

Please Read:

Douglas Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start Three Things to be Aware of Before Working/Volunteering in a Head Start/Early Head Start Classroom

Infections and diseases are spread more frequently from one child to another when children are confined to one room. In a HS/EHS classroom, children may get infections or they may spread infections. The infections or diseases may be spread to adults also. Therefore, parents, staff and community volunteers should be aware of some of these infections or diseases before deciding to volunteer in a classroom.

1. **CMV** – Cytomegalovirus Infection

CMV is a common infection found in young children. In most cases, there are no symptoms. The virus can remain in a person's body for several years. The virus may be spread in body secretions such as saliva, urine, genital secretions, and (rarely) blood.

Spread of the infection requires direct contact with infected secretions that are then spread to a person's bloodstream through the mouth, an open cut or sore, etc. CMV may be kept under control by practicing good hand washing procedures.

Pregnant women or women who might become pregnant should consider finding out from their doctor if they have already had CMV or if they are at risk because they have never had it.

If you are pregnant or plan to be in the near future, please consult your physician to let them know that you work and/or volunteer in a child care center.

2. **Hepatitis B.** – Hepatitis B. is a viral infection of the liver. Symptoms include fever, loss of appetite, nausea, jaundice and occasionally joint pain. Hepatitis B can cause chronic infection with a constant shedding of the virus into body secretions and blood. People with the chronic infection and no symptoms may be called virus carriers.

Spread of the infection occurs when blood or body fluids containing the virus get onto skin or inside the mouth, eyes, rectum or genital tract. It cannot be spread through hugging or hand shaking.

To prevent the spread of Hepatitis B, follow the procedures for handling body fluids, use disposable gloves and good hand washing. Also, there is a vaccination available.

3. ***AIDS & HIV*** – Acquired immune deficiency syndrome & human immunodeficiency virus. AIDS is a disease that leaves a person vulnerable to illnesses that a healthy person might overcome. It is caused by a virus.

The *spread* of AIDS is primarily through sexual contact, blood to blood contact or from an infected mother to her baby. There is NO evidence that the spread of AIDS happens by sitting near, living in the same household with, or playing with someone with AIDS. AIDS has not been spread by casual person to person contact.

Proper hand-washing procedures should be followed and the use of disposable gloves when dealing with body fluids should be adhered to by all staff and volunteers working in the classroom.

SUMMARY

Diseases, infections and viruses can be spread by children, staff and volunteers in the HS/EHS classrooms. However, if proper personal hygiene procedures are practiced by staff, adults, and children, disease spread is less likely. Remember to use good hand-washing, wear disposable gloves, and use proper cleaning procedures.

Please feel free to call you're the Health Coordinator at the Central Office is you have any questions concerning diseases, infections or their spread in the classrooms.



I have been given a copy of the hand-out concerning CMV, Hepatitis B, and AIDS/HIV. I will be responsible for reading the information. I realize that if I work/volunteer in the HS/EHS classroom, I will need to use proper hygiene practices – hand-washing, disposable gloves, and cleaning procedures.

Staff/Volunteer Signature

Date