

July 8, 2020

For Parents - Children's Village Procedures During COVID-19 Pandemic

When Children's Village reopens to children and families during Governor Wolf's Yellow Phase of the COVID-19 pandemic state reopening plan, below are the measures our governing bodies require or advise we take. These modifications in our program are designed to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 to children, staff, and their families. Consider this document the COVID-19 Pandemic Procedures Addendum to The Parent/Provider Agreement and The Family Handbook.

All families will be asked to inform us of your plans to return to the center when a reopening date is known. We will send you a survey via email. Some may want to attend upon our reopening day, others may prefer to wait for a subsequent week, or may want to wait until the fall. Some may want to go back on the waiting list for a future date. We understand if you are unsure. There is much uncertainty in the world, and it's frightening. We hope the procedures detailed in this document give you confidence that we are planning to reopen safely, and with the health and welfare of children and staff in mind.

Sources of Guidance

As we plan our reopening, we depend on the expertise of the following authorities. They are listed in ranking order.

- Pennsylvania Office for Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)
- Pennsylvania Department of Health
- Philadelphia Department of Health
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

Expect More Changes

It's important to say that we anticipate changes in the procedures that follow. There are many factors to consider - the science improves, experts refine their guidance accordingly, and resources may become more or less available. At all times we are committed to practices that best support the health and safety of children, their teachers, the non-classroom staff at Children's Village, and the families of everyone involved.

For example -

- Any of the guidance in this document may be overridden by directives from OCDEL or the Health Department.
- If Philadelphia reverts to the Red Phase in the event of escalating cases of COVID-19, child care centers will likely be required to close again.
- When Philadelphia progresses from the Yellow to the Green Phase, some of these special precautions will be lifted, but other recommendations for mitigation spread will still be in effect.
- Please be aware of travel restrictions to the states listed on the Philadelphia Health Department website where COVID-19 is spiking [<https://www.phila.gov/programs/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/updates/>]. After

a return from these states, travelers must self-quarantine, monitoring for health symptoms, for 14 days before leaving home. Children who have been to any of these locations must be quarantined at home for 14 days before coming to Children's Village.

Watch for COVID-19 Symptoms

COVID-19 symptoms range from mild to severe. Symptoms may appear 2 - 14 days after exposure to the virus. They include:

- **Cough**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Fever**
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Headache
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

Some individuals may have COVID-19 and not show any symptoms at all.

The Health Department specifies those with fever or cough or two or more of the other symptoms should consult their health care provider. Those without a primary care provider should call the COVID-19 helpline at (800) 722-7112.

Philadelphia Health Department guidelines recommend those with even mild symptoms of above should stay home for at least three consecutive days, avoiding all contact until they feel completely better.

The Pennsylvania Office for Child Development and Early Learning clarifies that children do not need to be excluded from child care settings with mild colds.

Seek emergency medical attention (call 911) for trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, or bluish lips or face.

People who contract COVID-19 present higher risk for severe disease and death if they are 65 years and older, have chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, serious heart conditions, are immunocompromised, severely obese, diabetic, or have chronic kidney or liver disease.

General CDC Practice to Prevent Illness

Four of these are already standard practices in child care settings:

- Wash hands frequently and properly, lathering 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into tissue, or into the elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and frequently touched surfaces.

In addition, while COVID-19 spread is a threat:

- Wear cloth face coverings while outside the home, particularly within 6 feet of others.
- All adults at Children's Village will wear cloth face coverings.
- As of 7/8/20, face masks are required for children over the age of 2 years old.
- Parents are required to send children over the age of 2 years old to school in face masks. A paper bag labelled with the child's name will be provided for mask storage when not in use.
- Children should not wear masks while eating, sleeping, or vigorously exercising.

Exclusion and Monitoring for COVID-19 Exposure at Children's Village

Staff and children should not come to school if they are sick, or if they have recently been in close contact with someone with COVID-19. The CDC recommends parents take children's temperatures at home before coming to school every day. Anyone with a temperature 100.4 and above should stay home. Children with a cough or shortness of breath should stay home.

