STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Toy Cleaning and Sanitizing SOP

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Revision	1.0
Owner	Center Director
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Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To reduce the spread of germs between children by cleaning and sanitizing toys on a routine schedule and immediately after a toy has been mouthed.

2. Scope

Applies to toys, manipulatives and shared classroom materials used by children in care. Outdoor playground equipment cleaning is covered by a separate procedure.

Definitions

Mouthed toy bin	A separate, labeled bin used to collect toys a child has put in their mouth, kept apart from clean toys until sanitized.
Clean versus sanitize	Cleaning removes visible dirt with soap and water; sanitizing reduces germs on a surface to a safe level using a sanitizing solution afterward.
Contact time	The time a sanitizing solution must remain on a surface to be effective, as stated on the product label.

3. Responsibilities

Lead Teacher	Removes mouthed toys from circulation immediately and follows the daily and weekly cleaning schedule.
Assistant Teacher	Cleans and sanitizes toys following the schedule and restocks the mouthed toy bin.
Center Director	Sets the cleaning schedule, approves sanitizing products and audits compliance.

RACI matrix

Activity	Lead Teacher	Assistant Teacher	Center Director
Remove a mouthed toy from circulation	R/A	R	I
Clean and sanitize toys on schedule	C	R/A	I
Set the cleaning schedule and approve products	C	I	R/A
Audit cleaning compliance	I	I	R/A

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Labeled mouthed toy bin
- Child-safe cleaning soap and water
- Child-safe sanitizing solution
- Air-drying rack for washed toys
- Toy cleaning schedule checklist

Personal protective equipment

- Disposable gloves

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Watch for mouthed toys during play** Watch for any toy a child puts in their mouth during play and remove it from circulation as soon as it's noticed.	Lead Teacher	☐
5.2	**Place mouthed toys in the labeled bin** Place the mouthed toy directly into the labeled mouthed toy bin, keeping it separate from clean toys still in use. **Checkpoint:** Every mouthed toy is placed in the labeled bin, not returned to the shelf or play area.	Lead Teacher	☐
5.3	**Offer a replacement toy** Offer the child a clean replacement toy so play is not interrupted while the mouthed toy waits to be cleaned.	Assistant Teacher	☐
5.4	**Empty the mouthed toy bin regularly** Empty the mouthed toy bin for cleaning at set points during the day, such as before nap time and at the end of the day, rather than letting it fill up.	Assistant Teacher	☐
5.5	**Clean visible soil first** Wash toys from the mouthed bin with soap and water to remove visible soil before applying any sanitizing solution.	Assistant Teacher	☐
5.6	**Rinse before sanitizing** Rinse cleaned toys with water to remove soap residue before applying the sanitizing solution.	Assistant Teacher	☐
5.7	**Apply the sanitizing solution** Apply the child-safe sanitizing solution to the toy surface, keeping it wet for the full contact time listed on the product label. **Checkpoint:** Toys remain wet with sanitizing solution for the full contact time before rinsing or drying.	Assistant Teacher	☐
5.8	**Air-dry the toys** Let toys air-dry completely on the drying rack rather than wiping them dry, since a damp cloth can spread germs from toy to toy.	Assistant Teacher	☐
5.9	**Return dry toys to circulation** Return toys to the shelf or play bins only after they are fully dry and the sanitizing contact time has passed.	Assistant Teacher	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.10	**Follow the daily cleaning schedule** Wipe down frequently handled toys and hard surfaces daily according to the posted cleaning schedule, even if they were not mouthed.	Lead Teacher	☐
5.11	**Follow the weekly deep cleaning schedule** On the scheduled day each week, wash and sanitize all toys in the room, including those stored on shelves that were not directly played with.	Lead Teacher	☐
5.12	**Remove and repair damaged toys** Remove any toy that is cracked, splintered or otherwise damaged from circulation immediately, since damage can create a hiding place for germs or a choking hazard. **Warning:** A cracked or damaged toy should be removed from use right away, not just cleaned more often.	Lead Teacher	☐

6. Quality checks

- Mouthed toys are moved to the labeled bin immediately, not left in the play area.
- Sanitizing solution stays on toy surfaces for the full contact time listed on the label.
- The daily and weekly cleaning schedules are completed and checked off consistently.
- Damaged toys are removed from circulation the same day they are noticed.

7. Records

- Toy cleaning schedule checklist
- Sanitizing product label and safety data sheet on file
- Damaged toy removal log

8. KPIs

- Percentage of mouthed toys moved to the bin immediately during observation
- Daily and weekly cleaning schedule completion rate
- Average time a mouthed toy is out of circulation
- Damaged toys removed within the same day

9. Common mistakes

- Returning a mouthed toy to the shelf without cleaning it first.
- Wiping sanitizing solution off before the full contact time has passed.
- Drying toys with a cloth instead of air-drying them.
- Letting the mouthed toy bin sit for hours before it gets emptied.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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