

## Universal Precautions for School Settings

Universal Precautions refer to the usual and ordinary steps all school staff need to take in order to reduce their risk of infection with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, as well as all other blood-borne organisms (such as the Hepatitis B virus).

They are universal because they refer to steps that need to be taken in all cases, not only when a staff member or student is known to be HIV-infected.

They are precautions because they require foresight and planning, and should be integrated into existing safety guidelines.

Appropriate equipment (mops, buckets, bleach, hot water, hand soap, disposable towels and latex gloves) must be readily available to staff members who are responsible for the clean-up of body fluid spills.

1. Treat human blood spills with caution.
2. Clean up blood spills promptly.
3. Inspect the intactness of skin on all exposed body parts, especially the hands. Cover any and all open cuts or broken skin, or ask another staff member to do the clean-up. Latex gloves contribute an added measure of protection, but are not essential if skin is intact.
4. Clean up blood spills with a solution of one part household bleach to ten parts water, pouring the solution around the periphery of the spill. Disinfect mops, buckets and other cleaning equipment with fresh bleach solution.
5. Always wash hands after any contact with body fluids. This should be done immediately in order to avoid contaminating other surfaces or parts of the body (be especially careful not to touch your eyes before washing up). Soap and water will kill HIV.
6. Clean up other body fluid spills (urine, vomit, feces), unless grossly blood contaminated, in the usual manner. They do not pose a significant risk of HIV infection.

Adapted from Universal Precautions for School Settings, Massachusetts Department of Education and Medical Update to Massachusetts Policy Guidelines: Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers with HIV Infection/AIDS in Early Childhood Settings (June, 1989).