

# When Your Early Education Program Remains Open- Guidance for CCA Staff

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**\*Adapted from the CDC website**

As an essential program that is open during the COVID-19 pandemic these additional considerations must be addressed:

- Consistently practicing social distancing strategies-Efforts to maintain 6 feet distance apart as best possible throughout the day.
- Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts-Ongoing and throughout the day.
- Modify drop off and pick up procedures-Efforts to limit contact with parents and accepting children in a respectful way.
- Maintain an adequate ratio of staff to children to ensure safety.

We have been working with local health officials to determine a set of strategies appropriate for our situation. The **BEST STRATEGY** to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is **continually practicing social distancing techniques**.

***Social Distancing is: AVOIDING “close contact” with others. To the best of our ability and as age appropriate as possible ASSURE social distancing for children and help them avoid “close contact” with their peers.***

***Definition of “Close Contact”:*** Close contact is considered either 1) Being within 6 feet of a symptomatic or non-symptomatic person (whether or not COVID-19 has been confirmed by test) for greater/more than 10 consecutive minutes. OR 2) Anyone who had unprotected contact with the infected persons **body fluids and/or secretions**.

## **DAILY PREVENTION STRATEGIES AT CCA:**

All early care education staff are **required** to wear face coverings while at work. Cooks, Custodians and Maintenance **MUST wear face coverings at all times**. **Face Coverings are now being required by teaching staff as well** while they are around others (staff, children, etc). ***PLEASE NOTE-if staff wearing face coverings causes undo stress on a child/children, take it off while with that child/group of children. The respect for those children IS paramount.*** Additionally, if you have breathing issues, you also have the ability to take it off when needed and/or wear a CCA provided face shield. These face coverings can be provided by CCA or you can choose to wear your own. Remember to follow safe hygienic practices while wearing them, if not, you or your staff are spreading germs rather than preventing them.

Classrooms should include the same group each day, and the same teaching staff should remain with the same group each day, **as best possible**. Use larger classrooms or run an outdoor classroom to maintain social distancing.

As an organization, we have already cancelled/postponed special events such as parent meetings, special events, and in person conferences.

CCA has stopped the daily group activities that may promote transmission of COVID-19. We have eliminated large and small group times from the lesson plan and schedule. Separation as much as possible of children while eating and while following the daily routine. Do not share food or drinks with children and/or adults.

Keep each group of children in a separate room and limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate or sanitize play equipment between uses.

At nap time, ensure that children's naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Place children head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for the spread of germs.

At drop off and pick up times, teaching staff must meet families outside the door of the campus or at the gate to pick up the children as they arrive. Your plan for drop off and pick up should limit direct contact between parents and staff members and adhere to social distancing recommendation.

Place signs outside and inside your campus to remind everyone of the social distancing requirements. (Face Coverings required while dropping off/picking up, 6 feet separation while waiting, etc.)

## **CLEAN AND DISINFECT FREQUENTLY**

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, doorknobs, and floors can be disinfected. **CCA uses (bleach/water solution) that is an accepted AND effective disinfectant.**

### **CCA staff *MUST DO*:**

#### **Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts:**

- Facilities must follow a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting.
- 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, desks, chairs, cubbies, outside toys and playground structures. Use the bleach water solution made daily.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using soap and water prior to disinfection.
- All cleaning materials **MUST** be labeled (**Bleach/Water solution**), 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.

#### **Clean and Sanitize 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 secretion or excretion should be taken and put in the dirty toy basket until they are cleaned by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and soap, rinse, sanitize with the bleach/water solution, 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.
- Have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings and/or each child has their own set.
- 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 children, use individual large zip lock bags to separate toys and materials if possible. Ensure all toys are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other or before reuse.
- 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:

- Use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed. Keep each child's bedding separate, and stored 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. As current practice, infant's sheets are laundered daily.

### Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up:

- **MUST DO: STOP ALL VISITORS AT THE GATE.** Place sign-in stations outside and meet the parent/guardian at the door. Set up table outside the gate and/or use a sterilizable clipboard for sign in & out purposes.
- If possible, hand hygiene stations should be set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands before they enter.
- **MUST DO:** Post signs requiring parents/guardians to wear face coverings for drop off and pick up. Remind parents and enforce social distancing at drop off and pick up times. Tell parents to plan for the delay. This includes marking the floor in your drop off area with visible "X" marks to show parents where the 6 feet distance is to wait with their child/children.
- Limit direct contact with parents as much as possible.
  - Have teaching staff greet children outside as they arrive.
  - Designate a staff person to walk all children to their classroom, and at the end of the day, walk all children back to their parent at the door. **MUST DO:** Said staff person **MUST** wear face covering and wash hands (if not possible hand sanitize) between each child.
  - Infants should be transported in their car seats. Store car seat out of children's reach.
- Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. If possible, older people such as grandparents should not pick up their children, because they are more at risk for serious illness.
- **MUST DO: Screen ALL children and staff upon arrival.** 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 remind them to keep their child home when they are sick.
  - 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.
  - **MUST DO: Ask the parent/staff, do you or your child have any symptoms of COVID-19?** Cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, body aches, diarrhea? Have you recently been in close contact with anyone who has exhibited any Covid19 symptoms? Do you have anyone in your home with symptoms of COVID-19? Have you recently been in close contact with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19?
  - **MUST DO: Record any symptoms on the COVID-19 sick logs** or daily health logs.
  - If a staff member or child shows signs of respiratory illness, a fever of **100.4°F or above, a cough, or shortness of breath, they must leave the premises immediately.**
  - Staff, children, parents/caregivers, and visitors should be reminded regularly that they should stay home if they are ill, even with mild symptoms.
  - **DO NOT accept children with any COVID-19 symptoms.** Children must stay home when they are sick with symptoms of respiratory illness such as fever and cough. Remind the parent that the child must remain at home and not return to school for a minimum of 7

days after onset of symptoms AND until their symptoms are gone AND they are free of fever for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication.

