



MRSA FACT SHEET FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS

MRSA in Early Childhood Care and Education Settings

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) wants to help early childhood educators prevent the spread of MRSA in early childhood care and education settings.

If you suspect or learn that a child in your facility has an MRSA skin infection:

- > Ask the parents to contact the child's doctor.
- > Frequently inspect bandages covering the wound, and change them before drainage is visible through the bandage. Wash your hands thoroughly and apply clean gloves before removing the bandage. Dispose of the used bandage in a closed waste receptacle. After applying a clean bandage, remove and dispose of the gloves, and again wash your hands thoroughly.
- > Wash the infected child's clothes, linens, and towels daily and never share them with other children.
- > Make sure that everyone in the facility practices good hand washing techniques and follows recommended procedures for cleaning and disinfecting toys.
- > Ensure all staff and children clean hands well before eating and after using the bathroom.
- > Distribute MRSA education materials to parents (see www.cdc.gov/mrsa). Note: This may be done prior to a reported infection so parents know how to prevent and recognize MRSA infections early.

Can a child or staff member pass on an infection to others?

Yes. MRSA skin infections are transmitted primarily by skin-to-skin contact and by contact with surfaces that have come into contact with someone else's infection.

Should a child with an MRSA skin infection be excluded from early childhood care and education settings?

Generally speaking, unless directed by a physician or a public health official, a child with an MRSA skin infection should not be excluded from early childhood care and education settings if the infected skin can be kept

covered with a clean, dry bandage (preventing the infected skin from coming in to contact with other children, the environment or the child's hands).

Exclusion from early childhood care and education settings should be reserved for those with wound drainage ("pus") that cannot be covered and contained by using the bandage technique mentioned above.

Should early childhood care and education facilities close if a child has an MRSA skin infection?

The decision to close an early childhood care and education facility for any communicable disease should be made by the facility's officials in consultation with local and/or state public health officials. However, in most cases, it is not necessary to close a facility because a student has an MRSA skin infection.

Should early childhood care and education facilities be closed to be cleaned or disinfected when an MRSA skin infection occurs?

In general, it is not necessary to close early childhood care and education facilities to disinfect them when MRSA skin infections occur. When MRSA skin infections occur, more focused cleaning and disinfection efforts, in addition to normal cleaning routines, should be performed on surfaces that are likely to contact uncovered or poorly covered infections.

How can MRSA skin infections be prevented?

Make sure that everyone in the early childhood and education setting practices good hand washing technique and follows recommended procedures for cleaning and disinfecting toys.

Materials for early childhood care and education professionals, as well as for parents, are available free of charge by calling 1-800-CDC-INFO or by visiting www.cdc.gov/MRSA.

