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## **COVID-19 Handbook**

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## What is COVID-19

- The virus that causes COVID-19 is called “novel” because it has never before been seen in human beings.
- The virus is spread mainly by close contact from person to person. Close contact can be:
  - Contact within 6 feet of a symptomatic person to person (whether or not COVID-19 has been confirmed by test) for greater than 10 minutes.
    - Also, contact with a person who has tested positive but is asymptomatic.
  - The infected person may have symptoms when the contact occurs. But it is also considered close contact if the contact took place up to two days (48 hours) before the infected person showed any symptoms.
  - Anyone who had unprotected contact with the infected person’s body fluid and/or secretions.
    - This could happen if the infected person was a child who was infected and had a runny nose or other secretions.

## Child Development reopening considerations during COVID-19

- **Implement** social distancing strategies
- **Intensify** cleaning and disinfection efforts
- **Wear face coverings**
- **Modify** drop off and pick up procedures
- **Implement** screening procedures upon arrival and throughout the day
- **Maintain** an adequate ratio of staff to children to ensure safety

## Health and Safety

- Parent/guardians must screen themselves and the child/children before leaving home. Anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, including the child, should remain at home in isolation for a minimum of 10 days plus at least three days after

the resolution of fever (without fever-reducing medication) and improvement in other symptoms.

### **Screening and Monitoring Checklist:**

#### **At Home Before School, Upon Arrival At School and Throughout the Day:**

All Programs must screen all staff and children before they are permitted to enter the child care space.

1. Health check responses must be recorded and maintained on file.

2. Verbally screen children and parents asking the following questions. If any of the below are yes, the child must not be allowed to enter the building. The child must return home with their parent or caregiver.

*Today or in the past 24 hours, have you or any household members had any of the following symptoms?*

- *Fever (temperature of 100.0°F or above), felt feverish, or had chills?*
- *Cough?*
- *Sore throat?*
- *Difficulty breathing?*
- *Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea, nausea, vomiting)?*
- *Fatigue? (Fatigue alone should not exclude a child from participation.)*
- *Headache?*
- *New loss of smell/taste?*
- *New muscle aches?*
- *Any other signs of illness?*

*In the past 14 days, have you had close contact with a person known to be infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?*

#### **a. Staff – Before Entering the Preschool**

- **Train staff** on Covid-19 prevention, symptoms, transmission and use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- **Provide ongoing updates** on COVID-19 to staff
- **Screening of staff** for COVID-19 symptoms as outlined by public health officials
- **Hand Washing** is required of all staff and children immediately after entering the preschool. Wash hands frequently throughout the day. Hand sanitizer is available in every room of the center.
- **Face Masks** must be worn by staff at all times.

- *The center will provide PPE to staff and children (as needed)*
- *The center is stocked with the necessary cleaning/disinfecting supplies*

### **Preventative Actions**

- Stay home when sick and check for symptoms of COVID-19
  - If exposed to COVID-19, stay home for 14 days, then longer if you start to develop symptoms.
- Remain home until the fever has been gone for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms, and 10 days since symptoms first appeared.
- Seek immediate medical care if symptoms become more severe, e.g., high fever or difficulty breathing.
- Enhance cleaning consistent with CDC guidance

**Respiratory Etiquette** - Because COVID-19 is a respiratory virus spread by droplets in the air when people cough and sneeze, the same precautions that help prevent colds and flu can help protect against this respiratory virus.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; if unable to wash, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow; throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands afterward.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- keep children home when they present with a fever greater than 100.1°F and/or have flu-like symptoms.

### **b. Children**

- **Daily Health Check** - staff will conduct visual wellness checks for all children upon arrival and throughout the day and ask health questions when concerned

### **If a child becomes sick**

- Staff will contact parents/guardians listed on the emergency form to come and pick up the child.

- If the child is sick or not feeling well, he/she will be placed in an area that is used to isolate a sick child (upstairs green bathroom) and given a mask to wear and will be supervised by a staff person.

### **When to keep the child at home**

Any child with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should remain at home in isolation for a minimum of 10 days plus 3 days after resolution of fever (without fever-reducing medication) and improvement of other symptoms.

**Symptoms of COVID-19** may include some combination of fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea. (According to the CDC, this list does not include all possible symptoms.)