**If a child or adult becomes sick at school:**

- Send the adult home immediately.
- Remind parents to update their emergency contact information regularly so site staff can get in touch quickly if they need to. When a child does show signs of illness, they will need to be picked up immediately.
- Children who develop symptoms of illness after drop-off at school should be separated from others right away, preferably in a room separate from the group. **The child should remain in isolation until they can go home with adult supervision.**
- If possible, **and ONLY if safe and above age 3**, place a disposable face covering on a child with fever and/or cough as soon as possible after moving them to the sick room.

**Remember to sanitize the room and all items which came in contact with the sick child/adult.**

**The following is a MUST DO protocol to safely check an individual's temperature:**

- Perform hand hygiene-**Wash your hands.**
- Put on gloves and sterilize thermometer with Bleach/Water solution.
- Check individual's temperature.
- **If performing a temperature check on multiple individuals, ensure that you WASH HANDS or use a clean pair of gloves for each individual and that the thermometer has been thoroughly sterilized 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 and diligently as recommended by CDC for infection control.
- Remove and discard gloves and wash hands. Initial Health Check box on the sign in sheet.

**Caring for Infants and Toddlers:**

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

- Teaching staff can protect themselves by wearing an oversized long sleeved shirt and putting their hair up in a ponytail or bun.
- Teaching staff should wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Teaching staff 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 or washed in a washing machine. Infants, toddlers, and their providers should have multiple changes of clothes on hand at the campus.

## Diapering

When diapering a child, wash your hands and wash the child's hands before you begin, then put on gloves. Follow safe diaper changing procedures. Procedures should be posted in all diaper changing areas. Steps include:

- Prepare (includes putting on gloves)
- Clean child and remove gloves
- Remove trash (including gloves)
- Replace diaper
- Wash child's hands
- Clean up diapering station
- Wash hands and log on diaper chart

Posters with diaper changing procedures are available-please ask.

**After diapering**, wash your hands (even if you were wearing gloves) and disinfect the diapering area with the bleach water solution. If the surface is dirty, it should be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection.

If **reusable cloth diapers** are used, they should not be rinsed or cleaned in the facility. The soiled cloth diaper and its contents (without emptying or rinsing) should be placed in a plastic bag or into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered diaper pail to give to parents/guardians or laundry service.

## **Healthy Hand Hygiene Behavior**

All children, staff, and volunteers should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- After diapering
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
- After playing outdoors or in sand
- After handling garbage

Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone.

After assisting children with handwashing, staff should also wash their hands.

Place posters describing handwashing steps near sinks.

## **Food Preparation and Meal Service**

- Meal are served pre-plated style so that multiple children are not using the same serving utensils.
- Use disposable plates and utensils to minimize contamination risks.
- Food preparation should not be done by the same staff who diaper children.
- Sinks used for food preparation should not be used for any other purposes.
- Caregivers should ensure children wash hands prior to eating.
- Caregivers should wash their hands before preparing food and after helping children to eat.

- Facilities should follow all other local regulations and guidance related to safe preparation of food.
- Spread the children out and remember to use social distancing strategies as best possible-this may be harder as numbers increase. Be creative, but safe. You can also stagger the meal service to allow for easier social distancing. Always keep visual supervision of the children while eating.

### **Vulnerable/High Risk Groups**

Children and adults with serious underlying medical conditions, as well as older adults, are believed to be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19. To protect those at higher risk, it's important that everyone practices healthy hygiene behaviors.

- If you have staff members or teachers age 65 or older, or with underlying medical conditions, encourage them to talk to their medical provider to assess their risk and to determine if they should stay home.
- Information about COVID-19 in children is somewhat limited, but the information that is available suggests that children have mild symptoms. However, a small percentage of children have been reported to have more severe illness. If you have children with underlying health conditions, talk to their parents about their risk.
- If you have children with disabilities, talk to their parents about how their children can continue to receive the support they need.

### **Other Resources**

CDC's website contains a variety of resources for childcare programs, including detailed guidance, considerations for closures, and frequently asked questions for administrators, teachers, and parents. Together, these resources provide additional information on:

- What to do if a child or staff member at your facility becomes sick.
- Closures of childcare programs.

The resources emphasize that any decision about temporary closures of childcare programs or cancellation of related events should be made in coordination with your local health officials. Childcare programs are not expected to make decisions about closures on their own.

Guidance is also available on these topics:

- [Children and COVID-19](#)
- [Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- Information about COVID-19 and:
  - [Pregnancy and breastfeeding](#)
  - [Stress and coping](#)

Additionally, for up to date information for LA County you can visit:

[Los Angeles County Department of Public Health \(LACDPH, County\)](#)

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>