



## **The Early Years Daycare Center Protocol to reopening post COVID-19**

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## **Arrival and Departure Protocols**

### **Drop Off Procedure:**

**Currently our revised hours of operations as of September 8, 2021 will be:**

**8:00 AM- 6:00 PM**

Drop off is between the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

All children must be drop off by 9:00 a.m.

Please complete the screen on the HiMama app prior to arriving at the centre. The screen will be updated if the Government of Ontario updates the screening protocols at any time.

If your child answers yes to any of the screening questions, they are not to be brought into the centre. Please use the screen if you have answered yes to any of the screening questions for further instructions. Link to the screen is found at this site:

<https://COVID-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

Please follow the advice whether or not to send your child to child care. We ask only 1 adult drop off per child/children. Please ensure you are keeping a safe distance when inside hallways. All adults dropping off MUST wear a mask while inside the centre; regardless of your vaccination status. Parents/Caregivers will NOT be permitted to enter the classroom at any time, unless asked. We ask that you limit your time in the centre to a maximum of 5-6 minutes only, to help your child dress/undress and bring them to their classroom. When dropping your child in their classroom, educators will verify through the HiMama app that you have completed the screening and that they have passed. If you have not screened your child, they will not be permitted entry until you have completed it. If your child appears unwell (exhibiting symptoms such as cough, lethargy, palour; pale skin, nasal discharge that is green or yellow, runny or goopy eyes, fever, irritability and has passed the screening, we reserve the right to refuse care. Please review our Parent Handbook for more information on illness.

### **Pick up Procedure:**

Pick- up is between the hours of 3:00 p.m-6:00 p.m. Please notify the centre if someone other than you will be picking up your child(ren). They must follow these protocols and provide their driver's license to the educators, if they have not picked up before.

Dismissal protocols will be the same as entry protocols, please respect social distancing with other families in the centre. All adults MUST wear a mask regardless of your vaccination status. The educator may speak to you briefly at pick up time; however they are not able to speak longer than a couple of minutes or give you their full undivided attention to speak about other matters. If you need to speak with your child's educator, you may message them via HiMama (they will reply when they are able) or we can set a time aside for a phone conversation. If your child(ren) are in the playground, parents are permitted to retrieve their children from the gate. They may not enter the playground. For the safety of our children please ensure gates are affixed when entering and exiting.

Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Screening**

**All children are to be screened at home prior to arrival on the HiMama app. Confirmation upon arrival of this screening is visible to educators and children will not be permitted to enter the classroom until the HiMama app shows that you have completed the screening, and screening is passed. Please use this link to access the [COVID Screening](#) that is the guidance the HiMama screen is based on EACH day a child or a Staff attends the centre as required by York Region and Ministry of Education. As a reference if your child answers "yes" to any indicators on the HiMama screen, please follow the instructions on the Government of Ontario site. We will follow the Ministry of Education and Public Health Guidelines outlined in this policy.**

1. In the past 5 days have they experienced any of the following symptoms, even if the symptoms have cleared:

- ✓ -temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher
- ✓ -chills
- ✓ -cough or barking cough (croup) continuous, more than usual, making a whistling noise when breathing (not related to asthma or any other condition they have already have)
- ✓ -Shortness of breath- out of breath, unable to breathe deeply (not related to asthma or any other condition they already have)

- ✓ -decrease or loss of taste or smell
- ✓ -sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ✓ -runny or stuffy/congested nose
- ✓ -headache
- ✓ -extreme tiredness: lack of energy, poor feeding (in infants)
- ✓ -muscles aches or joint pain
- ✓ -nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea
- ✓

2. In the last 5 days have they had a positive COVID test?(either lab based PCR or Rapid antigen test)

3. Has anyone in the household including the child been told to isolate due to a positive test?

4. Has anyone in the household including the child isolating due to having symptoms listed in question 1?

5. Is anyone in the household awaiting COVID results?

6. Has the child been in close contact with someone who has tested positive and been asked to self-isolate?

7. Has a doctor or health care provider or Public Health unit told you that the child or anyone in the household that they need to isolate?

8. Do any of the following apply?

-In the last 14 days has the child travelled outside of Canada and was told to quarantine?

-In the last 14 days has the child travelled outside of Canada and was told not to attend daycare?

-In the last 14 days, has anyone that is staying with or living with the child returned from outside of Canada and is isolating, has been asked to quarantine or awaiting COVID results?

Please note if the child is not fully vaccinated (2 doses and 14 days after last dose) and has travelled outside of Canada with a fully vaccinated companion; and is exempt from federal quarantine- they must NOT come to daycare for 14 days, even if a negative result is received by a PCR test.

By completing and saying “no to all” on the HiMama screening above you are verifying that your child has passed the screening and they are safe to come to the centre.

