



Requirements for Health & Safety Practices

Purpose

To ensure that all employees are aware of, and adhere to, Discovery Early Learning & Care's Health & Safety Practices and the directive established by the Ministry of Health.

Policy

Discovery Early Learning & Care is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for teams, children and families. Discovery Early Learning & Care will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within our centre.

This policy applies to all employees, families and children. This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees prior to commencing employment and annually thereafter, and at any time where a change is made.

Discovery Early Learning & Care is required to follow all existing health and safety requirements as directed by the local medical officer of health and as outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and other policies and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education. Plans must also be in place to respond should any employee, children, or parents/guardians be exposed to COVID-19.

Many infectious diseases and illnesses can be prevented through appropriate hygiene, sanitation, and infection prevention/control practices which helps protect the health, safety and well-being of employees, children and families.

Procedures

1. Monitor employees and children daily for symptoms. Should employees or children show any signs they will be immediately separated from all others. Parent/guardian will be called and will need to pick up child immediately.

- Fever (temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher / 100 degree Fahrenheit or higher)
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell
- Runny nose/nasal congestion without other known cause
- For young children sluggishness or lack of appetite (if no other diagnosis).

Or the following atypical symptoms:

- Unexplained fatigue, malaise, muscle aches
- Delirium (acutely altered mental status or inattention)
- Unexplained or increase numbers of falls
- Chills
- Headaches
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis).

2. Preventative Measures -Prevent the spread of illness

a. Masks

PHSD is requiring that employees wear a mask (medical or non-medical) when physical distancing cannot be maintained, including, but not limited to:

- Providing direct care (for example, feeding, assisting a child with hand hygiene, diapering).
- Consoling an upset child.
- Assisting a child with dressing or changing clothes.

This requirement applies within cohorts as well.

*Note that the use of masks is not recommended for children, especially for those under the age of two.

Information on the use of face coverings is available here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/face-coverings-and-face-masks>

and here:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/2020/05/factsheet-covid-19-non-medical-masks.pdf?la=en>

- b. If parents/guardians administered any fever-reducing medication to their child(ren) in the last 5 hours for fever they are not allowed entry.
- c. All employees must wash hands upon arrival and often (See Appendix E: Hand Hygiene Policy and Procedures). They must also cover their mouth during coughing and sneezing either with a tissue or a flexed elbow and disposing of used tissues in a plastic lined waste container, followed by hand hygiene.

Everyone should be encouraged avoid touching their face.

- d. Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items that children touch with their hands, mouths, and body fluids such as toys, diaper stations, chairs, playground equipment, door handles, etc. (See *Appendix C: Environmental Cleaning and Disinfecting Policy and Procedures*).
- e. Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when needed during screening, cleaning and when monitoring sick children who have been separated, and when physical distancing cannot be maintained. (See Appendix F: Testing and Exclusion of Sick Children or Employee Policy and Procedures).
- f. The playrooms and washrooms will be supplied with paper towels and tissues and available at all times.
- g. Liquid soap dispensers and/or hand sanitizer is available in each playroom and hand sanitizer will be made available outside of the entrance area.
- h. Wash daycare laundry using detergent.
- i. Clean and disinfect diaper change areas between uses.

Requirements for Health and Safety

1. Ensure all current infection prevention and control practices are adhered to, this includes but is not limited to:
 - Ensuring all toys used at the centre are made of material that can be cleaned and disinfected (e.g. avoid plush toys);

- Increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting objects, toys and frequently touched surfaces;
 - Frequently touched surfaces are most likely to become contaminated, including doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, and tabletops, and must be disinfected at least twice a day;
 - Only using disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). Low level hospital grade disinfectants may be used;
 - Checking expiry dates of products used and always following manufacturer's instructions;
 - Performing proper hand hygiene (including assisting children with hand hygiene); and,
 - Incorporating additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule.
2. Encourage more physical space between children by:
 - Spreading children out into different areas; and
 - Incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children.
 3. Shifts will be scheduled with the best effort to staff each cohort with 3 – 4 employees to a maximum of 15 children. We have cleaners, screeners and kitchen support employees. Hours of staffing will be shared during the day with an opening employees, floats for the specific cohort, and closing employees to avoid overlaps, maintain cohorts and cover the entire day's operations. All employees will be responsible for contributing to all cleaning and disinfecting necessary to maintain environments and adhere to health and safety requirements.
 4. The rescheduling of group events and/or in-person meetings.
 5. Do not use water or sensory tables unless it can be confined to one child per event, and then set aside for cleaning and disinfecting. (ie. Each child would have their own water bucket, playdough and space to explore.) Employees will be creative in continuing to provide individual sensory experiences for children.
 6. Outdoor play at Discovery Early Learning & Care is encouraged in small groups in order to encourage physical distancing in order to maintain physical distancing.

7. Increase the distance between cots/cribs, if possible. If space is tight, place children head-to-toe or toe-to-toe. Cots and cribs should be disinfected after each use. Please refer to Section 4 of the Ontario Child Care Centre Licensing Manual (September 2019) for more information.
8. Linens must be laundered daily.
9. Children will not share soothers, bottles, sippy cups, toothbrushes, facecloths, etc. Label these items with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.
10. Reinforce "no food sharing" policies.
11. Ensure each child has their own individual meal or snack. Multi-use utensils must be sanitized.
12. Pick-up and drop-off of children will happen outside the child care programs unless it is determined that there is a need for the parent/guardian to enter the program only under special circumstances.
13. When holding infants and toddlers, use blankets or cloths over employees clothing and change the blankets or cloths between children as necessary.
14. Avoid getting close to faces of all children, where possible.
15. Clearly communicate to parents/guardians:
 - Check their children's temperature and we ask employees to check their own temperature daily before coming to work.
 - If the temperature is equal or greater than 37.8 degrees Celsius / 100 degrees Fahrenheit or if the child/children have any cold-like symptoms or vomiting and/or diarrhea, they should stay home (see *Appendix F: Testing and Exclusion of Sick Children or Staff Policy and Procedures*).
14. More information on self-monitoring can be found on [Public Health Ontario's website](#).

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