

**CHILDCARE MANUAL**

SECTION:	<b>6 - HEALTH CARE</b>	DATE OF APPROVAL:	<b>Draft May 2020, R-June 11, 2020, June 17, 2020, July 21, 2020, August 25, 2020, August 31, 2020, September 21, 2020, November 9, 2020, December 1, 2020, January 21, 2021, May 5, 2021, August 24, 2021, September 9, 2021, January 4, 2022, Jan. 17, 2022, Feb. 15, 2022</b>
CODE:	<b>HC- 016</b>		
TITLE:	<b>COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidance</b>		

Public Health Units provide direction to Child Care Centres on Sanitary Practices and the steps that should be taken to minimize transmission of infectious diseases.

During a Pandemic, there may be no effective vaccine or treatment, therefore Public Health measures might be the only tools available to mitigate the impact of a virus. Public Health may provide additional guidelines specific to the Virus at the root of the Pandemic. Vaccines for COVID-19 are proven effective and reduce transmission and illness in those who are vaccinated. Kids & Us strongly recommends the COVID-19 Vaccine for staff in order to reduce workplace illness and transmission, and to protect the vulnerable children in our care. For more information, please refer to HC-020 Vaccine Policy, which was a mandatory directive from Public Health Ontario.

The practices outlined in this policy, in addition to our regular Sanitary Practices for our Childcare Centres have the goal of; prevention of the virus, screening and observation of children and staff for signs and symptoms of the virus, the appropriate response if a staff or child contacts the virus, and reducing the spread by promoting respiratory etiquette.

**Health and Safety Requirements**

1. All standard infection prevention and control practices are strictly adhered to including but not limited to;
  - All toys and equipment are made of material that can be cleaned and disinfected, **and items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected, but can be rotated/isolated for 7 days.**
  - Increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting objects, toys and high touch surfaces (E.g. doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, tabletops, tablets.)
  - High touch surfaces **MUST** be disinfected at minimum twice per day, and all disinfections logged in provided log.
  - Approved disinfectants will be provided to all childcare and EarlyON programs with Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). Expiry Dates need to be checked and product used according to manufacturer's instructions.
  - Hand Hygiene **MUST** be practiced including assisting children and implementing additional opportunities throughout the day.
2. Physical distancing should be encouraged and can be promoted by;

- Following **any current** provincial cohort and grouping rules
  - Spreading children out in to different areas as much as possible
  - Staggering snacks, and eliminating family style dining during the pandemic – NO food sharing reinforced, each child should have their own individual meal/snack plated for them.
  - Promote smaller groups and focus on outdoor programs if possible
  - Providing more individual opportunities or opportunities that encourage distance between children.
3. Effective August 3, 2021 group sensory activities may be reintroduced with an emphasis on hand hygiene before and after use of the materials; individual sensory opportunities may continue to be offered.
  4. Outdoor play at childcare sites is encouraged. The use of community parks and playgrounds will be allowed effective August 3, 2021 being mindful of physical distancing and a focus on hand hygiene before and after use. Additionally, all barriers separating age groups outside can be removed effective August 3, 2021.
  5. Distance between cots will be increased as much as possible keeping in mind head to toe or toe to toe placement – and cots cleaned and disinfected after each use, while individual assigned linens weekly or as needed.
  6. All children’s personal items MUST be labelled E.g. sippy cups, bottles, soothers etc. to avoid accidental sharing. Staff personal items must be stored in assigned lockers or not brought into the centre.
  7. Pick up and Drop off of children may happen at the door, to reduce the risk by fewer entering the childcare, unless it is determined that there is a need for the caregiver to enter the childcare.
  8. Any payments should be made through email transfer to avoid the use of cash and cheque. Consideration will be given to those who do not have access.
  9. Avoid getting close to the faces of the children, where possible
  10. Clearly communicate to caregivers;
    - Check their child’s temperature daily, before coming to the childcare. IF the temperature is equal to or great than 38° C/100°F OR it the child has symptoms of respiratory infection or vomiting and/or diarrhea OR the child has had Tylenol/Advil THEY SHOULD STAY AT HOME.
  11. Effective September 3, 2021 all staff must wear a medical face mask and eye protection (i.e. face shield or goggles) while indoors and outdoors at the childcare program, where physical distancing cannot be maintained. **Effective December 2021, non-fit tested N95 masks will be provided to staff who choose to use them.** Children in grades 1 and above must wear a non-medical or cloth face mask while inside the childcare premises, where physical distancing is not possible. Children below grade 1 are encouraged but not required to wear a non-medical face mask or covering while inside a childcare. Masks are not recommended for children under the age of 2. On December 30, 2021 the MEDU indicated they would provide 3 ply cloth masks for children and non-fit-tested N95 masks for employees. At this time, they are not mandatory, but optional.

## **Screening**

1. All children, staff, post-secondary students on educational placement and all visitors MUST complete the online school screening prior to entry into the child care. Entry will be denied to any individual who does not pass the screening. Screening criteria includes;
  - Temperature checks
  - signs or symptoms of respiratory infection e.g. cough, shortness of breath, sore throat or fever
  - anyone who has traveled outside of **Canada** in the past 14 days,
  - signs and symptoms of COVID19
2. Thermometers used must have single use protective covers and disinfecting between each use OR an Infrared Forehead Thermometer.
3. Ill children MUST not attend childcare. Individuals who do not pass screening because they are symptomatic must follow Public Health guidelines.

4. Protocols will be in place to notify parents/guardians if their child begins to show signs and symptoms of the Virus while in childcare, including the need for immediate pick up.
5. Volunteers, delivery people and any visitors must pass the online school screening prior to entering the child care. Contact information for all visitors, will be recorded in a visitor log and kept on file.

#### **Management of Children with Symptoms of the Virus**

1. If a child begins to experience **any** symptom of the virus while in childcare;
  - The symptomatic child is immediately separated from others in the same group, in a supervised area until they can go home. Staff providing supervision should maintain a distance of 2 meters where possible, PPE may be available if safe distance cannot be maintained. If possible, the remaining group should move outside so a thorough cleaning and disinfecting of the space can be completed.
  - At minimum the child and staff should wear a surgical mask, if possible. Children under 2 should not be made to wear a mask.
  - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while the child is waiting to be picked up.
  - Tissues should be provided to the child for proper respiratory etiquette with proper disposal of tissues and hand washing.
  - Thorough environmental cleaning of the separate space should be conducted once the child has been picked up.
  - Children with any symptoms **MUST** be excluded from childcare **until they cleared via current direction of local public health**. Effective January 2022, PCR testing is no longer available to children in childcare. The MEDU has announced each child and staff will be provided with 2 RAT's to use when symptomatic, if testing with a RAT, please follow all provided instructions. **If additional RAT's are available, they may be provided to children and staff as needed.**
  - Effective **February 7, 2022** a Serious Occurrence is **only required to be submitted for COVID-19 related closures ordered by the local Public Health Unit or voluntary closures impacting the entire centre.**