If you answer yes to one or more, your child is not to be brought to the centre and you will follow the instructions below.

Children or staff/visitors with new or worsening symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home until:

- they receive a negative lab based PCR COVID result, and be symptom free or improving\*
- they receive two negative rapid antigen tests (tests must be taken 24-48 hours apart), the child must be improving\* or be symptom free.
- they receive an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional, and symptoms are improving, or
- it has been 5 days since their symptom onset and they are improving\*

\*Improving: Symptoms, including fever must be improving for over 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/diarrhea) whichever is longest.

Families or children that have come into contact with a person who has been confirmed of having COVID must notify the centre immediately and must self-isolate.

Children will be passively screened throughout the day by Educators. Educators will also be passively screened (these processes' will be taking temperature and observing overall well-being of the children; when appropriate, children are encouraged to tell Educators if they are feeling unwell. Siblings of ill children must isolate if their sibling has symptoms or are awaiting a COVID test.

Any absent days will count as sick days, and fees will still be collected.

Disclaimer: The Early Years Daycare Centre reserves the right to deny entry to any child/ren exhibiting any of the COVID-19 symptoms, or any symptoms of illness. Our center has a zero-tolerance policy for parents who may cause struggle to staff or administration during a denial of entry process.

The Early Years Daycare Centre has a zero tolerance for parents who are not truthful regarding illness of any kind while off premises and returning to care or given medication to reduce sign and symptoms of illness. Please keep ill children at home until they are better.

**Log daily attendance**

All children will be required to have been screened prior to arrival. Visitors to the program will be required to have completed their screening and confirmed they passed, their temperature taken and recorded (this will help support York Region with contact tracing). Hands must be sanitized using an alcohol based rub prior to entering. Refusal of any of the screening process will be a denial of entry into the childcare center.

All visitors entering the centre must confirm that they have completed their own screening and have passed allowing them to centre. Screening must be completed prior to their arrival at the centre. We will record visitors that arrive and depart from the centre.

As of September 1, 2020, Students will be permitted to complete their Field Placements/Co-ops within our centre. They will follow the expectations set out under the Student/Volunteer policy, as well as the staff expectations regarding classroom assignment. All other volunteers are not permitted entrance until otherwise stated by York Region and Ministry of Education.

Regarding group events and in-person meetings, all pre-planned group events and in person meetings will be postponed or cancelled. These gatherings will only be scheduled or re-scheduled with respect to Public Health's direction and instruction, at which time the appropriate protocols will be followed.

### **Grouping of Children and Staff**

Children: As of September 1, 2020 centres may return to their maximum class sizes as outlined in their license, with respect to age.

Although children group sizes are to return to previous maximum group size, each group (cohort) should remain together as much as possible through the day. If grouping cohorts together is unavoidable, cohorts will be separated and kept at a distance of 2m.

The Early Years has been approved for mixed/family groupings; arrival and departure time, classrooms may combine. Ratios under schedule 3 will be observed.

Children will be encouraged to maintain a social distance from their peers and educators where able. They will be encouraged and reminded to adhere to the health and safety protocols outlines by York Region Public Health.

Staff: Staff and students are to work in only one location within the centre wherever possible. The Owner and Supervisor will limit movement between classrooms, entering when necessary. Supply staff will be assigned to the same cohort where able; to limit the interaction between groups of children. Placement students will be assigned to a specific age group.

### **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

Proper and frequent handwashing practices will be followed for staff, children and students. Staff will review and supervise the children when handwashing reference signage. Proper signage will be posted next to handwashing sinks and in washrooms too. Staff will assist children when necessary. Hand soap, paper towels and running water will always be available to children and staff. Staff will also have Alcohol Based Hand Rub (ABHR) of at least 60% or higher available when children do not have access to a handwashing sink. Children, staff, visitors are to practice proper respiratory etiquette (covering your cough, and sneezing into a tissue/elbow and performing hand hygiene). Hand hygiene is executed when donning and doffing PPE.

**Handwashing Protocols:** Children will practice frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and shall be required to wash their hands upon entering the classroom, before meals or snacks, after outdoor play activities, after going to the bathroom, and prior to leaving for home. Children will be monitored to ensure proper technique. Teachers will provide lessons to their students on healthy hygiene practices such as proper hand washing techniques and covering of coughs and sneezes. Healthy hygiene practices will be reinforced daily.

### **Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols**

Enhanced environmental cleaning will be conducted at least 3 times a day. This includes frequently touched surfaces (e.g. door knobs, handrails, sinks, toilet handles, electronics and table tops) are cleaned and disinfected. Staff will sign off on completion of these procedures. Staff will utilize Lysol disinfectant and Zochlor to disinfect these areas. Zochlor will be prepared and utilized under manufacture instructions. Staff will wear appropriate PPE when disinfecting.

