



YMCA of Niagara
#3-300 Bunting Road
St. Catharines, ON
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ymcaofniagara.org

COVID-19 Child Care Centre Operations

Intent: The Ministry of Education's *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, ie: Sun-Sat.

Operational Measures:

Educators

- Maximum cohort size for each room will follow the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* for capacity and ratios.
- Mixing members of groups (cohorts) will not be permitted.
- Cohorts should stay together throughout the day and should not mix or combine with others cohorts if at all possible.
- Movement of supervisors/designates should be limited between rooms and only when necessary, and personal protective equipment (PPE) – medical masks and face shields - will be required.
- All efforts will be made to have Educators work at only one child care centre. If an Educator must be scheduled at 2 centres, it will be a regular assignment and all safety protocols will be strictly adhered to.
- All efforts will be made to schedule Educator Supply staff to only support one child care centre and possibly one cohort during a 7 day period.
- Students on field placement will be assigned to a specific group.
- 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 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 should not be mixed at the beginning or end of the day.



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- Schedules may require adjustment based on operational needs.

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 or an 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 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.
 - 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.

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Page 2 of 3



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- Medical masks and face shields (or goggles) must be worn at all times by all staff in Child Care centres, effective September 1, 2020.
 - Exception may be made while a staff member is doing office work alone in the room, with the door closed.
 - Exception is also made for staff while in a designated break area/staff room of the centre, only while eating or drinking, and while keeping socially distanced.
 - Any exception requested by staff for wearing PPE will be reviewed by Human Resources.
- Use of additional PPE (ie: gloves, gown) may 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.
- Use best practices while wearing masks and face shields:
 - Be sure to wash hands before donning the mask and face shield and before doffing the mask and shield.
 - Staff will read fact sheets and watch videos to ensure proper use.