#### **c. Social Distancing Strategies**

- **Face Masks/Face Coverings** - We expect that children and adults will be required to wear face-coverings during part or all of the school day.
- Handmade masks are acceptable. These will allow students to be more comfortable and will allow for masks that are misplaced to be easily identified.
- Plan on sending an extra 2 masks to school in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name.
- Remember to wash used masks daily either by hand (using 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water) or in a washing machine on the warmest setting possible.

**All recent research suggests that face coverings are the best protection against COVID-19. We ask that families practice wearing masks at home to help children get accustomed to this new requirement.**

- All staff must wear a face mask/covering while working.
- Children birth through 2 years old should not wear face coverings.
- Children 3 years old should wear face coverings only with adult supervision to ensure that the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation.
- Children with breathing problems should not wear face coverings.

- **Group size and staffing** – We maintain an adequate number of children and staff to ensure safety. Children should remain in groups of no more than 10 per classroom, keeping social distancing of 6 feet apart. (CDC, EEC ratio is 1:10)

We will have 2 staff with the same 10 children at all times and limit contact with other staff persons.

- **Social distancing** – Maintaining a minimum of 6 feet of distance between individuals. The same group of children must remain together for the entire day. No more than ten children per classroom will be permitted. At the playground and bike area for special activities such as music, exercising, art, etc., the children will be spaced apart to maintain social distancing.

#### d. Healthy Hygiene Behavior

- **Children and staff must wash their hands often with soap and water.** If water and soap are not readily available, alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% of alcohol may be used. The center must have a parent signed consent form before hand sanitizer can be used with a child. ***The center prefers to have the children always wash their hands with soap and water.*** Wash hands for 20 seconds and use paper towels to dry hands thoroughly.
  - All children and staff should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:
    - Arrival at the center
    - Before and after preparing food or drinks
    - Before and after eating or handling food
    - Before and after administering medication
    - Before and after cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting
    - After using the toilet or before and after helping a child use the bathroom
    - After coming in contact with body fluids
    - After playing outdoors
    - After handling garbage

**Sanitizing/Disinfecting** – To help reduce contact spread of disease:

- Students will be limited to utilizing their own set of materials as much as possible.
- Shared toys and materials will be sanitized after each use.
- Cleaning and sanitation of bathrooms, office and classroom surfaces such as tables, chairs, etc. will occur throughout each day.
- Frequently touched common areas such as handrails, doorknobs, and faucets will be routinely and frequently cleaned according to CDC guidelines.
- Playground equipment will be cleaned according to CDC guidelines.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will NOT be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions will be set aside.
- Staff will routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and manipulatives.
- **Cough and Sneezes** – Children will be properly taught and reminded on how to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or their sleeve. Health and safety activities will be incorporated into the daily routine and curriculum.
- **Rest Time Cots** – children’s nap time cots are spaced out as much as possible keeping a minimum of 6 feet apart with the head-to-toe orientation to reduce the potential for viral spread.
- **Toileting** – Staff will sanitize sink and toilet handles before and after each child’s use. Staff will instruct the children to use a tissue to flush the toilet and then to wash their hands afterwards. After hand washing, use the paper towel used to dry hands to turn off faucets before putting it in the trash.
- **Changing a soiled or wet child** – Parents provide pull-ups, wipes and an extra set of clothes. Staff will follow the national health standards for safe changing procedures. Which include:
  - Wash hands
  - Put on gloves
  - Clean child
  - Remove soiled item and wipes and place in plastic bag for disposal
  - Assist child to replace pull-up and clothes
  - Have child wash hands

- Clean up area
- Dispose of gloves and wash hands

After changing a child, the area will be disinfected with an EPA registered sanitizing or disinfecting solution, if the surface is dirty, it will be cleaned with detergent or soap and water before disinfection. The soiled items that are in a plastic bag are disposed of in the appropriate lined and covered container. Hands are washed even if they were wearing gloves. Bagged soiled clothing will be given to parents/guardians to wash.

- **Extra clothing** - Parents are encouraged to bring in a set of clothes in a labeled zip lock bag with the child's name on it in the event the child needs to be changed. The center also has clean clothing available for changing a child.
  - **Meals and Snacks** – Staff follow all applicable federal, state and local regulations related to the safe preparation and serving of food. The center will provide the morning and afternoon snack. Parents are to provide a healthy lunch and drink. Children will be spaced out at snack and lunch time to avoid food contamination and the spread of germs.
  - **Bedding for Rest Time** – Parents must provide a travel size pillow and blanket for rest time. These items need to be brought in a large zip lock bag to ensure that these personal items remain separate from others. All items need to be labeled with the child's name. The items will be sent home weekly or as needed to be laundered. A child may bring in a small stuffed animal for rest time. This item will be kept with the pillow and blanket and only used during rest time. All of these bags will be stored in the rest time vented closet.
- e. **Arrivals and pick up procedures** – Drop off and pick up should be limited to one parent or parent designee and adhere to social distancing recommendations
- Parents park in the designated parking area
  - Parents line up near the guardrail following the blue tape spacing
  - Allow for the social and physical distancing of a minimum of 6 feet apart
  - Parents/parent designee must wear face-covering on center grounds

