

Handling, Cleaning and Disinfecting Children’s Toys in Group Settings Such as Child Care and Summer Camps

When To Clean Children’s Toys

- Toys used by children who wear diapers should be cleaned daily and when visibly dirty.
- Toys used by children who do not wear diapers should be cleaned weekly and when visibly dirty.
- Toys that children are likely to put in their mouths or are otherwise contaminated with body fluids should be placed in a separate box or area after use.
- Shared toys should be cleaned at least daily and when visibly dirty.

How To Clean and Disinfect Toys of Children Who Are Not Known To Be Sick

- To clean toys that will **not** be damaged by water:
 - Clean in a washing machine using the hot cycle or a dishwasher. You can use standard washing machine or dishwasher detergents.
 - Wash with dishwashing soap and water, if a washing machine or dishwasher is not available.
 - Scrub in warm, soapy water. Use a brush or dishcloth to get into small spaces. Rinse with clean water. Air-dry or dry with a clean cloth.
- To disinfect toys that will be damaged by water (such as electronic toys, windup toys and books):
 - Wipe with an alcohol wipe that contains at least 70% alcohol; keep surfaces wet for five seconds. Note: Alcohol wipes may damage the outside of electronic toys.
 - Air-dry or dry with a clean cloth.
- To disinfect toys after cleaning them:
 - Spray or wipe with a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-registered disinfectant (available at bit.ly/epa-list-g-products — note that products approved for norovirus will also work against other viral and bacterial diseases) or a solution made of 1 tablespoon of bleach and 1 gallon of cool water; keep surfaces wet for at least one minute.
 - Air-dry or dry with a clean cloth.
 - Rinse toys that children are likely to put in their mouths with clean water after disinfecting them to remove any potential chemical residue, then air-dry or dry with a clean cloth.

How To Clean and Disinfect Toys of Children Who Are or May Be Sick

- Toys used by children who are sick must be cleaned and disinfected following the steps above before being shared. Any toy that cannot be cleaned and disinfected should be thrown away.
- Water tables, modeling clay and finger paint should be discontinued unless they are single-use.
- Children with symptoms of a contagious disease, such as fever, respiratory symptoms, stomachache, diarrhea or other gastrointestinal symptoms, red or itchy eyes, or rash or sores, should not be allowed in common play areas until they no longer have symptoms or are cleared by a health care provider. Some children may need to be cleared by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene before they can return, depending on their infection.

For more information, call **311**, or visit nyc.gov/health and search for **child wellness**.