacing furniture 1 m apart.
- Sand pits must be emptied and covered.
- Partition screens are not compulsory but highly recommended.
- Toys, stationery and personal items of each child to be stored separately.
- Cleaning supplies safely stored but readily available.
- Cleaning rosters maintained.
- Ensure sufficient ventilation to allow fresh air in enclosed spaces.

❤️ Personal Protection Equipment:

Personal protection equipment, often referred to as PPE, may include a multitude of things that protect against health and safety risks. In the case of Covid-19 and ECD services, this refers mainly to faces masks and rubber gloves.

1. Face masks

A cloth face mask is recommended for staff and ECD practitioners because they are easily washed and should be ironed prior to being worn. Face masks are only effective when used and worn correctly. In other words, an individual should avoid touching the mask/their face as much as possible, and should avoid putting on and removing the mask regularly. It is for this reason that children aged 5 and younger are advised not to wear children since they are likely to struggle to adhere to the behaviour that must be observed to minimise risk of infection and transmission by wearing a mask.

2. Gloves

Gloves should be worn when changing nappies, cleaning bodily fluids and when dealing with an ill child. In other cases, the recommendation is to wash and sanitise hands on a regular basis as opposed to wearing gloves.
3. Clothes and shoes

After a day of work, staff members are advised to have a bath/shower and wash the clothes that were worn. For shoes, it is recommended that the soles of the shoes are sprayed with 70% alcohol-based sanitiser.

**Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces:**

- Disposable rubber gloves must be worn to clean and disinfect.
- Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, phones, chairs, toys, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks).
- Suitable disinfectants include: i) EPA-registered household disinfectants, ii) diluted household bleach solutions, and iii) alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol.

**Other hygiene and safety practices:**

1. Handwashing

- Additional handwashing routines should be put in place during the day, before and after learning activities.
- Hand towels should not be used for hand drying, paper towels are recommended or air drying when the use of paper towels is not possible.
- Hand sanitisers are not recommended for young children, particularly for children under the age of 3 years. Soap and clean water (for a minimum of 20 seconds) are highly recommended for hand washing.

2. Toilets

- Potties should be spaced a minimum of 1.5m apart.
- Handwashing should be observed before and after a child uses the toilet.

3. Food preparation

If food is prepared on-site, the following should be observed, as stated in the Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines prepared by the Department of Social Development.
Those preparing food must:

1. Wash their hands with soap and water before and after touching any food during preparation.

2. Wash their hands with soap and water before serving food to learners.

3. Clean and sanitise all work surfaces (i.e. tables, stoves and other resources) sinks and floors regularly.

4. Keep all appliances, equipment and utensils clean.

5. Wear clean kitchen attire at all times.

6. Wear head gear and masks to cover their mouths and noses.

7. Wear closed shoes to protect feet.

8. Ensure proper food storage practices.

9. Rinse all foodstuffs thoroughly before cooking before serving to learners.

10. Ensure learners do not share utensils, food or drinks.

11. Extra care should be taken during preparing and serving food to prevent cross-contamination with germs.

12. Grocery packaging should be thoroughly wiped with disinfectant or similar as soon as groceries are brought into the facility.

4. Physical distancing

• Where feasible, learning spaces should also be spaced at least 1m apart.

• Mattresses should be placed 1m apart during nap time.

• Where feasible, children should be spaced 1m from each other during circle time or rings. This can be achieved by using hula hoops or other forms of visible marking.