- If possible the same parent/parent designee should drop off and pick up the child every day.
- Walk the child, one at a time, to the check in table **outside the main entrance** of the school or **to the garage** following the blue markings.
- The director will check in the child. Be prepared to answer the following questions:
  - The COVID-19 screening questions
  - What time is the child going home that day?
  - Who is picking up the child that day?

Please make sure the child has:

- two extra face masks in a zip lock bag labeled with their name
  - a lunch box if staying for lunch
  - outer clothing if needed
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- Due to the new regulations, please do not send backpacks to school. Storage space is limited and backpacks are not needed.

**Pick Up** – Each class has its own designated pick up area. When the teacher has your child ready to leave, please come forward and take the child by the hand and quickly, return to your vehicle and depart. Please remember the following:

- Park in the designated parking area
- Line up near the designated pick up area
- Allow for the social and physical distancing of a minimum of 6 feet apart
- Parents/parent designee must wear face-covering on center grounds
- If possible the same parent/parent designee should pick up the child.
- Remember to daily launder your child's used face covering.

- f. Instructional/Daily Routine** – If possible, children and staff will remain in the same group each day
- Create a separate space to keep the ratio in the 1:10 compliance
  - Stagger the use of outdoor play areas to prevent the mixing of groups and time to sanitize the play areas between groups and activities
  - Maintain the same groups for all activities
  - Keep social distancing of 6 feet apart
  - No more than 4 children per table
  - For circle time, children are adequately spaced by using hoola hoops or blue tape markers
  - No more than two children at the learning centers
  - Multiple trays/containers of the same toys will be available so that children can play with the same toys. Once the child stops playing, the tray will be removed for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.
  - Children will have their own labeled container of crayons, markers, pencil and scissors. These materials will be disinfected at the end of day.
  - For art time, children will either have their own materials, or if they need to be shared, like brushes, the brush handle will be disinfected between use.
  - Our three year old children will have their own labeled cubby. **Parents of 4 year old children are asked to provide a letter/legal, clear, plastic file box with lid, (approx. 11.1 in H x 13.7 in W x 17.5 in D), labeled with the child's name and picture to store their child's extra clothes, outer clothing and lunch.**
- g. Parent Communication** – We will follow the recommendations of the CDC and MDPH related to school closure and assure that we will stay in contact with families if school closure is warranted. We will communicate via the following means:
- Email
  - Telephone

- Facebook pages
- Written notices and mailings

To ensure that there is no lapse in communication, parents are asked to email the school with their contact information. School Email: [Carmelite@verizon.net](mailto:Carmelite@verizon.net)

#### **h. Outside Visitors**

- We will strictly limit visitors inside the school building, including parents.
- Only one parent or parent designee should come to the school for drop off or pick up
- Small children and siblings are not allowed to visit or enter the building

#### **i. Advisory**

- If you have been in contact with anyone suspected to have COVID-19
- Traveled outside of the United States or
- Had close contact with someone who recently traveled outside of the United States and was sick and now you have fever, cough, trouble breathing – PLEASE CONTACT your Health Provider, immediately STAY HOME and report this information to the Peabody Health Department 24 Lowell Street, Peabody, MA 01960  
Tel#: (978) 538-5926 Email: [Debora.osgood@peabody-ma.gov](mailto:Debora.osgood@peabody-ma.gov) and the preschool.

#### **j. 5 Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way**

Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals.

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.

5. Dry your hands using a clean paper towel.

### **k. Hand Sanitizer Use When Soap and Water Are Not Available**

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

How to use hand sanitizer

1. Apply the gel product to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
2. Rub your hands together.
3. Rub the gel over all the surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This should take around 20 seconds.

Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in many situations. However,

- Sanitizers do not get rid of all types of germs.
- Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.
- Hand sanitizers might not remove harmful chemicals from hands like pesticides and heavy metals.

### **Caution!**

Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning if more than a couple of mouthfuls are swallowed. Keep it out of reach of young children and supervise their use.