



Councillor Paul Ainslie

Toronto City Council
Scarborough East - Ward 43

Chair, Scarborough Community Council
Chair, Government Management Committee

Date: October 24, 2011
To: Councillor John Filion, Chair, and Board of Health Committee Members
From: Councillor Paul Ainslie
Re: Indoor Play Areas in Eating Establishments

Upon inquiring with Toronto Public Health it has been determined that the City of Toronto does not have policies surrounding the sanitation of indoor play areas within eating establishments.

Currently there are no policies or procedures regarding disinfection requirements for indoor play areas in eating establishments nor is there any legislation governing these premises. Such play areas are often located in a separate room from the food serving area exempting from the food safety inspection process.

I understand that Toronto Public Health responds to complaints and can provide some of the City of Toronto's day care guidelines for the operators to follow if they should choose to. It is however not enforceable, unlike our licensed child care centres where there is no mandatory inspection for indoor play areas in eating establishments. Under child care centres the usual recommendation for cleaning is - Toys used by school age children should be cleaned and sanitized weekly with bleach or other disinfectants.

Play area in eating establishments should be required to meet the standards of child care centres or surpass them due to the play areas vicinity to the food serving area. The City of Toronto has already established an excellent DineSafe program where residents feel confident to shop or eat. Play areas should be added to the DineSafe program check list to give patrons confidence that the entire establishment they are frequenting meets sanitation and health standards.

Recommendation:

1. The Toronto Board of Health direct the Medical Officer of Health to work with Food Safety and Infection Control to report back to the Toronto Board of Health with policies surrounding sanitation of play areas within eating establishments.
2. That the Medical Officer of Health make recommendations in the form of a "check list" for eating establishments who operate an indoor play area to ensure that a healthy environment is offered to children utilizing the play area.

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3. That the Toronto Board of Health give direction to amend the requirements set out in the DineSafe program to include indoor playgrounds within eating establishments, amending Municipal Code Chapter 545 - Licensing.

Sincerely,

Councillor Paul Ainslie
Scarborough East Ward 43