

# Indoor Play Area Maintenance and Sanitation

HELP KEEP KIDS SAFE

## Clean, then sanitize or disinfect

Even if indoor play area surfaces look clean, germs (bacteria and viruses) may still be present. It is important to properly clean then sanitize or disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated. This will reduce harmful germs that could make children sick.

Sanitizers and disinfectants work best on clean surfaces. Food business operators should consult with their chemical suppliers and select sanitizers and disinfectants for surfaces based on indoor play area manufacturer's recommendations. Follow label instructions for non-food-contact surfaces and use the appropriate test kit to measure concentrations.

Guidelines for cleaning, and sanitizing or disinfecting surfaces can be found in section two of the [Infectious Diseases in Childcare Settings and Schools Manual](#).

### **CLEANING IS...**

Using soap and water to remove physical, chemical and microbial substances from surfaces.

### **SANITIZING IS...**

Using chemicals or other verified methods to reduce the number of germs on clean surfaces to a safe level.

### **DISINFECTING IS...**

Using chemicals to eliminate all of the germs listed on the product label, which may include bacteria, fungi or viruses.

## Routine cleaning and sanitizing

Clean and sanitize surfaces of the indoor play area daily or more often, even if they do not look dirty.

- Clean and sanitize dirty or soiled surfaces immediately.
- Clean surfaces thoroughly with soapy water before sanitizing.
- Always follow label instructions.

## Cleaning and disinfecting after body fluid incidents

Clean up body fluids (e.g., blood, urine, vomit, or fecal matter) immediately, because they may be highly contagious.

- Close the area so staff can clean and disinfect the area.
- Clean surfaces thoroughly with soapy water before disinfecting.
- Always follow label instructions.

## Safety hazards

Improperly maintained play area equipment is a safety hazard that may result in injuries or even death to children. Conduct routine physical inspections and keep equipment in good repair. Follow manufacturer's maintenance instructions or checklists.

The [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) suggests checking some of the following items when inspecting play equipment:

- Broken, worn, loose, damaged or missing equipment and parts
- Broken glass, trash, and hazardous or dangerous debris
- Loose anchoring
- Worn, sharp or damaged surfaces
- Vandalism

Indoor play areas often include ground level and elevated play structures such as:

- Ladders, stairs, steps and platforms
- Tunnels and slides
- Nets, ropes and webbing
- Inflatables and trampolines
- Other soft contained play equipment and other accessories

## Best practices

Food business operators can minimize health and safety risks by implementing the following best practices:

- Training staff to conduct routine self-inspections of the play area when in use and take appropriate corrective action.
- Developing procedures and documentation for routine self-inspections, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting, and maintenance of the indoor play area.
- Displaying signs or posters to inform patrons of importance of safe play

(good personal hygiene practices and handwashing at designated sinks).

- Designating areas to eat food away from the indoor play area.
- Responding appropriately to consumer health and safety concerns.

## Preventing illness

Handwashing is the most effective way of preventing the spread of bacteria and viruses that can cause infections and illness.

- It is important to know where and how to properly wash your hands before and after using the play area.
- Hand antiseptics can reduce the number of disease causing bacteria on clean hands but are not a replacement for proper handwashing.
- Alcohol based hand antiseptics are not effective against norovirus, one of the most common causes of vomiting and diarrhea in children and adults.
- Children should eat at tables and not in the play area.
- Children who are sick with vomiting and/or diarrhea should not use the indoor play area.

## Regulations

Minnesota food code can be used to address health and safety hazards in food establishments that have indoor play areas.

- The physical facilities must be maintained in good repair. (4626.1515 Physical Facilities; Good Repair. 6-501.11)
- The physical facilities must be cleaned as often as necessary to keep them clean. (4626.1520 Physical Facilities; Cleaning Frequency and Restrictions. 6-501.12A)

If health and safety hazards are not resolved through voluntary corrective action, state and local public health agencies may use Minnesota Statutes, chapter 145A for the removal and abatement of public health nuisances.

## Resources

[Minnesota Department of Health Food Business Safety](http://www.health.state.mn.us/foodbizsafety)

[www.health.state.mn.us/foodbizsafety](http://www.health.state.mn.us/foodbizsafety)

[Infectious Diseases in Childcare Settings and School Manual](http://www.hennepin.us/childcaremanual)

[www.hennepin.us/childcaremanual](http://www.hennepin.us/childcaremanual)

[U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission](http://www.cpsc.gov/)

[www.cpsc.gov/](http://www.cpsc.gov/)

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