COVID-19 Child Care Centre Operations

Intent: The Ministry of Education Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak Child Care Re-Opening has set new operational measures that are required in order to safely re-open child care.

Definition:

Cohort: a group of children and the staff members assigned to them, who stay together throughout the duration of the program for a minimum of (7) seven days.

Operational Measures:

Educators
- Maximum cohort size for each room will consist of no more than 10 individuals permitted per room (including staff in the room).
- This does not apply to Resource Consultants supporting the program.
- Mixing of groups (cohorts) will not be permitted.
- Cohorts must stay together throughout the day and are not permitted to mix with others cohorts.
- Movement of supervisors/designates should be limited between rooms and only when necessary and personal protective equipment (PPE) will be required.
- Educators will work at only one child care centre.
- Educator Supply staff will only support one child care centre and possible cohort (if support exceeds 7 days)
- Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) room licensing and ratio expectations must be maintained as long as the cohort does not exceed the maximum of 10 individuals
- Reduced ratios are permitted as set out under the CCEYA provided that cohorts are not mixed with other cohorts. Reduced ratios are not permitted at any time for infants.

Schedules
- Centre Supervisors and Regional Directors/General Manager will work together to set and implement Educator scheduling with the child care centre teams to ensure:
  - Educators, children, and cohorts are set and maintained whenever possible.
  - Scheduling of Educators will consider that cohorts may not be mixed at the beginning or end of the day.
- Schedules may require adjustment based on operational needs and hours of care that families will require.
Visitors/Attendance

- Daily records must be kept of anyone entering the child care centre.
- No non-essential visitors admitted to the child care centre.
- The Visitor Log Book will be maintained and recorded on the COVID-19 Visitor Log Form.
- These records must include the name, contact information, time of arrival and departure, and screening completion of the visitor.
- Records must be kept, up-to-date, and available to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case of outbreak.
- The records will be maintained on site.
- Orientations/meetings with families will take place by video, or telephone.
- Parents should not be permitted past the screening area unless the child requires additional supports while transitioning from parent. In the event that a parent is required to enter the program, a Health Screening Checklist must be completed on the parent.
- Volunteers and students will not be permitted during the pandemic.
- Group events will not be permitted e.g.: family nights, community meetings etc.
- In-person meetings should be conducted via video or telephone wherever possible.

Physical Distancing with Children

- Maintaining a welcoming and caring environment for children is imperative while following How Does Learning Happen and pedagogy in child care programs.
- When setting up play space, physical distancing of at least 6 feet (2 meters) must be maintained between cohorts and should be encouraged, where possible, between children within the same cohort:
  - Every effort should be made to spread children out into different areas, particularly at meal and dressing time.
  - Individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children should be incorporated in the program.
- For physical distancing when holding infants and toddlers, the use of blankets or cloths over clothing will be used and the blankets/cloths must be changed between children.
  - Educators must plan activities to minimize the sharing of objects or toys.
  - When possible, Educators will move activities outside to allow for more space, weather permitting.
  - Mouthed toys must be removed immediately for cleaning and disinfecting to minimize risk of cross contamination
- There will be flexibility with time requirements for outdoor play to mitigate challenges with accessing space and/or rotating children on playgrounds.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Face Coverings:

- Will be used as directed by the Niagara Region Public Health and Medical Officer of Health.
- Will align with the Ministry of Health guidelines
- use of PPE will be required:
  - In the screening area
  - When cleaning and disinfecting blood or bodily fluid spills if there is a risk of splashing.
  - When caring for a sick child or a child showing symptoms of illness.
- When wearing masks or face coverings:
  - Be sure to wash hands before donning the mask/face covering and before doffing the mask.
  - Staff will read fact sheets and watch videos to ensure proper use.