

# SAFE REOPENING OF CHILD CARE

Relaunch Playbook  
Round 1

YMCA Early Learning Center

June 9, 2020



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## **I. Introduction**

The YMCA Early Learning Center is committed to ensuring the safety and health of our youth, families and employees in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This guide outlines the policies and procedures that will be implemented during the reopening of our child care center. These standards are based on the current guidelines and recommendations set forth by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Virginia Department of Social Services and Child Care Licensing, as well as the State and local Health Department, and are subject to change.

## **II. Health and Safety Measures Personal**

### **Protective Equipment (PPE)**

All staff will be required to wear a face mask when interacting with members, program participants, general public and other staff members. Masks must be worn properly.

Additional PPE will be available for staff stationed at check-in and isolation areas including disposable gloves, masks, and face shields. Staff are encouraged to pack changes of clothes in the event of bodily fluid contamination.

While not required, children over the age of 2 are advised to wear a mask. This reflects the current licensing guideline and may be subject to change.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Hospital grade EPA approved disinfecting solution or an equivalent such as bleach will be used to sanitize equipment and surfaces. Staff will be required to sanitize areas before and after use including classroom equipment and furniture, as well as outdoor playground equipment. Cleaning crews will clean and disinfect all indoor and outdoor areas daily after operating hours.

The frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of toys, equipment, and surfaces, especially doorknobs, light switches, countertops, and restrooms will be increased to minimize the potential for the spread of germs. Toys that are not easily cleanable (such as stuffed animals, play dough, and pillows) will be temporarily removed and toys that are out at any one time will be rotated so that they can be adequately cleaned and sanitized.

## Hygiene Practices/Hand Washing

Practice frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and require handwashing upon arriving at the center, before meals or snacks, after outside time, after going to the bathroom, and prior to leaving for home. Help young children to ensure they are doing it effectively.

- Advise children, families, and staff to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and clean hands with soap and water.
- Provide adequate supplies for good hygiene including clean and functional handwashing stations, soap, paper towels, and lined trash cans.

## Health Screening at Entry

Children and staff will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering or being admitted to the center each day.

- Daily temperature and symptom checks of staff and children should be done upon entry. Temperature may not exceed 100.4 F. Temperature will be taken with a no contact thermometer. If a temperature reads above 100.4 F, then you may reattempt two times.
- Children or staff who respond affirmatively when asked about the following shall not be admitted to the center:
  - Ask if medications were used to lower the child's temperature.
  - Ask if they are experiencing fever, cough, or shortness of breath, and/or symptoms of communicable disease like cold or flu?
  - Ask if anyone has been complaining of sore throat or body rash?
  - If they have been in close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days; or
  - If anyone in their household has symptoms of respiratory illness (e.g. fever, cough, shortness of breath).

## Drop-off and Pick-up

Parents will not have access to the center. Drop off will take place outside of the center at a designated area located in the hallway. Children and staff will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entry. Screening includes temperature checks (may not exceed 100.4 degrees F) and a symptom questionnaire, and handwashing upon entering.

The following guidelines will be implemented during drop-off and pick-up:

- Groups will not be combined at any time.
- Children and staff must wash hands upon arrival, and wash hands before and after signing in and out. No pen should be shared. Parents should use their own pen when signing in. If check-in is electronic, provide alcohol wipes and frequently clean the screens or keyboards.
- Parents should drop off children at the designated drop-off area, limiting adult entry into the facility.
- Staff should meet children as they are dropped off.

## Physical Distancing

Though complete physical distancing is difficult to achieve in a child care environment because child care staff will be in close contact with children, centers are required to implement strategies to minimize chances of viral transmission. These shall include, at a minimum:

- Eliminate large group activities: No field trips, assemblies, large meetings, and performances.
- Cancel or modify activities where children are likely to be in close contact: For example, modify physical education activities to reduce contact between children, avoid large gatherings or mixing of classes.
- Reduce group size: Reduce group sizes to no larger than 12 people total, including children and adults. Keep groups together throughout the day; do not combine groups (e.g., on the playground, at opening and closing). As feasible, maintain the same groups from day to day.
- Maximize space between people: To maximize space between people in a group, limit rooms to 12 people total in typical child care facilities. Large rooms can be divided into two rooms. When dividing a room, create a clear barrier (e.g., with cones, chairs, or tables) to ensure a minimum of 6 feet between the two groups. Aim to keep three to six feet between individual children and minimize the amount of time children are in close contact with each other. For

example, increase the distance between children during table work and limit the amount of time children spend standing in line.

