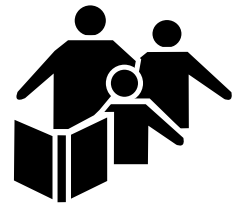


Body Care Basics

Infants and toddlers can practice good hygiene and help avoid the spread of germs and infection. Teaching young children the principles of good hygiene at an early age can help them stay healthy throughout their lives. These routines are an important part of everyday life and one of the best ways to teach is to lead by example. Follow these tips to help develop healthy hygiene habits.



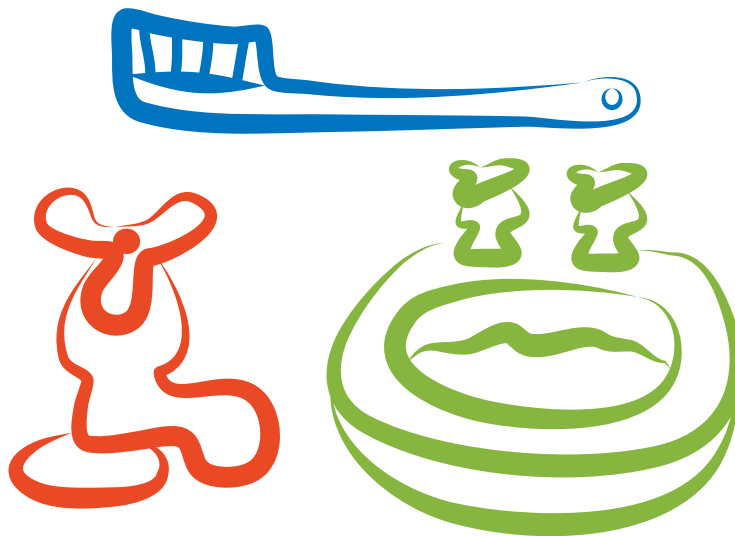
Handwashing

When

- Before and after eating and diapering/toileting
- After playing indoors
- After messy play
- After touching face, nose, or mouth

How

- With soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or the length of the “ABC” song)
- Turn the faucet off with a towel when using a public restroom



Toothbrushing

- Rub an infant’s gums with a soft cloth or finger toothbrush
- Help your child brush twice a day
- Use only a dab of toothpaste for children under age 3
- Use hand over hand or a “me first, then you” routine until age 7 or 8
- Floss every day; floss sticks are easier for small hands to use

Bathing

- Picture books can help your child learn the steps and body parts
- Use a cup, washcloth, visor, or goggles to avoid getting water and soap in the eyes
- Make it fun with bubbles, bath crayons, or toys
- Check the water temperature before you place your child in the tub
- Place your child who can sit independently in a laundry basket in the tub to contain toys
- Always stay with your child
- Practice bathing a waterproof doll to show how to get body parts clean

Toileting

- Use a child-sized seat or step stool with an adaptive seat
- Use appropriate words
- Show how to wipe and flush
- Always wash hands when done and after every attempt
- Encourage your child at his own pace and follow his lead for signs of readiness

 For more information, visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse at <http://eiclearinghouse.org>

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention.

