

# **Environmental Health Guidance for** **Face Painting**

*(Westminster Environmental Health Consultation Team)*

## **Checklist on the minimum standards for a face painter:**

1. Public Liability Insurance
2. Trained and/or Association member
3. EU and FDA compliant Professional Face Paints
4. Fresh clean sponge per child
5. Regular clean water
6. Policy on who should not be face painted
7. Policy on painting children with dirty faces or skin conditions
8. Good practice in health and hygiene

## **In-depth explanation:**

1. It is essential that face painters have their own public liability insurance or that they are covered by the policy of the company or organisation they are working for. Many insurers require a certificate to show they have undergone some training in face painting and the related health and hygiene in order to be covered or that they have attained a certain standard of work. This is not usually asked for until a claim is made and cannot be retrospectively attained. Check with the insurer on what and who is covered.

2. Painters should ideally have had basic health and safety training or attended "jams" with other painters to be able to work to best practice standard. Otherwise, in order to join FACE (The Face Painting Association), painters must pass a certification test and this looks at their practice, standard of painting and conduct with their models.

3. Always use cosmetically approved professional paints and products which are EU and FDA (Food and Drug Administration) compliant. Only use glitters which are cosmetically approved and cut (polymer glitters) - craft and art glitters are cut differently, are sharper and can seriously damage sight if they get into the eyes.

4. One sponge should be used per child:

- NEVER use the same sponge on more than one child. Using the same sponge on multiple children puts them at risk to the spread of bacterial,

viral and fungal infection, as well as other skin-borne infestations, in addition damp sponges on a hot day provide the perfect breeding ground for fast growing bacteria and germs which can cause serious illness.

- Used sponges should be stored in a separate bag whilst working so as not to risk using the same sponge twice. Sponges should be washed in a net bag in a hot wash at least 60 C degrees.
- All other equipment should appear clean and well looked after. Approved face paints contain agents which act against yeast, mould and bacteria so do not need to be disinfected. Brushes should be washed thoroughly at the end of each session using a brush and soap and allowed to air dry.

**5. Artist should change brush water frequently:**

- Always have a fresh water supply and a bucket or container for regular water changes.
- A water spray should be used for sponges to avoid putting the sponge in the brush water; this will help keep paints and equipment cleaner as well as controlling the consistency of sponged paints.

**6. Face painters should:**

- NEVER paint over broken skin of any kind; spots, cuts grazes etc.
- NEVER paint children under the age of 2. Their skin is not mature enough to deal with cosmetics and in some cases this can lead to a lifetime tendency to break out in contact dermatitis. Many younger children are also too immature to understand that the paint is temporary and can become very frightened and distressed on feeling and seeing their face painted. For this reason only paint children who can indicate their wish to be painted. Many insurance companies will not cover claims for painting on children under the age of 2 - Painters should not be expected to paint children who cannot sit still; it can be extremely dangerous when painting with a brush if the child turns suddenly.

**7. Children should be cleaned by a parent before being offered to paint. Never paint over food or dirt, and always look out for runny noses. NEVER paint a child with a cold sore or any other apparent skin disease or sensitivity. Painters should be on the lookout for other contra-indications like chicken pox and other childhood illnesses etc and avoid painting.**

**8. Painters should be of smart clean appearance, should always wash hands before beginning to paint, between every rest break or when handling food. They should ensure the working area is clear of children and onlookers and that they are kept to a safe distance, to avoid accidents and paints being contaminated.**