The Centre will supply and provide all Staff and Students with PPE as well as disinfectant.

**Classroom protocols:** Children will be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands often. Close person to person contact (hugging, kissing, games involving touching or tagging, etc.) will be strictly limited. Students will be reminded to limit these behaviors as needed. Children will have labelled chairs and spaces at the tables to encourage social distancing and less contact while using equipment. Children will be encouraged to distance from other children.

Strategies to encourage distancing are:

- Spreading the children out during meal and dressing times
- Incorporate more individual activities, and avoid group activities that require sharing of materials
- Using markings on the floor as well as walls to promote physical distancing.
- Moving activities to the playgrounds as much as possible to allow for more space
- Increase distance between cribs and cots during rest times, alternating head and foot.
- Stagger lunch breaks for staff

All Enrichment Programs will be cancelled at this time to avoid the combining of students in different classes and limit activities involving direct physical contact or shared equipment.

If a child becomes symptomatic while in attendance, the staff will ensure the entire classroom has been disinfected with an outbreak level disinfectant; this includes all materials utilized by the child. Sharing of supplies, food, toys and other high touch items such as art supplies, school supplies, equipment, etc., will be strictly limited. All students will be assigned individual storage bins for toys and art supplies and all items will be cleaned and sanitized at the end of each day. Children's personal belongings will be kept separate in their cubbies. During napping periods, cots and bedding will be positioned alternatively head-to-toe and at a reasonable distance from each other to minimize potential virus transmission between children. At the end of the week, sheets and blankets will be sent home to be washed and returned.

**Toys:** Toys and items that are not easily cleaned or disinfected (i.e. soft, cloth, or plush toys and blankets) will not be utilized in the Center and will be removed from each classroom. Toys they are mouthed as per usual will be removed and disinfected immediately. Toys and materials will not be shared between classrooms. After removing the toys from the classroom, toys are to be cleaned and disinfected. Only after that, they may be utilized by another classroom. **Toys from home will not be permitted.** Please do not send your child to the centre with toys or back packs. Plastic bags can be brought, only if extra supplies are requested.

**Shared Spaces:** Use of shared spaces, specifically bathrooms shared by two classes, will be carefully controlled to ensure that children and staff maintain at least six feet of separation from children or staff in other groups. Staggered bathroom schedules will be implemented when possible and all shared spaces will be disinfected between uses.

Outdoor play time on our shared playgrounds will be staggered to prevent mixing between groups. Children and staff must wash their hands upon returning from outdoor play. Once an updated outdoor play schedule is prepared, we will make it available to all our families. Toys, playground equipment and other frequently touched surfaces such as hands-on learning equipment, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, faucet handles, and restrooms will be cleaned, sanitized and disinfected multiple times throughout the day using Lysol spray, an outbreak level bleach solution and Zochlor solution. The centre will follow the cleaning and disinfection schedule set out by York Region Public Health. All mouthed toys will be sanitized immediately (as per usual protocol) All toys will be cleaned with soap and water, and finally submerged in water and bleach solution or sanitized with an outbreak level sanitizer Zochlor.

**Diapering:** As per usual, toilets, change tables and potty seats are sanitized after each use. Staff will ensure proper diaper change procedure, followed by proper hand hygiene. Proper PPE must be worn while diapering and toileting a child.

Windows will be opened (where available) frequently to allow for fresh air flow and HVAC systems will be adjusted to allow for more fresh air to enter the centre.

Each child's bedding will be separately stored in individual laundry bags and cots will be labeled for each child. Please return your child's bedding to the Center in a laundry bag labelled with their name. Bedding will be sent home each week for washing and all cots will be thoroughly sanitized and disinfected before use the following week.

All sanitization records relating to COVID-19 will be documented and kept in the centre for at least 1 year.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

All Staff and Students are required to wear face mask (medical; no cloth) and face shield (eye protection) within the centre. Masks must be worn on the playground; shields may be removed outside only if a physical distance of 2 meters can be achieved. Afterschool children attending who are in Junior/senior Kindergarten or higher are to wear a face mask while in attendance (including outdoor time)

Full PPE to be worn by staff when:

- Taking care of a symptomatic child, prior to pick up.
- When cleaning or disinfecting a room or area of a suspected or confirmed COVID case.

PPE is single use only, unless specified by the manufacturer.

### **Food Safety**

All water bottles are to be labelled with the child's name. We will not accept any outside food what so ever until further notice. There will be no self-serving of food or food sharing in the centre. Utensils are provided to serve the food, these will only be utilized by the staff serving the food. Children will not be preparing or providing food for others to share (i.e. in class baking) Food will be prepared, handled, served and stored in a safe manner in compliance with Food Premise Regulations.

