

EHS Protocols for In Classroom Return

Social distancing with young children is a challenging effort. However, the recommendations set forth aim to keep children and their care providers safe and healthy, while ensuring children are in a nurturing and responsive environment. Parents may also be concerned about the safety of returning children back to care. It is important to maintain frequent communication with families about the policies and practices implemented to keep everyone safe. This ongoing communication will aid in supporting young children with this new transition and social and enhancing the physical distancing practices.

Physical Distancing: Infants and Toddlers

- It is not possible to care for infants or toddlers from a distance, but efforts should be made to encourage distancing in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- Arrange developmentally appropriate activities for smaller group activities and rearrange furniture and play spaces to maintain 6 feet of separation, where possible.
- Clean smocks/gowns are available for staff and children's clothing will be changed when soiled with secretions or body fluids.

Daily Health Screenings

- Exclude any child or staff member showing symptoms of COVID-19
- The new screening procedures are implemented and a written copy available where children are being screened and signed in for care.
- Take children's temperature each morning using a no-touch thermometer. The no-touch thermometer needs to be wiped with an alcohol wipe after each use.
- Monitor adults and children throughout the day for any signs of possible illness.
- Follow the District Protocol for adults and/or children who come down ill while in class.

Mask/Face Covering Usage: Infants and Toddlers

- Never place face coverings on babies or children under 2, because of danger of suffocation
- Children aged 2 years and older should wear face coverings should use masks with adult supervision to ensure that the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation, especially when indoors or when a six-foot physical distance from others cannot be maintained.
- Nearly all children 2 years and older can successfully use cloth face coverings that securely cover the nose and mouth.
- Children who experience difficulty breathing when wearing a mask should not use one.
- Children should be encouraged to wear their cloth face covering but should not be reprimanded or punished.
- Children's individual cloth face coverings will be stored separately during nap, meals and snack times – such as in each child's cubby or elsewhere (close by but out of child's reach) in an individualized bag.

Meal Times

- Parents must feed their children breakfast before they arrive.
- Physical distancing is practiced when children are eating.

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- Tables are divided to indicate separate seating areas or highchairs with trays are used that can be placed 6 feet apart; but ensuring staff are close enough to assist as needed and be ready if choking incidents occur.
- Meals can be staggered, if possible, to limit the number of children eating at one time.
- The amount of infants being fed at one time must not exceed 2 per adult, to ensure proper supervision and individual support is provided.
- The food for all children who eat table foods (one year of age and above) will come prepackaged for each child, for the remainder of the day's meals.
- Utilize the highchair with trays and more tables to spread children out, or use visual markers to ensure adequate spacing of children.
- Practice proper handwashing before and after eating.
- Use paper goods, disposable utensils and disposable bibs for all children on table foods.
- Infants will be fed as usual; using bottles, regular utensils and bowls/plates, etc and will be cleaned and sanitized by running them through the dishwasher after use.
- Bottle fed babies will be held when eating as usual.
- Nursing mothers will not be allowed to come in to nurse their babies due to enhanced safety measures being implemented at this time.
- Breast milk can still be brought in as usual (and refrigerated or kept frozen) for breast feeding infants.
- Do not allow children to share or touch each other's food (and adults must not as well).
- Immediately clean and disinfect highchair trays and tables after meals.

Oral Health

- There is a possibility of transmitting the virus to others via salivary droplets from spitting into a sink or a cup; therefore tooth brushing is suspended until it is considered safe again.
- Encourage parents to brush their child's teeth with fluoride toothpaste before they come to your program and before bedtime. Share resources about tooth brushing with families.

More Physical Distancing & Physical Activity

- Remember to keep groups separate.
- Provide more time outside, when possible.
- Maintain distance between children at 6 feet, as possible.
- Plan activities that limit close physical contact, sharing of equipment, and waiting in line.
- Plan activities that do not require close physical contact between multiple children.
- Stagger indoor and outdoor play and adjust schedules to reduce the number of children in the same area, as possible.
- Develop spacing instructions in both indoor and outdoor spaces that are developmentally appropriate and easy for children to understand.

Enhanced Cleaning and Sanitizing Toys

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside (in the dirty toys bin) until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves or ran through the dishwasher.

