

GRAB AND GO LESSON

Keep Food Safe: Clean, Sanitize, and Disinfect

Topic Area: Health and Safety
Subtopic Area: Food Safety

Objective: Recall five steps for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting in child care settings.

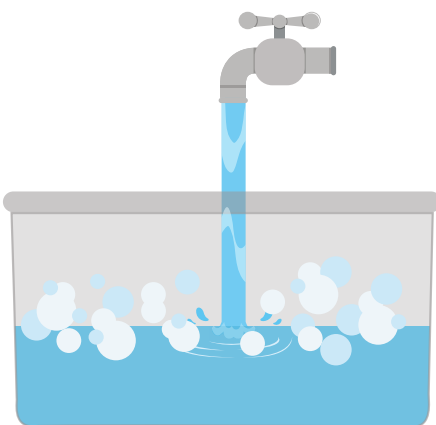
Children below the age of five years old are at a higher risk of virus-spreading illnesses. Their immune systems are still developing, and they are unable to fight off illnesses like adults can. Young children may get or spread illnesses by coughing, direct skin-to-skin contact, touching a contaminated object, and various other ways. For these reasons, it's important to implement good cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting practices to help keep children safe in child care settings.

What are the key terms?

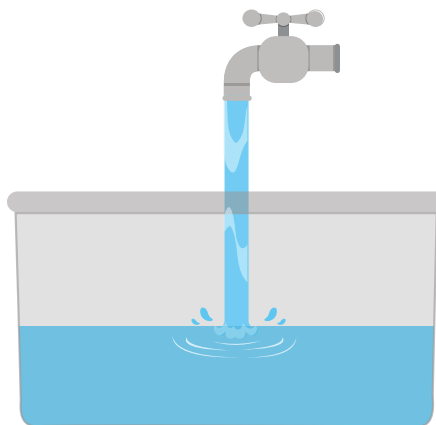
- **Cleaning:** The initial step for creating safe environment. It removes food, crumbs, or dirt from surfaces or objects using soap (or detergent) and water. It also helps to remove germs that may cause illness but does not kill those that may remain.
- **Sanitizing:** To reduce the number of germs to safe levels. After cleaning, sanitizing is used for any surface or object that may touch food. For example, dishes (plates, cups, and glasses), utensils (knives, forks, and spoons), and cooking equipment (bowls, pots, and pans) are all items that require sanitizing after each use.
- **Disinfecting:** To kill or inactivate germs on surfaces or objects that do not have contact with food. After disinfecting, it is used on hard, non-porous surfaces calling for a stronger solution than sanitizing provides. Some items may include bathroom surfaces, diaper changing tables, or areas that come in contact with bodily fluids.

How to Clean and Sanitize?

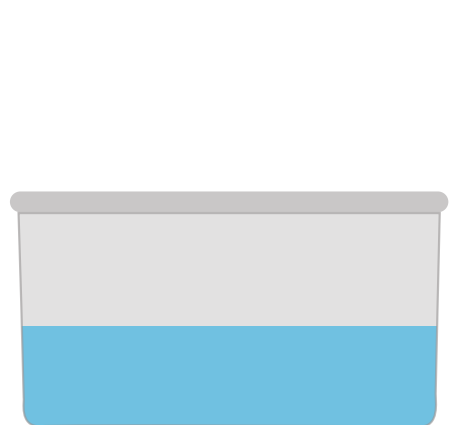
To clean and sanitize dishes, utensils, and cooking equipment, use a dishwasher whenever possible. The dishwasher may sanitize with heat or chemicals. However, if a dishwasher is not available, use a sink with three compartments to wash, rinse, and sanitize dishes. If the sink does not have three compartments, use one or two large dishpans as the second and third compartments. For example, if a sink has two compartments, wash the dishes in the first compartment and rinse them in the second. Use a large dishpan to sanitize the dishes.



Wash the dishes, utensils, or equipment in hot, soapy water.



Rinse the dishes well in clean, hot water.



Sanitize the dishes by using either the chlorine bleach sanitizing solution or hot water method.

Follow the five steps below to wash, rinse, and sanitize dishes.

Step 1: Scrape food off surfaces before washing.

Step 2: Wash the dishes, utensils, or equipment in hot, soapy water.

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Step 3: Rinse the dishes well in clean, hot water so that no soap is transferred to the chlorine bleach solution in Step 4. Do not mix bleach with the soapy water. Soap prevents bleach from sanitizing.

Step 4: Sanitize the dishes by using either the chlorine bleach sanitizing solution or hot water method.

- Chlorine bleach solution method: When using the bleach solution method, soak the dishes for at least one minute in a sanitizing solution, such as a mixture of 1 tablespoon of unscented chlorine bleach + 1 gallon of cool water (hot water and detergent prevent bleach from sanitizing). Remember to use test strips to check for correct concentrations. Remove dishes from the bleach solution, without rinsing, and allow to air dry completely.
- Hot water method: When using the hot water method, cover entirely and soak the dishes in 171 °F water for at least 30 seconds. Check the water temperature with an appropriate thermometer. Time the soak with a clock. Then, remove dishes from the hot water and allow to air dry completely. Use gloves or utensils (e.g., tongs) to remove dishes from hot water.

Step 5: Allow the dishes and equipment to air dry. Do not dry with a cloth or towel, as this may spread germs.

How to Clean and Disinfect Hard Surfaces

Clean and disinfect food prep area countertops or worktables, serving counters for meals, and the table and seats after each use.

Follow these steps to keep these hard surfaces clean and free from germs.

Step 1: Remove food and crumbs.

Step 2: Wash with hot, soapy water and rinse with a clean dishcloth.

Step 3: Spray the surface with an approved disinfecting solution.

Step 4: Allow to air dry or follow product recommendations.

Keeping the kitchen and serving areas clean and sanitary is an ongoing job. It is critical to establish procedures to keep everyone safe. Be sure to follow your local and State requirements for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting.

References:

Graves, D. E., Suitor, C. W., Holt, K. A., Eds. (2012). *Making food healthy and safe for children: How to meet the national health and safety performance standards—guidelines for out-of-home child care programs*, 2nd Ed. Arlington, VA: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health.

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