CDC Child Care Resources

Key Messages for Child Care
- Child care providers and facilities have distinct needs from school and other business settings.
- Child care facilities and providers can take important steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Child care providers play an especially important role while schools remain closed but critical infrastructure employees are still reporting to work.
- CDC provides guidance to child care facilities to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in their facilities.
    - Questions about federal funding and compliance for child care programs should be directed to HHS's Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care.
    - Questions about licensing or regulation should be directed to state or local licensing and regulatory authorities.
    - The US Department of Agriculture has other guidance for child care facilities related to meal programs through its Food and Nutrition Service.
- CDC's Supplemental Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open is intended to provide guidance for a range of child care programs, including family child care programs, also known as home-based child care.
- CDC's guidance does not supersede state and local authority. State and local governments have ultimate authority over what businesses, including child care facilities, are essential and will remain open under stay at home or shelter in place orders.
- State and local health have expertise about appropriate public health measures for the level of transmission occurring in the community. Child care centers should coordinate with state and local officials to determine when to close or re-open.

CDC Interim Guidance
- Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html
- Supplemental Guidance For Child Care Programs That Remain Open: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html
- K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs-- FAQs for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html
- Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschools-childcare%2Ftalking-with-children.html
- Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-building-facility.html
- CDC COVID-19 Stress and Coping Resources: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html
- Children and COVID-19: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/children.html
- COVID-19 Guidance related to Pregnancy and Breastfeeding: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html

FAQs

Are children at higher risk of getting COVID-19 than adults?

Based on available evidence, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date. You can learn more about who is most at risk for health problems if they have COVID-19 infection on CDC's current Risk Assessment page.

Are the symptoms of COVID-19 different in children than in adults?
No. The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in children and adults. However, children with confirmed COVID-19 have generally presented with mild symptoms. Reported symptoms in children include cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been reported. It's not known yet whether some children may be at higher risk for severe illness, for example, children with underlying medical conditions and special healthcare needs. There is much more to be learned about how the disease impacts children.

What should we do if a child or employee shows symptoms of COVID-19?
You should establish procedures to ensure students and staff who become sick at school or who arrive at school sick are sent home as soon as possible. Keep anyone sick separate from well students and staff until the sick person can be sent home.

What should I do if the suspected sick child or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19?
Immediately notify local health officials. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action for their child care programs. You will likely dismiss students and most staff for 2-5 days. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and for custodial staff to clean and disinfect the affected facilities. Work with the local health officials to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

Should we be screening children and employees?
Persons who have a fever or other signs of illness should not be admitted to the facility. Encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Screen children upon arrival, if possible:

- Conduct temperature screening, using the protocol provided below.
- Make a visual inspection of the child for signs of infection, which could include flushed cheeks, fatigue, extreme fussiness, etc.
- Record any symptoms in children's logs or daily health logs
- The following is a protocol to safely check an individual's temperature:
  o Perform hand hygiene
  o Put on a face mask, eye protection (goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face), gown/coveralls, and a single pair of disposable gloves
  o Check individual's temperature
  o If performing a temperature check on multiple individuals, ensure that a clean pair of gloves is used for each individual and that the thermometer has been thoroughly cleaned in between each check. If disposable or non-contact thermometers are used and the screener did not have physical contact with an individual, gloves do not need to be changed before the next check. If non-contact thermometers are used, they should be cleaned routinely as recommended by CDC for infection control.
  o Remove and discard PPE

How can child care workers protect themselves from COVID-19?

- Encourage staff to take everyday preventive actions to prevent the spread of respiratory illness.