We are required to track suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19. By law, we must report these to the Health Department and follow all of their recommendations. Please talk with a member of the family services

team - Beth Baker, Sophia Niu, Sim Loh, Min Kuster, or Ruiji Wang - so we can maintain an accurate and timely record of any suspected or confirmed incidence of COVID-19 at Children's Village.

If children become sick while at school, parents, or emergency contacts will be contacted for prompt pick-up. Please make sure we have current contact information on file for you and your child's emergency contacts, and plan to come very quickly if we have to call you.

Individuals presenting symptoms of COVID-19, or positively diagnosed with COVID-19, should isolate at home and consult their health care provider. They may return to Children's Village when (1) their symptoms have significantly improved, AND, (2) at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, AND, (3) they have been fever-free for 72 hours without fever-reducing medication. Alternatively, they may return if they supply a health care provider's documentation that they are permitted to discontinue isolation (this is a medical determination that involves CDC-approved testing revealing individuals are negative for the virus).

We will notify you if your child is a close contact of someone reported to be infected with COVID-19. The Pennsylvania Health Department requires close contacts of COVID-19 cases to self-quarantine at home for 14 days following their last exposure to an infected person. Please advise us if your child is under self-quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure outside Children's Village as well.

This means that if your child is in a classroom with someone discovered to be infected with COVID-19, and this infected individual was in the class with your child within the 48 hours before their symptoms appeared, then the entire class must remain home and self-quarantine for 14 days. Please be prepared with alternate plans if this occurs.

The names of those affected by COVID-19 - either with symptoms themselves or self-quarantining due to exposure - are only shared with those who need to know this information to perform their job. The Health Department must be notified who has COVID-19 at Children's Village, and they may want to know who has been exposed to the infected individual.

All staff and parents of children at Children's Village will be informed of a confirmed case of COVID-19 at the center.

If a child, staff member, or family member thereof contracts COVID-19, we will respond with care and compassion, and actions will be taken to protect others. It is pointless and hurtful to cast blame on anyone for how they contracted or unwittingly spread the virus. Actions or words demonstrating bias, prejudice, or blame against any persons or groups at the center will not be tolerated.

Reducing Close Contact During the Yellow Phase

The Health Department recommends that only teachers and children enter the school building during the Yellow Phase. Parents and family members should not come into the building. No outside visitors are permitted. Children's Village staff will meet you in the back of the building when you arrive and when you return to pick up your child. Staff will take children to and from their classrooms.

There will be no combined classrooms at any time of day. There will be no early room and no late room. Children must stay with their own teachers and classroom group from the time they arrive until they leave. OCDEL specifically states that class size is not reduced during the Yellow Phase of Pennsylvania's reopening plan.

To ensure staffing in each classroom for the full day, Children's Village operation hours will be modified to 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM during the Yellow Phase. We will ask you to commit to projected drop-off and pick-up times so we can staff child escorts accordingly.

Paper communications will be suspended during the Yellow Phase. Expect to receive this correspondence via email. Please check your email at least once a day at this time. Injury incident reports, emergency reports, parent/provider agreements, and preschool funding determinations will all be handled through email.

Tuition invoices will be sent by US Mail. If possible, please arrange to remit your payment by bank auto-pay, or by dropping a check or money order into the mail. On Monday mornings and Friday afternoons the bookkeeping staff will be stationed out back with a temporary drop-off box if you must pay by envelope. On-the-spot receipts will not be issued during this period. Again, this minimizes the close physical proximity that elevates risk for disease spread.

Stepped Up Cleaning and Disinfecting Practice

Children's Village has high standards for cleaning and disinfecting, and we'll be even more diligent when we reopen. The nighttime cleaning crew has been keeping the center clean and disinfected while we've been closed. Teachers will give classroom surfaces, toys, and materials a thorough cleaning and disinfecting before children return to school. Playthings and areas children touch will be cleaned and disinfected daily.

