



James B. Hunt, Jr., Governor
Jonathan B. Howes, Secretary

September 6, 1995

MEMORANDUM

To: Local Environmental Health Directors, Supervisors
and Coordinators

From: Susan C. Grayson, Head *SCG*
Food, Lodging and Institutional
Sanitation Branch
Environmental Health Services Section

Subject: Areas of Attention in Day Care Facilities

Several important subjects have come up recently regarding Day Care Facilities.

Handwashing

We discussed in the day care workshops where coliforms in day cares are found: most often on caregivers' hands, on the childrens hands and on sink handles. They are also found, less frequently, on diaper pail lids, toddler floors, sink surfaces, toys and even kitchen counters.

For these reasons, the handwashing rule (.2828) specifically mentions turning off sink handles with the paper towel used to dry hands. During your inspections, please make every effort to look at the practices of caregivers, particularly in the rooms with diapered children and see if they are washing their hands when they should. Make sure the caregivers are using paper towels to turn off sink handles. Observe the children. Are they washing their hands? What are caregivers' doing to encourage or observe children's handwashing? When reviewing day care plans, suggest sinks with foot, knee, wrist or electric eye water activation systems, thereby removing hand contact all together. Suggest diaper pails with foot-activated lid openers. Check on sanitization of toys, floors and carpets in toddler rooms. How frequently is it done and what chemicals are they using? Where are toys put to air dry?

Follow the food in diapered children's rooms. Are caregivers' hands washed just prior to feeding the children? If food comes in from the kitchen, where is the tray left? If caregivers are portioning food, where are the plates prepared? Are caregivers' washing their hands before performing any food preparation tasks? Use some of your HACCP skills in Day Cares to review the actual flow of the food.

Bottle Warming

A couple of questions have been asked wondering if bottle warming activities in an infant or toddler room require an infant/toddler foodservice area as described in .2810(c). The answer is yes. Note that the rule talks about this area being used exclusively for the "...storage of infant bottles, warming of bottles, storage of fully prepared baby foods..."

Lead

Whenever you are completing an inspection of a Day Care, please look for peeling, flaking or chalking paint on floors (.2824), walls and ceilings (.2825), toys and furniture (.2822) and outdoor play equipment (.2832). If any of the afore-mentioned items contain deteriorated paint conditions and were built or manufactured prior to 1978, please ask your local lead specialist to conduct an investigation. Remember that young children are most susceptible to permanent damage by the action of lead in their bodies and you are the front line in identifying such hazards in their environment.

cc: Local Health Directors
EHSS Standard Distribution List
Talitha Wright, Div. of Child Development
Jan Keller, Div. of Child Development