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# My Thoughts and Feelings

## Oh, No! Stains!

We did these things:	I felt like this:
 <b>Make Your Own Stain Activity</b>	  
 <b>About Me</b>	  
 <b>Games</b>	  
 <b>Singing</b>	  
 <b>Arts and Crafts</b>	  
 <b>Books and Stories</b>	  
 <b>Trips and Walks</b>	  
<b>This is how I felt about the whole meeting:</b>	



**Dear parent:**

Our activities today centered around the topic of stains. Yes, stains! The children got to make different kinds of stains on fabrics, and they also got to practice getting them out. Some of the stains were pretty difficult. We also talked about ways to avoid getting stains on our clothes in the first place. (See “What Children Need to Know About Stains.”)

Ways that you can help your child remember what he or she learned are listed under “Helping Children Learn More About Stains.” The **Stain Removal Fact Sheet** that comes with this letter tells about how most common stains can be removed.

While we can't promise a perfectly clean child, we do hope we've been able to make children more aware of the problems that stains can create for them—and you! Still, children really do learn best about their world through exploring and doing, and sometimes this means getting pretty messy. Some children even avoid playing because they're worried about getting their clothes dirty. Providing children with “play clothes” helps avoid this problem. By the way, please send your child to 4-H in play clothes!

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## What Children Need to Know About Stains

- A stain is a dirty or discolored spot.
- Different kinds of stains are removed in different ways.
- Treat stains right away, if possible.
- Some stains are hard to remove, and some can never be removed.
- Wearing clean clothes can help people look nice and feel better.
- When using or eating messy things, people can try to keep stains from getting on their clothes by wearing aprons, paint smocks, and bibs, and by using napkins.

## Helping Children Learn More About Stains

- When your child gets something on his or her clothing, have him or her rinse it out with cold water (or do whatever treatment is recommended for the stain).
- Children may like to engage in purposely “staining” their clothing by tie-dyeing an old T-shirt. Instructions for this process are usually included on packages of dye mix. This is recommended as a home activity because it requires one-on-one supervision.
- You can begin to involve your child in the laundry process by gradually teaching him or her some of the steps involved. Start out showing your child how to put all the clothes right side out and sort them by light and dark colors. When your child is a little older, he or she can begin to learn to use the washer and dryer.





# Stain Removal Fact Sheet

## General Points to Remember

- Identify the stain.
- Identify that the garment is washable.
- Treat the stain immediately! Fresh stains are easier to remove than old ones.
- Blot or scrape off excess stain.
- Work on the wrong side of the fabric so you push the stain out, not in.
- Work carefully and patiently.
- Do not use hot water on an unknown stain.

## How to Identify Stains

One very important factor in successful stain removal is correctly identifying the stain. What is it? When did it happen? What does the garment label say about the fiber content? Does the label say the garment is washable?

If you can't remember what caused the stain, then try the following:

1. Look at the color and appearance of the stain.
2. Look at where the stain is located.
3. Smell the stain. Does it have an odor you recognize?
4. Feel the stain to check the texture.

## Procedure for Removing Identifiable Stains

- Place a soft cloth or paper towels under the stain to serve as a blotter.
- Work on the wrong side of the fabric.
- Place the stain side to the blotter.
- Sponge the stain lightly with a clean, soft cloth.
- Move frequently to a clean area on the blotter.

## Simple Stain Solutions

There are many different methods of stain removal, and this list focuses on methods and stain removal products which children can safely handle with adult supervision. You may have methods of your own to share with your child.

- **Catsup**—Scrape off the excess with a dull knife. Soak in cold water for 30 minutes. Rub detergent into the stain while it is still wet, then launder the garment.
- **Grass and Chocolate**—Treat the stain with cold water before it dries. Soak for 30 minutes. Use an enzyme presoak and soak the garment for the recommended amount of time. Apply concentrated detergent to the stain and allow it to set, then launder the garment.
- **Fruit juices, mud, soft drinks**—Soak the stain for 15 minutes in a solution of 1 quart warm water, ½ teaspoon liquid hand dishwashing detergent, and 1 tablespoon vinegar. Rinse. Sponge with rubbing alcohol.
- **Ink (ballpoint)**—Sponge the stain with rubbing alcohol or spray it with hair spray until it looks wet. Rub detergent into the stained area. Launder the garment. Repeat if necessary.
- **Ink (felt tip pen)**—Rub household cleaner into the stain. Rinse. Repeat as many times as necessary to remove the stain. Launder the garment. Some stains may be impossible to remove.
- **Ice cream**—Soak the stain in cold water. Rub detergent into the stain. Launder the garment.
- **Mustard**—Rub detergent into the dampened stain. Rinse. Soak in hot detergent water for several hours. Launder the garment.

