For Parents - Children’s Village COVID-19 Pandemic Program Plan

The Children’s Village COVID-19 Pandemic Program Plan is 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.

Sources of Guidance

We depend on the expertise of the following authorities. They are listed in ranking order.

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

Expect Ongoing Changes

There will continue to be 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.

Watch for COVID-19 Symptoms

COVID-19 symptoms may be mild to severe. Some individuals are asymptomatic. Symptoms may appear 2 - 14 days after exposure to the virus.

ONE OF THESE SYMPTOMS:
• Cough - NEW OR PERSISTENT
• Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
• New loss of taste or smell

OR TWO OF THESE SYMPTOMS:
• Fever greater than or equal to 100.4
• Chills
• Muscle pain
• Sore throat
• Headache
• Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
• Congestion, runny nose

Philadelphia Health Department guidelines recommend those with even mild symptoms should stay home, rest, and avoid contact with others until they feel completely better.

The Philadelphia Health Department specifies those with a new cough, shortness of breath, new loss of taste or smell, or two or more of the other symptoms should stay or go home, and consult their health care provider. Those without a primary care provider should call the COVID-19 helpline at (800) 722-7112. Be sure to share not only your child’s symptoms and their severity, but also any underlying health conditions.

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.

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.

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.
Even those fully vaccinated and up-to-date with their booster shot, if applicable, should seek medical care if they present symptoms consistent with COVID.

**Vaccination is the Best Protection Against COVID-19**

Everyone six months and older is eligible to receive a COVID vaccine. This is highly recommended by the Philadelphia Health Department, and the Centers for Disease Control. If you have any questions about the vaccine for your child, consult your pediatrician. For more information about vaccines, timing, and locations to receive the vaccine, refer to the Philadelphia Health Department website.

At Children’s Village, vaccines are mandatory for staff.

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

Staff and children should not come to school if they are sick. 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 Philadelphia 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.

**If Your Child Tests Positive for COVID**

Children 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 after day 5 IF

1. their symptoms have significantly improved,
2. they have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication,
3. they can eat and sleep at least six feet away from other children*,
4. and they can consistently mask at all other times.

*Some children would be able to manage this more easily than others. We will consult with the teachers to see for whom this is possible and practical. **If this would be too difficult for a child, the 10-day isolation continues to apply.**

Children testing positive for symptoms of COVID-19 may return to Children’s Village following a 10-day isolation IF

1. their symptoms have significantly improved,
2. and they have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication

**If Your Child is Exposed to COVID at School**

We will notify you if your child is a close contact of someone reported to be infected with COVID-19. Children no longer need to quarantine in event of COVID-exposure at school. Observe for illness symptoms if your child has been exposed to COVID. Testing periodically is recommended if your child has been exposed to someone who is COVID-positive. It is particularly important for exposed children to test at least every other day if they are unable to mask yet (under the age of two).

**If Your Child is Exposed to COVID at Home**

A COVID-positive individual should not eat or sleep in the same room as other household members, if this is possible. When occupying the same room, all in the home should mask (again, if possible). If the exposed child is fully vaccinated, quarantine is not necessary (although monitoring for symptoms is still important). The COVID-exposed child who is NOT fully vaccinated should stay
home for a minimum of five days (since this is a higher risk exposure). As long as the child remains symptom-free and is testing negative, they may return to school on or after day six.

**Masking at Children’s Village**

Programs receiving federal funds (toddler and preschool classes) are still required to wear masks at this time.

Masking is required at Children’s Village for all over the age of two years in infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms, and in all common areas. Children remove their masks for meals, nap, and during periods of vigorous physical exercise outdoors.

 Masks are required for all children and adults in all common areas of the building - in the lobby, in the stairwell, in the elevator, at the 2nd floor front desk area, in hallways, in the kitchen, in bathrooms, and in all areas when infants, toddlers, and preschoolers are present.

School-agers may opt to remove masks in their classrooms if case rates are low and there has not been a recent COVID exposure in the class. Once children have been exposed at school (or at home), however, masks are mandatory for the following ten days, in accordance with the Philadelphia Health Department policy.

When masking is optional in school-age groups, some will continue to mask, and others will choose not to mask. Please respect individual decisions about masking, and encourage children to be respectful and kind to one another about their choices. School-age children are encouraged to discuss this decision at home with their families.

Please consistently remind school-age children to mask outside of their classroom. A pattern of noncompliance could result in revocation of the mask-optional privilege.

Bear in mind that the mask mandate may be imposed again by the Philadelphia Health Department when conditions warrant.

**Confidentiality, Compassion, and Communication**

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 jobs. 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.

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.

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, over the phone, or through some other online platform. Classroom COVID exposures will be announced via email.

Tuition payment may be made by envelope and dropped in the bookkeeping drop box on the 2nd floor across from the kitchen. On-the-spot receipts will not be issued during this period. However, the bookkeeping staff are available to answer your questions – drop by the office, give a call, or send an email [yic@childrensvillagephila.org].

**Stepped Up Cleaning and Disinfecting Practice**

Children’s Village has high standards for cleaning and disinfecting, and we are even more diligent at this time. The nighttime cleaning crew keeps the center clean and disinfected. Playthings and areas children touch are cleaned and disinfected regularly.

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. Remember that no water bottles are permitted at any time.

**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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