

## PLAY THERAPY

# HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR TOYS, EQUIPMENT AND SAND TRAYS

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Date: October 2009

Version: 1.0

## PLAY THERAPY RISK ASSESSMENT

<b>Task/Activity</b> Use of sand tray and toys in play therapy	<b>Who is at risk and who needs to know about the activity?</b> Therapist and children who use the equipment
<b>What are the hazards (dangers)?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of infection – E Coli, viruses</li> <li>• Possible irritation from sand</li> </ul>	<b>What are the potential outcomes (risk)?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stomach upsets</li> <li>• Skin irritation</li> </ul>

<b>How do we currently control these risks?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All toys which are washable are wiped with bacterial wipes regularly</li> <li>• Other toys are cleaned as effectively as possible</li> <li>• Sand is kept clean – changed regularly</li> <li>• Children are discouraged to practice hand to mouth contact.</li> <li>• Therapist will ask Parent/Guardian if child known to have any allergic reaction to sand</li> <li>• Follow safe working practices – see attached</li> <li>• Adhere to guidance in Safety Data Sheet – see attached</li> </ul>
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<b>When does the risk assessment need to be reviewed?</b> Every twelve months, or whenever any of the circumstances changes or any equipment relevant to the task is changed etc.
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Details of reviews or amendments	
Date of review/amendment	Carried out by

<p><b>RESIDUAL RISK RATING:</b></p> <p><b>LOW</b></p>
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# USE OF SAND TRAYS AND TOYS IN PLAY THERAPY

## SAFE WORKING PRACTICES

1. Where a number of children share toys and play equipment, there is a risk that cross infection could occur, with the toy or play equipment being the vehicle to carry bacteria and/or viruses from one child to another.
2. Children may be tempted to put toys etc in to their mouths and this could cause any infection to be carried on to the toy. Equally, children could handle toys and equipment whilst having faecally contaminated hands and the faecal-oral route of infection is possible.
3. To reduce the risk of infection, especially from faecal contamination e.g. E Coli, it is advisable to regularly disinfect the toys whenever possible and any other equipment handled by both therapist and child.
4. A proprietary sanitiser would be suitable and toys and equipment should be wiped as thoroughly as possible.
5. Sanitising wipes would be ideal e.g. those available from supermarkets and chemists, such as Boots' own brand 'Bugs Away' Anti-Bacterial Wipes. Many sanitising wipes will now address the risks of virus contamination and are commonly in use to reduce the spread of the Swine Flu virus.
6. It is possible that the sand in any sand tray could become contaminated with viruses and bacteria, although the risk is deemed to be low as it would be unusual for children to contaminate the sand with bodily fluids and faeces unlike traditional sand play pits and ball ponds.  
  
The sand in the sand play tray should be regularly changed but frequency will depend on the amount of multi-use.
7. Potential contamination of the sand and the toys associated with the sand tray could be reduced by encouraging children to wipe their hands with an anti-bacterial or sanitising wipe before play begins.

The two other precautions to take with regard to use of the sand tray are:

- 1) Children are encouraged to have their drink and biscuit (or sweet) **before playing with any of the toys, sand, etc.** That reduces the hand to mouth contact during a therapy session.
- 2) Always ask parents/carers to ensure the child washes their hands immediately after the session so that they are not taking any cross contamination away with them.

8. All toys in use in the play therapy session should be cleaned on a regular basis so as to prevent contamination building up. Soft toys could be washed periodically in washing machines or hot, soapy water where instructions permit.
9. Children should be discouraged from putting toys or other articles in to their mouths but should this happen the toy or article should be put to one side at the end of the session and then thoroughly wiped with anti-bacterial or a sanitising wipe, or alternatively, thoroughly washed with hot soap and water.
10. It is possible that some children may have an allergy to sand – especially the fine sand used in play therapy. Therapists are advised to ask parents/guardians at the beginning of any session whether the child has known allergies and to adapt their therapy sessions accordingly.
11. Should any child have an allergic reaction to the play sand then follow the first aid information contained in the attached, generic, safety data sheet for play sand.
12. All toys and equipment should be stored in containers and cupboards where subsequent contamination can be prevented.



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# PRODUCT DATA SHEET

## 1. IDENTIFICATION OF THE SUBSTANCE/PREPARATION AND COMPANY

Commercial product name: **Play Sand**

Description: Fine sand, specially washed and graded for use in children's sandpits

Manufacturer:

## 2. COMPOSITION/INFORMATION ON INGREDIENTS

Chemical characterisation of active component: Silica Sand

## 3. HAZARDS IDENTIFICATION

Dust is the main hazard

Large bags should be lifted with care

## 4. FIRST AID MEASURES

Skin contact: Wash skin thoroughly with soap and water

Eye contact: Immediately flood the eye with plenty of water for at least 10 minutes

Ingestion: Wash out mouth with water

Inhalation: Move into fresh air

**If symptoms persist, seek medical advice**

## 5. FIREFIGHTING MEASURES

This product is non-combustible.

## 6. ACCIDENTAL RELEASE MEASURES

Sweep or vacuum up and collect for recovery or disposal. Avoid creating a dust by dampening down with water if possible.

## 7. HANDLING AND STORAGE

All materials should be handled using good working practices.



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Store in a dry, well-ventilated place.

## 8. EXPOSURE CONTROLS/PERSONAL PROTECTION

Personal protective equipment:	No special protection is needed when using this product as directed
Respiratory protection:	Dust respirator if conditions are dusty
Hand and eye protection:	Gloves and goggles could be worn when prolonged use of this product in confined areas is anticipated



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**9. PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL PROPERTIES**

Appearance: Fine, buff sand  
Odour: Odourless  
Solubility in water: Insoluble

**10. STABILITY AND REACTIVITY**

Stable under normal conditions.

**11. TOXICOLOGICAL INFORMATION**

This material is an irritant to the eyes.

**12. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION**

Mobility: The product is non-volatile and will persist in the ground  
Persistence/Degradability: The product is resistant to biodegradation

**13. DISPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Dispose of safely in accordance with local and national regulations.

**14. TRANSPORT INFORMATION**

Not classified for conveyance purposes.

## 15. REGULATORY INFORMATION

Labelling information:	Not classified for Health, Safety or Environment
S phrases:	Do not breathe dust. Take precautionary measures against static discharges.

## 16. OTHER INFORMATION

Uses and restrictions:	Children's sandpits
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The information contained in this Safety Data Sheet, as of the issue date, is believed to be true and correct. However, the accuracy or completeness of this information, and any recommendations or suggestions, are made without warranty or guarantee. Since the conditions of use are beyond the control of our Company, it is responsibility of the user to determine the conditions of safe use of this product.

Date of preparation: October 2009

Updated: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009