

WATER TABLES THEIR SAFE USE AND MAINTENANCE

POLICY

Exposure of children to communicable disease that might be transmitted via water table play and activities will be minimized.

PROCEDURE

Water can be a vehicle for transmission of many communicable diseases. Pathogenic bacteria, viruses or parasites on the hands of children who play in a water table, toys, etc. that come in contact with the water table area can become a means of spreading infectious diseases.

Children should wash their hands before beginning to play at the water table. When they have finished play they should again wash their hands. Children who are sick, have runny noses or sores or irritated skin on their hands or arms should not play in water tables. Also, staff should monitor children to avoid hand to mouth contamination and to be certain children do not put toys or other objects from the water table in their mouths.

Water tables should be filled shortly before the play period and emptied at its conclusion. The amount of water put in the water table should be measured and approximately one teaspoon of household bleach per gallon added. The water can be measured as it is put in the table if a bucket of a known volume is used to fill the water table. If the volume of the table in gallons is known, the amount of bleach to water ratio can be determined. For instance, if the volume of the table is 20 gallons and it is filled with water one should add 20 teaspoons of household bleach; if it is half full of water one should add 10 teaspoons of household bleach. (12 teaspoons = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup). Adding too much bleach may cause damage to clothes and carpets.

Toys and other objects put in water tables should be clean.

Soaps and detergents should not be added as the organic compounds in them, combined with the chlorine in bleach making it ineffective as a sanitizer.

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Revised 2/10 by CHICS Committee during our meetings between Child Care Division and Health Department in the Tri-County area