### **COVID Response Plan**

It is with utmost importance that parents/guardians to screen children prior to arrival. It is also important to keep children home, have them screened for COVID-19 at the nearest

screening centre and/or be seen by a medical practitioner. Children who arrive with new or worsening symptoms will be refused care; and must isolate or follow protocols outlined on their COVID-19 childcare screening form. For children that develop symptoms while at the centre. The Early Years will follow this response plan for how we will accommodate the symptomatic child, communicated with families, the Ministry of Education and York Region Public Health.

A symptomatic child will immediately be separated into a room where equipment for proper hand washing and materials for appropriate respiratory etiquette are available (i.e. Hand washing sink, liquid soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, and facial tissue. A staff wearing Full PPE will accompany the child until they can be picked up, reminding them to practice hand hygiene and covering coughs and sneezes. The designated staff will maintain a physical distance of 2 meters, if possible. They should avoid contact with the child's secretions and perform meticulous hand hygiene frequently. If the child is over 2 years old they should wear a face mask (if tolerated). If PPE is not able to be utilized (i.e. medical reasons) the licensee will ask the individual, if any what PPE they may be able to use, and will ask them to provide medical documentation. The individual will be asked to maintain a physical distance of 2 meters (6 ft), complete an assessment at time of entry, temperature will be taken and recorded and the individuals must sanitized their hands upon entry.

Supervisor/Director, Educator will call the parent/guardian or emergency contact for immediate pick up. An illness report will be written; must be signed upon the parent/guardian upon pick up. An ill staff will be sent home right away. Upon being sent home the families must:

1. Receive a negative lab based PCR COVID result, and be symptom free or improving\*, or
2. Receive two negative rapid antigen tests (tests must be taken 24-48 hours apart), the child must be improving\* or be symptom free.
3. Receive an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional, been provided medication, have been on it for at least 24 hours and have symptoms that are improving\*, or
4. Isolate for 5 days and have symptoms improving\*

\*Improving means that symptoms, including fever have been improving for over 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/diarrhea) whichever is longest.

Upon returning, families must fill out a safe to return to school form, confirming they have participated in one of the above Public Health guidance instructions.

The staff will clean and disinfect with an outbreak level sanitizer all of the toys, materials and surfaces the child interacted with. Books, cardboard puzzles that cannot be washed should be removed and sealed in a container for at least 7 days.

Contaminated items belonging to the symptomatic child (including soiled clothing) are to be sent home immediately to be cleaned. They are to be placed in a securely tied in a bag and given to the parent/guardian. They are not to be cleaned, rinsed or washed at the centre.

Any individuals displaying symptoms of COVID-19 must isolated immediately and where possible be tested. Those who test negative for COVID 19 are to be excluded from the program until 24 hours after symptom resolution. Those who test positive must be excluded from the program for 14 days after the onset of symptoms and/or clearance has been received from York Region Public Health.

The serious occurrence policy will be followed; as required. The licensee will ensure that a serious occurrence will be reported the Ministry of Education if there is one lab-based PCR confirmed cases of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in respect of,

- a) a child who receives child care at a home child care premises or child care centre,
- b) a home child care provider,
- c) a person who is ordinarily a resident of a home child care premises,
- d) a person who is regularly at a home child care premises,
- e) a home child care visitor,
- f) a staff member at a child care centre, or
- g) a student at a home child care premises or child care centre,

Staff and children who have been in contact with a suspected case should be monitored for symptoms and/or grouped together until laboratory tests, if any have been completed or until directed by Public Health.

Children who have been tested and are awaiting results are not to in be in attendance; this includes siblings; as directed by Public Health.

All staff is trained and familiar with the child care centre's enhanced health and safety policies and procedures. In addition, the staff of The Early Years Daycare will follow all expressed instruction, directions and decisions from York Region Public Health.

We would like to communicate that if your child or a staff member is tested positive with COVID-19, unless expressed instruction from York Region Public Health, no names of individuals will be given. All information remains confidential and you will not be penalized for being open and honest with us regarding your health or the health of your child. It is imperative that you are open and communicate honestly if you or your child has taken a COVID test please let us know immediately, and update us by email when the results are available. We all need to work together to keep our children, educators and families healthy and safe.

If the York Region Public Health, Ministry of Education, and/or the Government of Ontario or Canada express that we are to revert to smaller class sized, or even another closure, Parents/Guardians will be notified by email when that information becomes available. Should the centre be ordered to close, parents may be obligated to cover the full payment for the month unless otherwise communicated.

As of October 2021, all staff are required to participate in the COVID-19 Immunization Disclosure Policy. They are required to provide the centre proof of full immunization against COVID-19 (14 days after receiving a second dose of an approved vaccine) or provide proof of exemption. If any staff is not fully vaccination; for exemption or otherwise, they must participate in weekly antigen rapid testing (3 times per week). Protocols will be followed if rapid testing displays positive result.