



COVID-19 Public Health Guidance

This document provides interim guidance to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and maintain safe and healthy environments for children and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. It identifies key infection prevention and control practices to implement in child care settings and actions to take if a child or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19.

Public Health Measures

Mass Gatherings

The Provincial Health Officer's Order for Mass Gatherings continues to prohibit gatherings and events of people in excess of 50 people, however this Order does not apply to child care settings. As such, there can be more than 50 children and staff at any given setting if they are not all in one area and if they are actively engaged in physical distancing to the greatest extent possible.

Self-isolation and Quarantine

Should children and staff have symptoms similar to the common cold, influenza or COVID-19, they should stay at home, be assessed by their health care provider and tested for COVID-19. When someone is symptomatic, they should self-isolate and follow directions provided by their health care provider. Self-isolation is also advised for those who are considered a close contact of a confirmed case and are waiting to see if they develop COVID-19 illness.

Environmental Measures

Outdoor Spaces and Ventilation

- Have children outside often, including for learning activities, snack time and play time.
- Activities will be organized in a thoughtful way, taking into consideration personal measures.
- Playgrounds are a safe environment, and appropriate hand hygiene practices before, during, after outdoor play will take place.
- We will make sure adequate ventilation and open windows whenever is possible.

Cleaning and Disinfection

. Our Child Care settings will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document.

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the our daycare will occur at least once a day.



- Frequently-touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day

These include door knobs, light switches, faucet handles, table counters, chairs, electronic devices, and toys.

- Any surface that is visibly dirty will be cleaned and disinfected immediately
- We are using common, commercially-available detergents and disinfectant products.
- All the toys and other items that cannot be easily cleaned are removed from our daycare (e.g., plush/stuffed toys).
- Garbage containers will be emptied daily, at minimum.
- Disposable gloves is worn when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine).

Hands will be washed before wearing and after removing gloves.

- Cots and cribs after each use will be cleaned and disinfected, as well as launder crib linens between children. If parents are providing their own crib linen, the linens must be laundered and placed in a sealed plastic or washable bag before bringing to the centre. Do not shake the linens.
- Diapering stations after each use will be cleaned.

Administrative Measures

General

At Braemar Daycare:

- We have established this policy and clearly communicated with parents and caregivers to assess their children daily for symptoms before sending them for child care.
- We have established a policy and procedures for children and staff who become sick while at the facility (see Appendix C).
- We may ask parents and caregivers about illness at drop-off to confirm that the child does not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease.

Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

Staff will minimize the frequency of direct physical contact with children and encourage children to minimize physical contact with each other.

- Staff should maintain physical distancing from one another.



It is reasonable to establish different expectations based on age and/or developmental readiness. For example:

- Younger children should be supported to have minimized direct contact with one another, while older children should be supported to maintain physical distance whenever possible.
- Children from the same household (e.g., siblings) do not need to maintain physical distance from each other.

The following physical distancing strategies will be implemented where possible in the child care setting:

- Avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs, handshakes). Regularly reminding children to keep “Hands to yourself”.
- Strive to minimize the number of different staff that interact with the same children throughout the day.
- Organize children into smaller groups and/or spread children out to minimize direct physical contact.
 - Use different room configurations (e.g., separating tables).
 - Set up small group environments to reduce the number of children in a group, for example, set up 2 or 3 areas for colouring or doing crafts.
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children and staff.
- Remove toys that encourage group play in close proximity or increase the likelihood of physical contact. Keep toys that encourage individual play.
- Help younger children learn about physical distancing and less physical contact by creating games that include basic principles such as “two arm lengths apart”.
- Consider using books, individual games, video and online programs as a part of learning so children can sit independently and distanced from each other.
- Increase the distance between nap mats, if possible. If space is tight, place children head-to-toe or toe-to-toe.
- Have a separate, supervised area available for children who have symptoms of illness rest until they can be picked up and ensure these areas are cleaned and disinfected after the child has left.
- Stagger snack or meal time to allow spacing between children during meals.
- Minimize the number of additional adults entering the centre, unless that person is providing care and/or supporting inclusion of a child in care (e.g. supportive child care assistants, speech language pathologist, etc.)

Pick-up and Drop-Off

- Pick-up and drop-off of children should occur outside the child care setting unless there is a need for the parent or caregiver to enter the setting (e.g., very young children). If a parent must enter



the setting, they should maintain physical distance from staff and other children present and be reminded to practice diligent hand hygiene and maintain physical distance when they are in the facility.

Parents and caregivers that are symptomatic must not enter the child care facility.

- The timings of pick-up and drop-off will be staggered.
- Daily check at drop-off will be conducted by asking parents and caregivers to confirm that their child does not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease.
- Parents and caregivers should use their own pen and avoid touching the sign in/out sheet directly. Parents and caregivers should practice hand hygiene before and after touching the sign in/out sheet.

Personal Measures

Daily Checks for Respiratory Illness and Staying Home When Sick

- All parents, caregivers, children and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 OR travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days OR were identified by Public Health as a close contact of a confirmed case must stay home and self-isolate.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them for child care.
- A child may still receive care if another person in their home has symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease, but they remain asymptomatic.
- Children who are ill, including children of essential service providers, should not be permitted to attend child care.
- Staff must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to working and stay home if they are ill.

Child care providers:

- Will clearly communicate with parents and caregivers to assess their children daily for symptoms before sending them for child care.
- Will conduct daily checks for respiratory illness at drop-off by asking parents and caregivers to confirm that the child does not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease.
- If a parent, caregiver or staff member is unsure if they or a child should self-isolate, they should use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool, contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit. They also will be



advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases.