- Limit item sharing: If items are being shared, remind children not to touch their faces and to wash their hands after using items. Only share items and toys that can be cleaned and sanitized.
- Non-essential visitors and guests are prohibited
- Teach staff, children, and their families to maintain distance from each other while at the facility: Educate staff, children and families about why physical distancing is important.

### **Outside Play**

- Offer outdoor play in staggered shifts.
- If multiple groups are outside at the same time, they should have a minimum of six feet of open space between outdoor play areas or visit these areas in shifts so that they are not congregating.
- Children and staff should always wash hands immediately after outdoor play time.

### **Meals and Snack Time**

- Meals and snacks will continue to be served in the individual classroom to avoid congregating in large groups.
- Eliminate family-style meals. Teachers will serve all kids individually.
- Ensure staff are conscious of how they deliver food and handle silverware and plates (recommend disposables). When handling do not touch food contact surfaces and ready to eat food without gloves, or utensils.
- Ensure staff and children wash hands before and after meal/snack time.
- Staff should clean and sanitize table(s) before and after each use by groups.

## **Health Exclusion from the Center (Adults and Children)**

Staff or children with a fever of 100.4 F or higher, cough, or shortness of breath will be excluded from the center. Children with household members who are known to have COVID-19 will also be excluded from the center.

If a child or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at the facility (e.g. fever of 100.4 or higher, cough, shortness of breath), immediately separate the person from the well people until the ill person can leave the facility. If the child has symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever, cough, shortness of breath), the caregiver waiting with the child should remain as far away as safely possible from the child (preferably, 6 feet).

If symptoms persist or worsen, they should call their health care provider for further guidance. Advise the employee or child's parent or caregiver to inform the facility immediately if the person is diagnosed with COVID-19.

If facility learns of a COVID positive case in their facility they should contact their local health department for guidance.

Facilities experiencing a confirmed case of COVID-19 among their population will work with the local health department to determine next steps. It may be advised by the health department that the center closes temporarily. The duration may be dependent on staffing levels, outbreak levels in the community and severity of illness in the infected individual. Symptom-free children and staff should not attend or work at another facility during the closure.

## **Short-Term Visitors to the Facility with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19**

If the infected individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 spent minimal time (i.e. 10 minutes or less) in close contact with those in the emergency child care center, the center must consult and work with the local health department to determine the appropriate course of action, which may include closure or exclusion.

## **Returning After Suspected COVID-19 Symptoms**

If a staff member or child has symptoms of COVID-19 or is a close contact of someone with COVID-19, they can return to the center if the following conditions are met:

- If the individual has a fever, cough, or shortness of breath and has not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, they should stay home and away from others until 72 hours after the fever is gone without fever reducing medication and symptoms get better. If the person's symptoms worsen, they should contact their healthcare provider to determine if they should be tested for COVID-19.

- If an individual is diagnosed with COVID-19, they must remain out of the facility for a minimum of 7 days after the onset of first symptoms. They may return under the following conditions:
  - If the individual had a fever: 3 days after the fever ends AND there is an improvement in initial symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath);
  - If the individual did not have a fever: 3 days after there is an improvement in initial symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath); OR 7 days after symptom
  - Individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 should remain home from work or the center and avoid contact with others until at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications) and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **AND** at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- If an individual believes they have had close contact to someone with COVID-19 but are not currently sick, they should monitor their health for fever, cough, and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day they were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19. They should not go to work or child care and should avoid public places for 14 days.

