**COVID Parent Handbook**

Last updated May 26, 2020

In light of the COVID-19 global pandemic, we feel it is important to clarify what Dr. Bonnie Henry has confirmed and encourages childcare centres to remain open at a reduced capacity, where possible, to serve families that are needing childcare, who cannot work from home.

Wee Childcare will continue to follow all updated protocols and procedures as outlined by the Health Authorities and CDC. This can be found at the following link: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/covid-19>qa\_covid19\_childcare\_settings\_mar\_24\_2020.pdf

Given these important requirements, it is imperative that we are resolute in our health policy, and that all parents understand and agree to the following additional requirements.

Provision of Care

We are currently providing childcare at a reduced capacity.  This may change week to week but could look like the following:

* Max group size of 8 children in infant-toddler program 1:4 or 2:8
* Max group size of 8 children in 3-5 program 1:4 or 2:8
* A “floater” staff will be moving around where needed

As such, we are offering spaces to families following a priority system of “COVID-19 Essential Service” roles, Tier 1 (both parents); Tier 2 that CANNOT work from home (both parents) Tier 1 (one of two parents); Tier 2 (one of two parents); Tier 3.

We are grouping children in “shared social distancing bubbles”.  Essentially, this will mean that children will be attending childcare, and be placed in a group, within ONE group only.  This limits the number of people outside of your family that your child is exposed to.

We are reminding families that having your child attend childcare does mean that your entire family has a larger shared social distance bubble.  Please behave responsibly and follow Dr. Henry’s recommendations if you are attending childcare as well as socially interacting with individuals outside of your household.  At this time, your “shared social distance bubble” includes all individuals that any member of your family interacts with, including your child.

Provision of Care during staff illness

As staff are also required to stay home when exhibiting illness symptoms, until they have received a negative Covid-19 test, and we are ensuring small group care bubbles, this presents a significant limitation to our operation in the event of staff illness.  We simply cannot have illness spread throughout the staff team.  We will be addressing staff illness in the following way:

1. For groups running with TWO staff: the group will be provided a staff-illness rotation list, and children will be able to attend alternating days, at a 2:8 ratio (3-5 programs) or 1:4 ration (infant-toddler programs).
2. For groups running with ONE staff: the group will not be able to operate until the negative Covid result is received.   In the unlikely event we have a staff available who can cover for several days, we will temporarily put in the substitute staff.  It is more likely that this will not be possible, and as such, the group will be unable to operate until the staff test is completed and the staff is able to return to work.

Illness and Attendance

Children may not attend Wee programs if they exhibit any symptoms of respiratory illness or fever, these may very well be caused by allergies or teething however there is a zero tolerance for any signs of unwell, we simply cannot take any chances. Our pandemic health & wellness policy is attached.  There are no exceptions to this illness policy.  This policy will be remaining in place indefinitely.  As such, parents are encouraged to think through how they will work from home/care for children who are required to stay home until they are symptom free.  Little ones get sick a significant amount in their first year of daycare; it is imperative to have an accessible plan B until the COVID-19 vaccine is available.

Individuals residing in the household with any child attending Wee Childcare are to be taking all precautions possible to limit their exposure to COVID-19.

Fees are not being refunded due to illness - be it a staff or child illness.  Our withdrawal policies for ‘temporary withdrawal’ and a permanent withdrawal are listed below.

Withdrawal and Temporary withdrawal

 Parents may choose to attend, temporarily withdraw or permanently withdraw.  Please see below for our Covid-19 withdrawal policy, which will remain in effect. MCFD Emergency Funding program is [ending August 31 2020](outlook-data-detector://0); therefore, [September 1st 2020](outlook-data-detector://1) regular fees are due.

Temporary withdrawal: if a family chooses to temporarily withdraw, their space will be offered out to another family for the duration of the pandemic.  At the end of the pandemic - which has been determined by MCFD as [August 31, 2020](outlook-data-detector://2) - families who have temporarily withdrawn will be responsible for fees and will have their space returned to them and or held for them, post-dated cheques for [September 1, 2020](outlook-data-detector://3) will be deposited.

Permanently withdrawal: Regular withdrawal notice would be required once attendance has been resumed. In the event that a parent decides they will permanently withdraw during the temporary withdrawal period, parents must follow the regular policy of withdrawal by giving two calendar months' notice as tuition will be required whether the child attends or not.

Arrival & Pick Up Protocol

Parents are not currently allowed to access inside the daycare rooms.