During the Yellow Phase, it is recommended that we minimize items from home. Toddler and preschool-age children should bring in their laundered blanket every Monday, and children should maintain a full, clean, weather-appropriate change of clothes in their cubbies. No stuffed animals are permitted at this time. No toys or books from home are permitted. Remember that no water bottles are permitted at any time.

In the event of a COVID-19 case at the center, the area(s) occupied by the child or adult will be left vacant for 24 hours, and then thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before the space is open for use again.

Arrivals and Departures During the Yellow Phase

CDC guidelines require us to confirm with you, each day upon arrival, that you have taken your child's temperature that morning and it is not 100.4 or over, you have not given your child any fever-reducing medication that day, your child does not have a cough, and your child is not experiencing shortness of breath. Please bear with us as we practice this precaution for the health and safety of everyone - your child, your child's classmates, and your child's teachers.

We will ask you when you plan to drop off and pick up your child. As much as you can, please try to stick to these times. We will meet you out in back of the building (in or near the parking lot). Dropping off or picking up later or earlier than projected? Please call the front desk. We'll work it out.

We will do the best we can, but please allow for wait times.

While waiting, please practice respectful social distancing guidelines. Wear your mask, and maintain at least six feet between your household members and others. Do not leave your child with another family who is also waiting so you can leave before your child is escorted to class. This increases your child's circle of close contacts, which elevates risk of potential virus exposure for all involved.

The CDC asks us to advise parents to choose a consistent drop-off and pick-up person who is familiar to us, and who is not in any of the risk categories mentioned above (not 65 or older, no underlying health conditions).

If the individual picking up your child is not readily identifiable to Children's Village staff, we will ask the pick-up person to raise their mask at a 6 foot distance so we can see their face. If we are unsure, we will request photo identification, as usual, to make sure the individual is on your permitted pick-up person list. We really appreciate your cooperation while we maintain our strict security standards and respect social distancing guidelines at the same time.

Keep in Touch - Virtually, of Course!

It's important for teachers and families to maintain communication despite current social distancing mandates. Each teaching team will have their own plan to keep you posted on your child's participation in the program.

You can always call or email! We promise to stay abreast of phone calls and email communications. Believe me, we don't like excluding parents and family members from classroom settings. Early childhood and after school settings typically see parents and family members twice a day - morning and evening - and we have come to take this check-in opportunity for granted. We're counting the days until we can restore this valuable practice.

Prejudice, Bias, and Blame Will Not Be Tolerated

This is a stressful time. We are all afraid and protective of our own. Let's set a good example for our children in the way we manage risk in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Have a complaint? Please call or write to a management team member to voice your concern. We'll investigate and get back to you. We may need to make a change, or we will explain to you why a practice is in place.
- Concerned about another's behavior? Reach out to a management team member. If this is about another child or family, we'll follow up with them.
- Have an idea to improve procedures? Please let us know. There's always room for improvement and we value our collaboration with you.
- Are you, your child, or any member of your family the target of bias or blame? Please tell us. We really want to intervene if this is happening at our program.

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A Heartfelt Thanks!

While we have been closed during Pennsylvania's Red Phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are beyond grateful to the other Children's Village staff members who stepped up to facilitate communication with non-English speaking parents. We would not have been able to maintain our commitment to regular, ongoing, responsive interactions between parents and teachers without their steady, reliable, and caring help at this time:

Huan Chen, Administrative Assistant

Yi Chen, Office Manager

Felicia Lai, #203 Lead Teacher

Teresa Lei, Education Assistant

Ann Ng, Data Clerk

Helen Wen, #103 Assistant Teacher

Adriana Estrella Perez, Part-Time Classroom Teacher

Ling Xu, English Teacher, Special Needs Coordinator

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