

Resuming Care Post COVID-19

Best Practice Guidelines for Home Child Care

Information Compiled on May 14 2020

Adjusting to the new normal of post-pandemic life will require some serious thought and planning. Business practices, policies, and procedures will need to be amended to consider all implications—for the business itself, and more importantly for the people involved.

Depending on where you live, your local public health unit might have some guidelines, recommendations, and/or requirements already put in place. Public health directives should take priority and be followed at all times. Use this link to find your Ontario local public health unit:

<https://www.phdapps.health.gov.on.ca/PHULocator/>

While each home child care business is unique and providers will undoubtedly make decisions best geared towards their individual professional and personal needs, there are some guidelines available to help you start the planning process. These can be used in the absence of or in conjunction with specific orders from your local public health unit.

Below you'll find several links to explore. While some are not necessarily geared towards home child care, many of the recommendations for best practice can be implemented and/or adapted for home child care use.

While researching and developing your “resuming care” plan some important elements to consider include:

- Screening guidelines for yourself, other members of your household, parents, and children.
- Pick up and drop off guidelines—who, how, when, where?
- Sanitizing/disinfecting procedures—what will you use and how often?
- Extra handwashing time and opportunities for yourself and the children.
- Will there be a need for you to wear personal protective equipment?
- Program planning to support physical distancing (as much as possible, including during meals and naptime), limited sharing of toys (plan for more individual activities), and type of toys available (i.e. nothing soft or porous, only items that can be disinfected), no shared sensory bins/water tables/playdough etc.
- Program planning to support outdoor play with limited toys and no access to play structures.
- What about outings? When and where? What precautions might be necessary?

- Determining your approach for offering comfort to the children. Will it be limited (i.e. rubbing a child's back but no hugging or sitting on your lap) or will it be the same as it's always been?
- Guidelines and procedures for the management of COVID-19 related symptoms for yourself and/or a child while in your care (for "in the moment" management and also for returning to care after illness)
- What new supplies might you need before opening? Masks? Gloves? Hand sanitizer? Disinfectant wipes?
- What modifications to the physical environment might you need to make before opening?

Communicating openly with families will be imperative and will pave the road for a smooth and successful transition.

- How and when will you present your "resuming care" plan to families?
- What new family expectations have been put in place?
- How often and when will you revisit your plan?
- Will your plan be an official amendment to your contract?

Knowing that you have the health, safety, and well-being of all children and families at heart will relay a message of care and compassion. Following provincial and/or municipal guidelines while developing your own plan to resume care highlights your expertise in the field and your commitment to quality child care.

"Do the best you can until you know better.
Then when you know better, do better."
Maya Angelou

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- Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: Emergency Child Care Centres Version 2 - May 8, 2020
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_child_care_guidance.pdf
- Public Health Ontario Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>
- Ottawa Public Health COVID-19 Guidance for Emergency Childcare Centres— April 17 2020 https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/resources/Documents/EN-COVID-19-Guidance_EssentialWork_CCC_Final_April17.pdf
- Ottawa Public Health Environmental cleaning and disinfection in child care centres and schools <https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/environmental-cleaning-and-disinfection-in-child-care-centres-and-schools.aspx>
- Toronto Public Health: COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care Settings <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/9571-COVID-19-Guidance-for-Child-Care-Settings.pdf>
- Eastern Ontario Health Unit: Home-Based Child Care Operating Guidelines for COVID-19 <https://eohu.ca/files/resources/12084-2-icd-20e.pdf?125104e654>
- Eastern Ontario Health Unit: Daily Health Assessment <https://eohu.ca/files/resources/12086-icd-20e.pdf>