Protocol to follow when a child or staff develops symptoms of COVID-19 at home or at the child care setting is available in Appendix B.

Hand Hygiene

Everyone should practice diligent hand hygiene. Parents and staff will teach and reinforce these practices amongst children.

How to perform hand hygiene:

- Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds (sing the “ABC’s” or “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”).
- Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.
- If sinks are not available (e.g., children and staff are outside), supervised use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol may be considered.
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand sanitizers may not be effective at eliminating respiratory viruses. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty.

Strategies to ensure diligent hand hygiene:

- Children will clean their hands when they enter.
- We have incorporated additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule.
- Our Daycare is well-stocked with hand washing supplies at all times including plain soap, clean towels, paper towels, waste bins, and where appropriate, hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Children regularly forget about proper hand washing. Staff and children will practice often and staff will model washing hands properly in a fun and relaxed way.
- Staff will assist young children with hand hygiene as needed.

An info sheet on when children and staff should practice hand hygiene is included as Appendix C.

Respiratory Etiquette Children and staff will:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow sleeve or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene (“Cover your coughs”).
- Not touch their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands (“Hands below your shoulders”).



- It is not recommended that children wear cloth or homemade masks.

Parents and staff will teach and reinforce these practices amongst children. Other

Children and staff will not share food, drinks, soothers, bottles, sippy cups, toothbrushes, facecloths, and other personal items.

- Personal items are labeled with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.
- If meals or snacks are provided, each child will have their own individual meal or snack. Reusable utensils will be cleaned and sanitized after each use.
- Children will not be allowed to prepare or serve food.
- Parents and caregivers are required to only bring personal comfort items (e.g., stuffies) if they are clean and can be laundered at the end of each day.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Staff will wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine) and when diapering, and wash their hands before wearing, and after removing gloves.
- Cloth or non-medical homemade masks are not recommended. Wearing one is a personal choice. More information about COVID-related mask use is available [here](#).



Appendix A. Summary of Child Care-Based Control Measures



1. STAY HOME WHEN SICK

All children and staff with common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory diseases must stay home and self-isolate.



2. HAND HYGIENE

Everyone should wash their hands more often!

Thorough hand washing with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.



3. RESPIRATORY AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

Cover your coughs.

Do not touch your face.

No sharing of food, drinks, or personal items.



4. PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND MINIMIZING PHYSICAL CONTACT

Spread children out to different areas.

Take them outside more often.

Stagger lunch times. Incorporate individual activities.

Remind children, "Hands to Yourself!"



5. CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least twice a day.

General cleaning of the centre should occur at least once a day.

Use common cleaning and disinfectant products.



Appendix B. Protocol for child or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 in a child care setting

Child with Symptoms of COVID-19	Staff with Symptoms of COVID-19
<p>IF CHILD DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT HOME:</p> <p>Parents or caregivers must keep their child at home for a minimum of 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.</p>	<p>IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT HOME:</p> <p>Staff must be excluded from work, stay home and self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until all symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.</p>
<p>IF CHILD DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS WHILE AT CHILD CARE:</p> <p>Staff must take the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify a staff member to supervise the child. 2. Identified staff member should immediately separate the symptomatic child from others in a supervised area until they can go home. 3. Contact the child's parent or caregiver to pick them up right away. 4. Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 metres from the ill child. If this is not possible, the staff member may use a mask if available and tolerated, or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth. 5. Provide the child with tissues, and support as necessary so they can practice respiratory hygiene. 6. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. 7. Avoid touching the child's body fluids. If you do, wash your hands. 8. Once the child is picked up, wash your hands. 9. Clean and disinfect the space where the child was separated and any areas used by the child (e.g., bathroom, common areas). 10. If concerned, contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further advice. <p>Parents or caregivers must pick up their child promptly once notified that their child is ill.</p>	<p>IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS WHILE AT WORK:</p> <p>Staff should go home right away where possible.</p> <p>If unable to leave immediately, the symptomatic staff person should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Separate themselves into an area away from others. 2. Maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. 3. Use a tissue or mask to cover their nose and mouth while they wait for a replacement or to be picked up. 4. Remaining staff must clean and disinfect the space where staff was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., office, bathroom, common areas). 5. If concerned, contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further advice.
<p><i>If a child or staff member is assessed by their family physician or nurse practitioner and it is determined that they do NOT have COVID-19, they may return to child care once symptoms resolve.</i></p>	



Appendix C: When to perform hand hygiene

<i>Children should perform hand hygiene:</i>	<i>Staff should perform hand hygiene:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> When they arrive at the child care centre and before they go home<input type="checkbox"/> Before and after eating and drinking<input type="checkbox"/> After a diaper change<input type="checkbox"/> After using the toilet<input type="checkbox"/> After playing outside<input type="checkbox"/> After handling pets and animals<input type="checkbox"/> After sneezing or coughing<input type="checkbox"/> Whenever hands are visibly dirty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> When they arrive at the child care centre and before they go home<input type="checkbox"/> Before and after handling food (raw, cooked or pre-packaged), preparing bottles or feeding children<input type="checkbox"/> Before and after giving or applying medication or ointment to a child or self<input type="checkbox"/> After changing diapers<input type="checkbox"/> After assisting a child to use the toilet<input type="checkbox"/> After using the toilet<input type="checkbox"/> After contact with body fluids (e.g., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)<input type="checkbox"/> After cleaning tasks<input type="checkbox"/> After removing gloves<input type="checkbox"/> After handling garbage<input type="checkbox"/> Whenever hands are visibly dirty