- o [Wash hands](#) often with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty. Remember to supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent swallowing alcohol.
  - o [Cover cough and sneezes](#)
  - o Plan ahead to ensure adequate supplies to support hand hygiene behaviors and routine cleaning of objects and surfaces. If you have difficulty in obtaining these supplies, please contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agency which can be found under "[Resources](#)" at Child Care Aware of America.
  - o Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Require sick children and staff to stay home.
  - o Communicate to parents the importance of keeping children home when they are sick.
  - o Establish procedures to ensure children and staff who come to the child care center sick or become sick while at your facility are sent home as soon as possible.
  - o Keep sick children and staff separate from well children and staff until they can be sent home.
  - o Plan to have an isolation room or area (such as a cot in a corner of the classroom) that can be used to isolate a sick child.
  - o Follow CDC's guidance on how to [disinfect your building or facility](#) if someone is sick.

What are some examples of social distancing in child care settings?
Work with your local health officials to determine a set of strategies appropriate for your community's situation. Continue using preparedness strategies and consider the following social distancing strategies:

- If possible, child care classes should include the same group each day, and the same child care providers should remain with the same group each day. If your child care program remains open, consider creating a separate classroom or group for the children of healthcare workers and other first responders. If your program is unable to create a separate classroom, consider serving only the children of health care workers and first responders.
- Cancel or postpone special events such as festivals, holiday events, and special performances.
- Consider whether to alter or halt daily group activities that may promote transmission.
  - o Keep each group of children in a separate room.
  - o Limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities such as art, music, and exercising.
  - o If possible, at nap time, ensure that children's naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Consider placing children head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Consider staggering arrival and drop off times and/or have child care providers come outside the facility to pick up the children as they arrive. Your plan for curb side drop off and pick up should limit direct contact between parents and staff members and adhere to social distancing recommendation.
- If possible, arrange for administrative staff to telework from their homes.

What should child care providers be doing to clean and disinfect their facilities?
[Caring for Our Children (CFOC)](#) sets national policy 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 floors can be disinfected.

- Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts:
  - o Facilities should develop a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting. An example can be found [here](#).

- o [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 pads, toilet training potties, desks, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures. Use the cleaners typically used at your facility. Guidance is available for the selection of appropriate [sanitizers or disinfectants](#) for child care settings.
  - o Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered, fragrance-free household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available [here](#). If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method, and contact time for all cleaning and disinfection products.
  - o If possible, provide EPA-registered disposable wipes to child care providers and other staff members so that commonly used surfaces such as keyboards, desks, and remote controls can be wiped down before use. If wipes are not available, please refer to CDC's guidance on [disinfection for community settings](#).
  - o All cleaning materials should be kept secure and out of reach of children.
  - o 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.
- Clean and Sanitize Toys
  - o Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
  - o Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, and air-dry or 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.
  - o 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.
  - o 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.
  - o Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a dish pan with soapy water or put in a separate container marked for "soiled toys." Keep dish pan and water out of reach from children to prevent risk of drowning. Washing with soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning. Try to have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.
  - o Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered as a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.
- Clean and Disinfect Bedding
  - o Use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed. Keep each child's bedding separate, and consider 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 weekly or before use by another child.

I provide or send my child to home based childcare. Are there different recommendations for this setting?

Home-based can also refer to CDC's cleaning and disinfection for households guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html

CDC Communications Resources

CDC COVID-19 Communication Resources: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html

Partner Resources

- American Academy of Pediatrics Resources: https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/
- Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families – Office of Child Care Resources: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/occ-covid-19-resources
- Department of Health and Human Services Administration of Children and Families – Children's Bureau Resources: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/covid-19-resources
- Child Care Aware of America Resources: https://info.childcareaware.org/coronavirus-updates
- National Head Start Association Resources: https://www.nhsa.org/coronavirus
- USDA Food and Nutrition Services resources: https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic
- Center for Medicaid and Chip Services resources: https://www.medicaid.gov/resources-for-states/disaster-response-toolkit/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/index.html
- State Public Health COVID-19 resources: https://www.usa.gov/state-health
- American Public Human Services Association COVID-19 resources: https://aphsa.org/APHSA/COVID_19.aspx