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|  | POLICIES & PROCEDURES Number: 50-20 Title: Toys and Toy Cleaning |
| Authorization: [4] SHR Regional Infection Prevention and Control Executive Committee | Source: Infection Prevention & Control Date Initiated: April 7, 2009 Date Reaffirmed: Date Revised: Scope: SHR Agencies & Affiliates |

Introduction

Although toys can be comforting, fun, and therapeutic for children, they can also be a reservoir for potentially pathogenic organisms. Organisms from saliva, respiratory secretions, feces, or from hands can contaminate the toys.

Policy

1. The Toys and Toy Cleaning policy will refer to all toys and games used within all clinical and community-based services including waiting rooms and play areas.
2. All toys are to be clean and in good repair.
3. Written procedures for cleaning toys are to be posted in all areas where toys are being stored.
4. Hand hygiene is to be completed prior to handling toys.

Purpose

1. To prevent the spread of disease and outbreaks involving toys.
2. To ensure toys and toy areas are cleaned on a regular basis.

Procedure

1. Types of Toys

Toys refer to all infant and toddler toys, dolls, games, books, puzzles, crafts, art supplies, and all electronic equipment.

2. Toy Materials/Design

- Toys with small pieces that can be swallowed are not permitted.
- Foam, stuffed or cloth toys, musical wind instruments, or toys that retain water are not permitted.
- If stuffed, plush, or cloth toys are brought in with a patient, keep these toys in the patient's room.
- Toys are to be non-porous and able to be cleaned.

- If small crafts such as beads, shells, and sparkles, etc are being used for supervised therapy, ensure each individual has their own crafts to use. Once the therapy session is over discard craft items that can not be disinfected and disinfect those that can be disinfected.
- Water, food, and sand tables should not be used in an acute care facility.
- If water, food, and sand tables are used in a community based setting the following is required:
 - Fresh potable water is to be used daily.
 - Table is to be disinfected upon emptying.
 - Food such as beans, lentils, peas, rice must be stored in food grade containers when not in the table.
 - Food and sand is to be replaced on a regular basis (semiannually).
 - Disinfect food and sand table when food or sand is changed.
 - If vomit or feces contaminates the tables, remove the contents, disinfect and replace with clean water, food, or sand.

3. Toy Cleaning Schedule and Cleaning Frequency

- Ensure there is a toy cleaning schedule and a person (care aide, staff, volunteer etc.) is assigned to do the cleaning.
- Written procedures on how to clean should be posted for staff to follow.
- Toys that are in use should be cleaned on a weekly basis or sooner if visibly soiled.
- If any toys are 'mouthed' by a patient, these toys are to be cleaned after each use.
- There should be a 'dirty toy bin' where toys that have been touched and mouthed are placed for cleaning.
- Only take out enough toys to fit into the dirty bin at the end of each day.
- Always have toys on hand in the 'clean toy bin' to exchange for the dirty ones that have been removed.
- Have a lid on the 'dirty toy bin'. If 'dirty toy bin' is kept in the toy room, place where children can not get into it or lock the lid.
- Clean toy bins that are in use on a weekly basis.

4. Toy Cleaning and Disinfection

- Toys are to be inspected for any damage, cracks, or broken parts every time they are washed. Remove any broken toys and discard them.
- Toys must be cleaned prior to disinfection.
- Wash toys in warm water and soap (liquid detergent).
- Rinse off the soap.
- Disinfect toys with any of the following:
 - Run toys through a commercial dishwasher if toys can withstand a high temperature.
 - Wash cloth toys in a washing machine and then machine dry.
 - Soak toys for at least a 2 minute contact time in a household bleach solution of 30ml of bleach to 4 liters of warm water.
 - Can use a low level disinfectant such as a quaternary ammonium compound. Refer to the product label for directions and contact time to ensure toy is disinfected.
 - Can use an accelerated hydrogen peroxide product (0.5%). Follow manufacturer's direction for dilution and contact time.

- Once the toys are disinfected, allow the toys to air-dry prior to storing in the clean toy bin.
- If toys may be 'mouthed' rinse toys with running warm water to remove disinfectant and let air-dry before storing in the clean toy bin.
- Toys, such as puzzles, games, books, and videos/DVDs that can not tolerate excessive moisture are to be surface wiped with a sanitized cloth (cloth soaked in a disinfectant solution). Allow 2 minutes wet contact time. Follow this with a surface wipe with a wet cloth (water only) if surface can be negatively affected by the disinfectant.
- Therapy lights and toys are to be cleaned after each use.
- Any toys taken into isolation rooms must be cleaned and disinfected after their use. If the toy can not be cleaned and disinfected, it is to be discarded.
- All toys brought from home with a patient should be clean. Instruct the parents to wash personal toys and blankets at least once a week and whenever they are visibly soiled.

5. Play Rooms or Play Areas

- Play rooms or play areas should be designed so that they are safe for the children and are visible to the staff.
- Play rooms or play areas should be designed to have a hand sink with running water and liquid soap available for hand washing **OR**
- Play areas should have alcohol hand sanitizers for children to use before and after playing with the toys.
- Staff monitored play rooms or play areas should have a 'dirty toy bin' in it and a 'clean toy bin' or clean toys after each use.
- Non-monitored play rooms or play area need to have toy storage boxes and cupboards and are to be cleaned on a regular basis (weekly).
- High hand contact surfaces such as playhouses, climbing toys, table tops and chair arms should be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis.
- The flooring in the play area should be cleaned on a daily basis.
- Electronic games and computers are to be cleaned weekly.
- Computer keyboard covers shall be either of the immersible type or wipe them daily with a sanitized cloth according to manufacturer's directions.

References:

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