ARRIVAL (LIMIT ONE FAMILY MEMBER)

·  PARENTS ARE NOT CURRENTLY PERMITTED IN THE CENTRE

·  HAVE WASHED HANDS UPON ARRIVAL, PARENTS INCLUDED

·  KNOCK ON DAYCARE DOOR

·  YOUR CAREGIVER WILL BE WITH YOU SHORTLY

·  PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE DAYCARE ROOM

·  MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING WHILE YOU WAIT

·  TAKE TEMPERATURE BEFORE ARRIVING

·  ANSWER HEALTH CHECK QUESTIONS, A STAFF WILL SIGN YOUR CHILD IN

PICK UP

·  PARENTS ARRIVE WITH WASHED HANDS

(WE WILL WASH YOUR CHILDS HANDS)

·  KNOCK ON DOOR AND WAIT

·  MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING WHILE YOU WAIT

·  PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE DAYCARE ROOM

·  A CAREGIVER WILL BRING YOUR CHILD AND BELONGINGS TO YOU

·  A STAFF MEMBER WILL SIGN YOUR CHILD OUT

Cleaning and Sanitization

 Following the current health authority guidelines for sanitization and care:

* 1. Inside the classroom, including all accessible materials, will be disinfected twice per day when used full day.  Disinfection must be completed using a health authority approved sanitizer. We respect that some families prefer us not to use these, and feel they are “unnatural” cleaning products.  Unfortunately, these are the only options we will use for disinfection, as per the CDC.
  2. The washroom is disinfected after every child use.
  3. Child bags must be plastic and on arrival will be sprayed with the disinfectant solution prior to being brought into the classroom.  Please plan your child’s bag accordingly.
  4. Children MUST HAVE DAYCARE ONLY SHOES.  We ask that you send shoes that will be easily disinfected and align with summer outdoor needs - we highly recommend natives or similar rubber/plastic based summer shoes that will work outdoors at and can easily be cleaned.
  5. When eating outdoors, we place a tablecloth on the table, and disinfect the tablecloth.  Hands are washed with soap and water, prior to eating.

Snacks

Snacks need to be provided in disposable containers. For example, plastic wrap, ziploc bags, etc.

Lunch

Please send all lunch / snack items in a plastic bag.  It is helpful to separate lunch and snacks into different bags. You must add an ice pack. Lunches may be brought in reusable, wipeable containers.

Sunscreen

In order to reduce possible spread of illness, we want to refrain from applying sunscreen on every child. Please lather your child with sunscreen before arrival and provide a SPRAY sunscreen for staff to reapply when necessary.

Child/Staff Interactions

* Avoid getting down to child’s face level ie: bend only part way when zipping up coats vs: kneeling in front of the child
* Find alternate ways to show affection such as air hugs, big waves, air kisses
* Carry infants facing away from you whenever possible
* Maintain 6 feet social distancing with parents
* Encourage children to maintain a “personal bubble” and encourage them to use own toys or ask staff to wash if they would like to share
* Use glove when wiping child’s nose

Communication

* Ensure that all information from families is communicated in timely fashion to Manager
* Be firm at ensuring everyone is adhering to policies, but sensitive to how things are stated as pandemic has created heightened anxiety
* When a parent calls in to say their child will be absent, be sure you find out why. If sick, be sure you document their symptoms in DC sign in communication book. Be sure you inform Management immediately of any suspect Covid19 cases
* After using center phone wipe with alcohol swab immediately.
* Staff are to avoid sharing items as much as possible (have own pens, etc)
* Manager to contact Health Unit to report any potential case

Nap Room

* Space children out as much as possible, min 2m (use as much of the room as possible
* Cots are placed head to toe
* Ensure beds are bleached weekly
* Ensure all bedding (including PT children) is washed and recorded weekly (Avoid shaking when making or laundering)

Outside

* Staff are encouraged to spend as much time outside as possible – Minimum 4 hours would be ideal (summer avoid 10-2)
* Children may go for walks but avoid going out places that public frequents/gathers
* Children may use our playground, public playgrounds are not permitted
* Wipe down with bleach cloth high touch items as necessary ie: bike handles, swing chain, playground railings, slide sides, talk tubes (avoid spraying bleach as may rust)

Circle Time

* Ensure children sit spaced 2 meters apart
* Avoid hand holding activities
* When two staff are present split the group in half

Tables

* Large tables seat max 4 and small seat max 2 (less at each if possible)
* When two staff are present split the group in half
* Be sure to clean and sanitize after meals and sweep floor

Art/Sensory/Baking

* Limit children to two at small table and 4 at large table (less at each if possible)
* Give each child personal art supplies, wipe with bleach when done
* Give individual playdoh in bag with child’s name and do not permit sharing, store in baggie with name
* Baking with children for consumption is to be avoided

Play Areas/Toys

* Two to Three children may play together in each area (preferably each with own toys)
* Toy Bins will be placed out for children to play with and then put away with date (may sit for 7 days or be bleached prior to using)
* Avoid using toys that can not be easily washed
* No soft items will be out (dress up, puppets, stuffed animals)
* Avoid sharing of toys as much as possible by having children playing parallel (toys can be separated by giving half to two children beside each other)
* Puzzles once used will be placed away with date (avoid use for 7 days)
* Limit play food (depending on children present it may need to be removed)
* Books may be left out as low risk (wipe down periodically)
* Wash toys that have been put in child’s mouth

Bathroom

* Avoid children lining up
* Adult will remain in bathroom to “teach” proper handwashing, tap off with towel etc.
* Children may sing song while washing for 20 seconds
* Adult will teach children to close toilet prior to flushing (as Covid may be transmitted through feces)
* Adult must wear gloves when changing diapers when BM, not needed with urine