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- Supplies such as crayons, markers and other material that can be difficult to clean can be individualized in a container labeled with each child's name. The AAP recommends keeping these difficult-to-clean supplies and toys to a minimum.
- Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant and air-dry. You may also clean in a mechanical dishwasher. Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.
- Machine washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time or should not be used at all. These toys should be laundered before being used by another child.
- Do not share toys with other groups of infants or toddlers, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Washing with soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning before sanitizing. Have enough extra toys available (you can use bins marked clean toys if you choose) so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures. Board/hard covered books can be wiped down with a sanitizer if possible.
- Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows.
- When cleaning, air out the space before children arrive; plan to do thorough cleaning when children are not present.
- When using the air conditioning, use the setting that brings in fresh air.

Clean and Disinfect Cribs/Cots and Bedding

- Cribs and Cots should be sanitized daily, at the end of each day or after their last nap.
- Use bedding (sheets, sleep sacks for infants, blankets for toddlers) that can be washed and change them weekly, or more often as necessary.
- Keep each child's bedding separate, and store in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags as necessary.
- Cribs and cots should be labeled for each child and not shared.
- Bedding that touches a child's skin will be sent to be cleaned weekly (laundry service).
- For napping, place cots/cribs 6 feet apart (or as far as possible), with heads/feet in opposite directions.

Diapering

- When diapering a child, **wash your hands and wash the child's hands before you begin**, and wear gloves. Follow safe diaper changing procedures: (<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/pdf/hygiene/Diapering-procedures-childcare-508c.pdf>)
- Procedures are posted in all diaper changing areas.
- Ensure you have all items ready for the change (gloves, diapers, wipes, bag for containing diaper, etc.) **BEFORE** bringing the child in for changing.
- Full cleaning and sanitizing (remember dwell time) of the diaper table will be done between each child, as usual.
- Sanitize the sink and toilet handles before and after each child's use.

Hand Washing

- The goal is to increase hand hygiene as much as possible during this pandemic.

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- Follow strict (increased) handwashing guidelines for all staff and children.
- Hand Washing Procedures will be posted in all areas where hand washing occurs.
- Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap, rubbing thoroughly after application, and use paper towels to dry hands thoroughly. It may be helpful to sing a 20-second song while children wash.
- Use bathroom time for toilet independent children as an opportunity to reinforce healthy habits and monitor proper handwashing.

Hand Sanitizer

- May be used under adult supervision only (outdoors primarily, when sinks are not available) and must be kept out of children's reach.
- Note that frequent handwashing is more effective than use of hand sanitizers. Sanitizer must be rubbed into children's hands until completely dry.
- Hand sanitizer is not recommended for children under 24 months, but can be used as stated above when necessary.

Washing, Feeding, or Holding a Child

It is important to comfort crying, sad, and/or anxious infants and toddlers, and they often need to be held. To the extent possible, when washing, feeding, or holding very young children:

- Adults can protect themselves by wearing an over-large button-down, long sleeved shirt and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other up-do.
- Adults should wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Child care providers should change the child's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. They should change the button-down shirt, if there are secretions on it, and wash their hands again.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag to be taken home (for children) or sent with the laundry
- Infants, toddlers, and their providers should have multiple changes of clothes on hand.
- Adults will wash their hands before and after handling infant bottles either prepared in the facility or using breast milk brought in by parents.
- Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment used for bottle-feeding should be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing in a dishwasher.

Clean and Disinfect

Caring for Our Children (CFOC) provides national standards for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of educational facilities for children. Toys that can be put in the mouth should be cleaned and sanitized (see below). Other hard surfaces, including diaper changing stations, door knobs, and doors can be disinfected.

Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts by:

- Routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games. This may also include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap cots, diapering surfaces, tables, chairs, and playground structures.
- Use the cleaners provided to you and use all cleaning products according to the directions.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using or soap and water prior to disinfection.

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- All cleaning materials should be kept secure and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.

Drop Offs and Pick Ups

- Parents/Caregivers will meet at the facility-designated entryways for pick-up and drop-off of children.
- Parents/Caregivers will enter and exit the entryway one person (with child) at a time to allow for social and physical distancing.
- Teaching staff will encourage Parents/Caregivers to wash their own hands and assist in washing the hands of their children before drop off, prior to coming for pick up, and when they get home.
- Parents/Caregivers will use the sanitized “clean” pens provided when signing children in and out, then place the pens into a specified “dirty” pen container after use.
- Hand sanitizers will be placed near all entry doors and other high traffic areas, out of the reach of children.
- All staff welcoming children will wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).