

ILLNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

AIMS

To provide unwell children with immediate attention and prevent the spread of infection.

For staff and families to be aware of the procedures of exclusion for infectious disease.

PROCEDURES

Unwell child

It is not possible for children to be provided with an appropriate environment at the centre when they are unwell. The needs of all children, families and staff will be considered when deciding on appropriate care for the unwell child.

- Out of consideration for staff, their children and other children, parents are expected to keep home any child who is suspected of being ill.
- When a child is unwell and unable to participate in the normal activities of the centre, staff will separate the unwell child from other children, make the child comfortable and keep constant supervision.
- Record the illness in the Accident and Incident folder — signs and symptoms.
- Staff will inform the Director, then the parents. It is at the A.S. discretion if a child is to be excluded in such circumstances.

Temperature

Prolonged temperature in young children may be dangerous. A temperature is a warning signal that something is wrong.

- If a child develops a temperature (37.5C degrees or more) whilst in care, staff will first attempt to lower the temperature by tepid sponging and removal of excess clothing and give fluids.
- Staff will contact parents to inform them of the situation.
- Parents may give staff permission over the phone to administer **one dose only** of paracetamol. Staff will complete the medication book.
- If temperature persists after one dose of paracetamol, the child must be collected from preschool.
- If a child's temperature is 38C degrees or more and displays other symptoms such as: cough, vomiting or irritability, staff will contact parents or emergency contact person to collect the child.

- If parents or emergency contacts are unable to be contacted, staff will contact the child's G.P. or Medical Centre to seek advice. Paracetamol can only be administered if parental permission is noted on the enrolment form.

Infectious Diseases

The centre follows the recommendations from the publication Exclusion Guidelines for Infectious Disease.

- If, whilst in care, a child develops the symptoms attributed to a known infectious disease, staff will contact parents or emergency contact person to collect the child.
- The family must inform the centre upon diagnosis of the illness, at which time the parents will be informed of conditions of exclusion and re-admission.
- All families will be informed of the infectious disease by appropriate signs placed in visible positions. The signs will include the symptoms, exclusion and readmission information e.g. medical certificate if applicable.

Signs and Symptoms to be alert for:

- A high temperate in the morning or fever.
 - Severe cold, sneezing or runny nose.
 - If the child seems sick without obvious symptoms, e.g. unusually tired, pale, irritable or lethargic.
 - Vomiting and/or loose bowel motion.
 - Rashes — any irritation you cannot identify.
 - Red, swollen or discharging eyes.
- All linen and clothing used by the child that day will be soaked in a disinfectant solution and washed separately. Any toys or utensils used by the child will be disinfected.
 - The Public Health Unit will be informed of an outbreak of measles, mumps, diphtheria, poliomyelitis, whooping cough, tetanus and hepatitis.
 - Any staff member presenting with symptoms attributed to a known infectious disease will be excluded and will need a medical certificate clearing them to return to work.
 - The person's general practitioner or other doctor does not have the authority to override exclusion decisions made by Kinma.
 - Questions or disputes concerning exclusion may be referred to the local health authority.

Support Information

The following information provides some background information on common illnesses and complaints which will help both families and staff when making decisions to exclude the child if they display the symptoms. If there is any doubt medical advice should be sought.

- **Common cold and respiratory infection**

The common cold often occurs in young children and can be viewed as a natural way of building immunity. While it is desirable that a child with a cold be isolated so as not to spread the germ, it is understood that this is not possible with every sign of a cold. Nevertheless, cold may sometimes lead to a serious illness such as croup or an acute viral infection. In a severe case it is necessary to exclude the child, in consultation with the parents and child's doctor.

- **Diarrhoea**

Gastro type infections are highly contagious. Hand washing is effective in the prevention of the spread of the infection. It is difficult to determine whether diarrhoea is a result of infection of loose bowel motions due to a particular food. Diarrhoea is characterised by an increase in frequency and fluidity of the faeces. If a child has 2 loose bowel motions within 2 hours and appears unwell, the staff will contact the parents to collect the child. The child can return to the centre after they have had a normal bowel motion.

Staff who have gastro infections will be excluded from the centre for the period of the infection.

Acknowledgement

Ferson, Mark Dr. Autumn 2000 "Exclusion for Infectious Diseases — an Update" Rattler 53 Community Child Care Co-op Ltd NSW.