### III. Preparing to Reopen

#### Staff Training

Prior to returning to work, employees will be required to attend virtual training on the Relaunch Workplace Safety Playbook and onsite training on personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning and disinfecting, social distancing and additional health and safety procedures. Staff will signoff to acknowledge upon completion of the online training and understanding of the policies and practices herein.

#### Preparing the Facility for Children

- Teachers should approach the return of children to the ELC in the same mindset as we would plan the first day of school. Children will take time to adapt back into the setting and adjust to the changes made to the environment. Schedules and routines will be vital from day one. However, staff should be prepared to be flexible as per their social emotional and intellectual needs.
- Classroom arrangements will be revised to accommodate changes in maximum group size and to allow for physical distancing. There should be enough tables and chairs to permit adequate spacing at play time. Consider staggered meal



times if there is not enough table space. Floor markers may be installed to help with physical distancing.

- Cloth toys, books, wooden toys and toys that are not easily cleaned will be removed temporarily. Easily mouthed toys will also be temporarily removed from the Toddler classroom. Toy sets for each individually child will be organized for infants. Loose/shared playground equipment such as balls, scooters and cars will be temporarily removed and placed in storage.
- School kits may be pre-assembled if possible for children to contain their own regular-use supplies including art materials and writing tools. Contents will be determined in collaboration with teachers.
- The daily schedule including curriculum, meals and naps will be re-designed to accommodate time for hand-washing, cleaning-sanitizing of surfaces and materials, as well as to help the children learn and adjust to physical distancing in the classroom.
- A drop-off area will be designated and equipped with appropriate PPE, disinfecting spray bottle, no contact thermometer, tent and table.
- A designated isolation area for sick children will be identified and equipped with the appropriate equipment and PPE.

### **Messaging to Families**

Prior to opening, current ELC families will receive information pertaining to the new health and safety guidelines as released by the Department of Social Services in conjunction with the Department of Health. A virtual orientation session for parents may be provided to present appropriate information and address any questions.

A survey will be conducted with current families to assess the need for care and to gather important information about enrollment, age groups and any additional concerns parents and/or guardians may have.

## **IV. Opening the Doors – Everyday Practice**

### **Cleaning Supplies and Equipment**

The center will be stocked with cleaning supplies and equipment that will be easily accessible in classrooms and other areas of the center. Supplies include gloves (gloves are required for cleaning), paper towels, soap and water solution, and hospital grade disinfectant or bleach and water solution. Effective preparation and use of disinfectants is necessary to properly sanitize materials and surfaces. If using a bleach dilution, NEW bleach solution MUST be prepared every morning prior to the

welcoming of children into classrooms. Spray bottles should be clearly labeled with the mix instructions if not already done so. The proper mix of bleach and water is:

- 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

Hospital grade EPA approved disinfectants that are approved for use by the YMCA may also be available. Staff must follow the directions on the label for correct dilution and use.

All materials and surfaces must be cleaned with soap and water prior to the application of the disinfecting solution. Disinfecting solution must sit on materials and surfaces for 10 minutes prior to wiping. This instruction should be included on the spray bottle as well.

### **Child Drop-Off**

Children will be brought to the designated drop-off area outside of the center for screening as they arrive. Multiple screening stations may be employed to accommodate higher volume drop-off times.

- Children and parents will queue according to social distancing guidelines while waiting. Parent must stay with child(ren) prior to completion of screening and intake.
- Staff will use a mobile check in procedure to sign the child in and record temperatures and survey questions. Temperatures will be checked by non- contact forehead heat-scan thermometers. Upon completion of screening, child will be checked in and escorted to their classroom by staff.
- Parents should be asked for an estimated pick-up time for that day, and that should be noted for a planned and uneventful pickup without the parent entering the Center. For infants: staff will record when the child last ate and how much (to allow for staff to plan the child's schedule for the day)
- Children should come to the center equipped with multiple changes of clothes (to be left at the center and washed at the center if possible) and an extra pair of shoes.
- Staggered pick up and drop off: Parents need to commit to a specific time so that we can effectively stagger arrival and dismissal. Drop off and pick up windows will be determined by the Center Director and may be limited to specific hours.