Handwashing

* Staff Wash hands frequently with soap and water (hand sanitizer on occasion or when outside)
* Upon arrival
* When visibly dirty
* Before/After touching face
* After close physical contact with a child or their personal belongings: first aid, wiping nose, sunscreen, wiping tears,
* After you have coughed or sneezed into tissue or hands
* After going to washroom, diapering or assisting child in washroom
* After cleaning tasks & taking out the garbage
* Before handling food or clean dishes
* Before feeding children, food prep or making bottles
* Before and after eating
* After removing gloves
* After having been outside
* Children Wash hands frequently with soap and water (hand sanitizer only if outside)
* Upon arrival
* When visibly dirty
* After touching nose or fingers in mouth
* After you have coughed or sneezed into tissue or hands
* After going to washroom
* Before and after eating
* After having been outside

Mid Day Health Check/Sick Children

* Staff will take children’s temperature prior to nap time
* If a child is sick, they will be in separate area until picked up
* Staff are to maintain a safe distance of 2 meters if possible
* Sanitize area thoroughly as soon as possible
* Instruct parents to keep Manager up to date with info

Illness policy

Recognizing that childcare programs may be the only option for essential service workers to secure childcare in order to work, our program has elected to remain open (with reduced hours) to families at this time.  Please remember that the Covid-19 public health emergency is rapidly changing, and our ability to remain open may change without notice.

Dr. Henry maintains that childcare centres can safely care for children if they are following the prescribed health protocols.

We do not recommend that children with underlying health concerns, or children who live within a household with any underlying health concerns that are considered to be an additional risk for Covid-19, attend child care programs during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Accordingly, please note the following Covid-19 Health and Wellness policy, which applies to all staff and children within this facility.

On arrival, children’s temperature will be told to staff before entering the facility.   If the child has a temperature, they must be taken home and remain home, as per the health policy, below.  \*\*Ear thermometers will not be used, as “Earwax or a small, curved ear canal can interfere with the accuracy of a temperature taken with a digital ear thermometer.”  We will be using a no-touch forehead thermometer.  [(Reference: Mayo clinic)](https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/fever/in-depth/thermometers/art-20046737?fbclid=IwAR3xkrBGvyGof9nBRQ2hs-bxRx-6nYjo9KSWfg9U9wBEEGCg37s_EgMHP-Q)

Parents will additionally be asked health questions each morning, confirming that their child is symptom free and that their child has not been given acetaminophen or ibuprofen in the last 12 hours.  In the event that a parent is found to be not answering this statement truthfully or withholding important medical information, childcare will no longer be provided to that family.  If a child develops any illness after drop off, the child will be separated immediately and parents must pick up within 30 minutes.

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| Symptom | May return when |
| Temperature of 100 F / 37.8 C or higher (orally) or 99 F / 37.2 C or higher (under the arm) | May return to childcare after 10 days AND symptom free; or following a negative Covid test after 5 days and 48 hours symptom free. |
| Runny nose | May return to childcare after 10 days and symptom free or following a negative Covid test after 5 days and symptom free. |
| Cough | May return to childcare after 10 days and symptom free or following a negative Covid test after 5 days and symptom free. |
| Sore throat | May return to childcare after 10 days and symptom free or following a negative Covid test after 5 days and symptom free. |
| Difficulty breathing or wheezing | May return to childcare after 10 days and symptom free or following a negative Covid test after 5 days and symptom free. |
| Unexplained fatigue, aches, rash or cold/flu-like symptoms | May return to childcare after 10 days and symptom free or following a negative Covid test after 5 days and symptom free. |
| Sinus congestion | May return to childcare after 10 days and symptom free or following a negative Covid test after 5 days and symptom free. |
| Children who have, or children with others living in the same home who have just returned from international travel | May return after self-isolating for 14 days and being symptom free |
| Children who have, or children with others living in the same home who have been identified as at-risk of potential Covid-19 exposure | May return after self-isolating for 14 days and being symptom free.  A Covid test is recommended |

[(Reference: Health Authority](https://drive.google.com/open?id=17yKMxLBrjmQGaNZB7s8eP7jKIONUnX-F) memo; [COVID19 in childcare](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1fktLQsNSJJs0HQzaqA9Mhem3iwF944Mj))

Additionally, our regular health and wellness policy stands:

Children may not attend childcare programs while they have any of the following symptoms:

* unusual, unexplained loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability, or headache
* eye infections of any kind
* unexplained rashes or any rash that is not confirmed by doctor to be non-contagious
* known or suspected communicable diseases (measles, chicken pox, pink eye, hand foot and mouth, etc.)
* ear infection
* nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea in the last 48 hours

For the well-being of children, staff and families, open transparency and candor is required around all the above requirements. Although this may lead to some challenging conversations, staff and families need to acknowledge and respect their necessity and their intention of care during the pandemic. We sincerely appreciate your compliance and understanding!





