**Infant Handwashing**

### When to Wash Infant’s Hands
- Upon arrival
- Before and after infant receives bottle or food
- After diapering
- After contact with body fluids
- After outside play
- Before and after water play
- After handling pets
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- Before going home

### Handwashing Steps
- Turn on warm water (90-110°F in NC).
- Wet hands with water.
- Apply liquid soap.
- Wash hands for 10-15 seconds. Rub top and inside of hands, under nails and between fingers.
- Rinse hands with water.
- Dry hands with disposable paper towel.
- Turn off the water using paper towel.
- Throw paper towel into a lined trash container.

### Very Young Infants
**unable to support their heads**

The infant is unable to hold head up or stand at sink, or the infant is too heavy for you to hold at sink.

Wash the infants hands with:
- disposable wipes
- or
- the three towel method (prepared ahead):
  1. dampened and soapy for washing infant’s hands
  2. dampened with water for rinsing infant’s hands
  3. dry for drying infant’s hands

### Young Infants
**who can support their heads but not stand at the sink**

You are able to hold the infant, but the infant cannot stand at the sink.

- Carry infant to sink.
- Hold infant at the sink and wash infant’s hands.

**Caution!** Do not push the infant’s tummy into the sink.

**Back Aid** Place your foot on a 12” stool to lift your leg. Rest the infant on your knee at the sink.

### Older Infants
**who can stand at the sink**

Infant can stand at a toddler height sink or on a stool at a sink.

- First wash your hands.
- Then assist the infant with hand washing.