### **Group Size and Ratios**

Group size and ratio will be determined based on current guidance from Virginia Department of Social Services. Groups will be reduced to 12 total including children and adults.

The ELC Director will collaborate to determine classroom staff schedules including possible assignment of floating teachers for staff meals and breaks, support cleaning and other sanitizing requirements. Staff schedules will be reviewed and approved by the Chief Operating Officer.

### **Daily Classroom Schedule and Activities**

- Children and staff should remain outside of three-to-six feet apart whenever possible.
- Classrooms, activities and materials should remain limited.
- Play areas will be established for one-at-a-time use or table activities enabling three to six feet of space between children individually working with materials.
- Shared materials should be avoided wherever and whenever possible. Materials should be cleaned and sanitized between uses. All classrooms should employ the use of a Dirty Toy Bin for frequent cleaning and sanitizing throughout the day. Unnecessary materials, toys and cloth-based items (stuffed animals, pillows, etc.) should be removed from classrooms and stored in closed plastic trash bags (the cloth-based items) until further notice.
- Outside Time: Playground should be used by one group at a time and must be sanitized in between groups. No equipment should be used.
- Naptime: Cots should be minimally six feet apart, arranged “head to toe” during rest and nap. Bedding should be individually stored daily and sent home to be laundered weekly.
- Meals and Snacks: During meal and snack times, prior-existing food handling requirements are in play in accordance to childcare licensing requirements, including the use of gloves and/or utensils ALWAYS when handling children’s food. Tables will be cleaned before and after meals. No family style meals. ELC will continue to use disposable plates and utensils to prepare and serve food to children. Children must be seated three to six feet away from each other so that they will not touch each other or each other’s food while eating. Staggered food times can be arranged to provide for meal- time social distancing.
- Staff and children MUST wash hands (see hand-washing signage) before and after meal-times. Tables, containers and surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized before and after as well (see bleach solution protocols).
- Child Comforting: Throughout the day, especially for infants and toddlers, physical comfort will need to be provided. Gloves and masks should be worn whenever staff physically encounter children within three feet.
- Halls and classrooms must be limited to 12 total attendees including staff. Classrooms requiring more than one staff person will be limited to ten children. Appropriate, compliant signage should be posted as well.

- Restroom Use: Toilets and faucets must be cleaned and disinfected between toileting routines.

### **Isolation Area**

A designated isolation area will be used for children who develop symptoms during the day and are waiting to be picked up by a parent or guardian. The isolation area will be away from other children in the Director's office. Children should be kept comfortable via social distance. Staff monitoring this area when a child is sick, will be required to wear appropriate PPE including mask, gloves/face shield. The isolation area will be disinfected after the child leaves the center.

### **Child Pick-up**

Pick-up times should be staggered to avoid overcrowding. An organized system will be implemented where parents/guardians will indicate their pick-up time and will call the center when they arrive. The staff will gather the child's belonging, have the child wash their hands, and escort the child into the Center. Parents will be asked to confirm their pick-up time during drop-off earlier in the day. The parent/guardian will receive the child and place the child in the car seat.

### **Daily Cleaning/Sanitizing and Closing the Center**

- Throughout the day, and following every use, tables and materials should be cleaned with soap and water, then sanitized with disinfectant. All wiping should be done with disposable paper towels and gloves. Both should be disposed after each use.
- Toys should be cleaned daily if used (weekly if not unused) in soap and water and then disinfectant water bath.
- To close the ELC at the end of the day, all surfaces and materials should be cleaned and sanitized one last time. Items should be taken off the floor and stored on tables for optimal night-time floor cleaning.
- Bleach spray bottles should be emptied and left open to air out near the sink areas in preparation for the next morning's mixing of fresh bleach solution.
- Supplies should be restocked in each room, bathroom, and wherever morning drop off supplies are kept.

## **V. Operating Hours**

The Early Learning Center will reopen with modified hours to ensure safety, adhere to CDC group size limitations, sanitization procedures, and social distancing requirements. Initially, the operating hours will be 8am-6pm, M-F. This will be reevaluated as these guidelines change.