

COVID Response and Guidelines

Keeping children safe during COVID-19 is the utmost priority. The following are guidelines for the yellow phase to decrease the risk of COVID-19 for children and staff.

Promote Social Distancing

Create cohorts of children and staff

- It will not be possible to prevent young children and infants from coming in close contact with one another and their teachers. Instead, the goal is to limit the number of people in close contact in order to lower the risk of transmission.
- Ensure that classes include the same group of children each day, and that the same childcare providers remain with the same group each day.
- There should be no more than 10 children in a classroom at any one time. Consider having fewer children per classroom if staffing and space permits.
- Increase the space between cribs and rest mats to maximize the space between children. The cribs and rest mats should be 6 feet apart if space permits. If closer than 6 feet, consider having children nap in head-to-foot positioning.
- No outsiders will be allowed in the classroom, including parents. Students and staff are the only people allowed in the building.
- Avoid activities where children from different classes interact. For example, stagger use of playgrounds/ indoor play spaces, do not combine classes for enrichment activities.
- Cancel all field trips and excursions including the use of public playgrounds.
- For staff:
 - As much as possible, keep the same teachers with the same children.
 - Stagger break and lunch hours for staff in order to minimize interactions.
 - Move chairs in break rooms so that employees do not sit opposite or next to each other while eating.
 - Post signs alerting employees to maintain distance and avoid eating near or across from each other.

Minimize contact and crowding at pick-up and drop-off

- Have parents sign children in with their own pen. If using a pen from the center, wipe down the pen with alcohol each time it is used.
- All parents should wear masks at pick-up and drop-off.
- Limit direct contact with parents as much as possible. Instead, prioritize giving parents updates on their children electronically or by phone.
- Consider the following options to avoid over-crowding during pick-up and drop-off times:

- Assign staggered arrival and drop off times for families.
- If staffing allows, have a designated staff-member greet children outside as they arrive and escort them to their classroom and escort children to exit the building during drop-off.
- Require families to wait 6 feet apart (can use space marker) while waiting to drop off their children and complete daily health screen.
- Store all children's personal strollers out of children's reach since these surfaces may be contaminated.
- Encourage families to have the same parent or designated person drop off and pick up the child every day.

Food safety procedures

- No lunch boxes allowed. Lunches will be packed in throw away containers and put in zip lock bags labelled with children's names.
- Staff should ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating.
- Staff should wash their hands before preparing food and after helping children to eat.
- Staff should wear gloves while preparing food/ bottles and feeding children or giving them bottles.

Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces throughout the day. This includes tables, chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remote controls, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, strollers, and sinks.
- Wipe off any playground equipment or indoor play space equipment between usage by different classrooms of children.
- All toys should be washed at least daily and before and after each use if possible.
- Set aside all toys that need to be cleaned in a container marked "soiled toys". Wash toys that have not been mouthed with soapy water and air dry before the next use.
- Toys that have been mouthed should be set aside until cleaned by someone wearing gloves using EPA-approved disinfectant.
- Remove all plush toys or toys that require laundering from the classroom.
- Use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed. Keep each child's bedding separate, and storing in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags. Cots and mats should be labeled for each child. Bedding that touches a child's skin should be cleaned at least weekly or before use by another child.
- Store all cleaning products securely and out of the reach of children.

Promote Healthy Habits

Promote hand hygiene

- Hand hygiene should be practiced at the following times:
 - Entry to the facility at handwashing stations or using hand sanitizer and after breaks.
 - Before and after eating or assisting children with meals and bottles.

- Before and after preparing food, bottles, and drinks.
- Before and after medication administration.
- Before and after diapering.
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom.
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose.
- After playing outdoors.
- After coming in contact with bodily fluids.
- After handling garbage.
- Perform hand hygiene by washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Use personal protective equipment

- All staff should wear masks whenever in facility except during meals or outdoor break time. If using a disposable mask, should use a new mask each day. If a cloth mask, should launder every day.
- Parents should wear masks at pick-up and drop-off.
- Staff should wear gloves when diapering and preparing food or bottles.

Screen Children and Staff for Symptoms

Daily screening checklist

- **Fever:** Every staff-member and child with a temperature of 100.4 or higher should remain home. A designated staff-member wearing a mask and gloves can use a no-contact (temporal) thermometer to take temperatures on all staff and children. The no-contact thermometers should be cleaned with an alcohol wipe (or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab) between each person.
- **Symptoms:** A designated staff-person should administer the brief daily COVID-like illness symptom checklist to all staff and parents/ caregivers upon arrival. If the child or staff member has symptoms, the child or staff-member should return or remain home.
- **Visual Inspection:** Make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness, and confirm that the child is not experiencing coughing or shortness of breath.
- **Exposure:** Every staff member and parent/ caregiver should be asked if they or their child have been exposed to anyone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days. If the answer is yes, the child or staff member should return home.

Plan for When Someone Becomes Sick

- Staff who develop symptoms of COVID-like illness (cough, shortness of breath, or any 2 of the following symptoms: fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell) should immediately be sent home. If they need to be picked up, they should wait in a designated isolation room or area while waiting.
- If children develop symptoms, they should be brought to a designated isolation room while waiting

to be picked up. The staff member waiting with the child should wear a surgical mask and also gloves if holding the child.

- If a separate room is not available, designate a cot or crib that can be kept at least 6 feet apart from all other children.
- If a child or staff member in a classroom has COVID- like illness:
 - They can return to school if:
 - » Initial COVID-19 testing is negative and individual meets the center's normal criteria for return after an illness OR
 - » A clinician has evaluated the child and documented an alternative diagnosis OR
 - » For children who were not tested for COVID: All of the following are true
 - 1)at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms AND
 - 2)until fever free off anti-fever medications for 3 days AND
 - 3)symptoms are improving.
- If a child or staff member has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19:
 - Call the Philadelphia Department of Public Health at 215-685-6741 for further instructions.
 - All children and staff in the same classroom or who have come in close contact with (defined as greater than 10 minutes of interaction less than 6 feet away) quarantine at home for 14 days. Anyone who develops symptoms during that time should contact their healthcare provider to request testing.
 - In accordance with PDPH guidance, the COVID positive individual should remain home until all of the following are true:
 - 1)at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms AND
 - 2)until fever free off anti-fever medications for 3 days AND
 - 3)symptoms are improving.
- Cleaning/Disinfecting after a COVID or COVID-like illness:
 - Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
 - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
 - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as classroom, offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
 - Clean and disinfect surfaces in your isolation room or area and in the classroom the sick child or staff members was in after the sick child or staff member has gone home.