



CDSSAB COVID-19 Response Plan

for

EarlyON Child and Family Centres in the District of Cochrane

Version 11- Effective March 21, 2022

In collaboration with the Porcupine Health Unit



Purpose

Regulations in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 require that all EarlyON Centres offering services during the COVID- 19 outbreak practice good health and sanitary practices daily. EarlyON Centres within the Cochrane District under the Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board (CDSSAB) will be expected to comply with this guideline “CDSSAB COVID-19 Response Plan for EarlyON Child and Family Centres in the District of Cochrane”, as a minimum expectation.

Further to the Memorandum dated August 13: *Operational Guidance for September for Child care and Early Years Programs*, wherein the ministry detailed that EarlyON Child and Family Centre programs were permitted to re-open as of September 1, ,2020 -On November 18th 2020, Version 2 of the *Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak* was made available. This guidance document has been designed to reflect the latest advice from the Ministry of Health, Public Health Ontario and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. This guidance has also been aligned with the guidance for Child Care and Before and After School programs, as well as the provincial Guide to Re-Opening Ontario’s schools and the COVID-19 guidance on school outbreak management where appropriate.

EarlyON Centres will adopt this document as their COVID-19 Response Plan. This is a living document and may be revised upon new advice or changing information. EarlyON Centres will be notified by email of any revisions to the document. The document will be available for families and the general public on the CDSSAB website, www.cdssab.on.ca and the Cochrane District EarlyON website <https://www.cochranedistrict.earlyoncdssab.com/>.

Advice of the Porcupine Health Unit must be followed even in the event it is different from the guidance in this document.

Inspections

Any inspector (MEDU, PHU, CDSSAB, Municipal) that visits the child care centre must identify themselves. When the Porcupine Health Unit Inspector attends your EarlyON centre, provide a copy of the Inspection Report to the CDSSAB within 72 hours. Send to Gabriella Desmarais-Brunet, Program Manager EarlyON Quality Assurance; desmarag@cdssab.on.ca

Core Services

Mandatory Core Services found within the EarlyON Child and Family Centres Core Service review (June 2019) will still be applicable. These include the following:

- Supporting Early Learning and Development
- Engaging Parents and Caregivers
- Making connections for families

Recognizing that service delivery methods may have shifted as a result of COVID-19, EarlyON Centres will continue to deliver high quality programs and services that support early learning and development, engage parents and caregivers and make connections for families through a variety of methods that support the health, safety and well being of children and families.

Pedagogical Approaches

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (HDLH) remains a key support for children, families and educators as we navigate the challenges of these difficult COVID-19 periods. The Ministry of Education is recommending that EarlyON Centres rely on the principles of HDLH in its program delivery along with programs that reflect the view of children, parents and educators: competent, capable, curious and rich in potential and experience.

EarlyON Centres will be provided with the document *Building on How Does Learning Happen* which provides pedagogical approaches to re-opening child care and early years settings.

Ensuring Children's health and physical well-being is important as we know that early years programs play a critical role in supporting their learning, development and

emotional well-being. The values, foundations for learning and pedagogical approaches in HDLH can also help to guide discussions on ways to ensure children's emotional well-being and capacity for learning continue to be nurtured.

Mental Health Supports for Children and Families

This is a challenging time for children and their families. EarlyON Centres can play an important role in helping children understand the current situation in a way that is honest, accurate and minimizes anxiety or fear. The following resources may help support EarlyON Centre staff with talking to children and families about COVID-19.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres will have to incorporate mental health awareness in their programming either in person or virtually.

Ressources :

<https://smho-smsso.ca/>

https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/camh_covid19_infosheet-talking_to_kids-pdf.pdf

<https://mindyourmind.ca/blog/6-tips-staying-top-your-game-during-pandemic>

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschools-childcare%2Ftalking-with-children.html

Guidelines

EarlyON Child and Family Centres in the Cochrane District will continue to follow the Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board EarlyON Child and Family Centre Service Provider Operations Manual.

Virtual Programming

As of March 21st, 2022, EarlyON Centres will continue to offer 2 virtual services a week through their Social Media platforms. This will allow EarlyON families to continue to receive EarlyON services should they not be able to attend in person programming.

EarlyON Centres can choose to record a 'live programming' with other families present however this should only occur if all families present sign the *EarlyON Facebook Live Consent* form. This form will be created by CDSSAB and available to all EarlyON Centres in the Cochrane District through Google Drive.

Capacity for EarlyON Programming

Outdoor programming

As of March 21st, 2022, EarlyON Child and Family Centres will be able to provide outdoor programming with no more capacity limitations.

Indoor Programming:

As of March 21st, 2022, EarlyON Child and Family Centres will be allowed their regular pre COVID19 capacity limits as set out by CDSSAB and your organization.

Drop IN

As of March 21st 2022, Drop In style EarlyON Programming will resume.

Confirmation of Screening:

Daily confirmation of screening for families and staff/provider will no longer be required.

Individuals should continue to self-screen every day before attending the EarlyON Centres by using either the COVID-19 school and child care screening tool, or a screening tool designated by the local public health unit. The screening tool has been updated to align with the updated COVID-19 Integrated Testing & Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge 3 The ministry recognizes that these changes are significant.

Moving toward normalcy is a welcome change for many. However, some staff/providers and families may find this transition challenging. EarlyON Child and Family Centres are encouraged to support staff/providers and families with clear communication about these changes.

SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

A list of symptoms, including atypical signs and symptoms, can be found on the Ministry of Health's website:

[COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms](#)

Please use CCEYA for actions and exclusion guidelines for other common childhood communicable diseases.

Sign In/Sign Out

In addition to attendance records for all children/ parents/ caregivers/ essential visitors that receive in-person programs and services, all EarlyON centres are responsible for maintaining daily records of anyone entering the centre. (including maintenance work/ people from partner organizations)

Personal Protective Equipment

In alignment with community masking requirements, masks will no longer be required for staff, providers or any other individual (including children) at the EarlyON Centre. Eye protection for staff will also no longer be required. As some children, staff/providers may choose to continue to wear masks or eye protection, the government will continue to provide free masks and eye protection. Licensees will be able to continue to receive these items through the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services. In addition, we know that many children and staff may choose to continue to wear masks at times, or consistently. We encourage child care licensees to promote respectful, welcoming and inclusive practices and communications within their communities. A reminder that under current federal travel requirements, upon return from international travel, individuals must, wear a mask at all times when in public spaces (including schools and child care), maintain a list of all close contacts for your first 14 days in Canada, and monitor yourself for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Licensees must include information on the use of PPE in their health and safety protocols that is consistent with the information in this section as well as any direction provided by their local public health unit.

There are times when there is a requirement to wear a medical mask and eye protection, as these situations are a higher level of risk and wearing PPE at all times is important. These times are when:

- In the isolation room with ill children (not likely in the EarlyON Centre as family will be with child)
- When cleaning blood and bodily fluid spills

Proper Use/Wearing of PPE:

How to Wear a Mask

Properly wearing of masks, includes:

- On the face properly covering the mouth and nose
- Not lifted or dropped to the chin or around the neck
- All straps must be securely fastened
- Masks are single use and must only be touched with clean hands. If you touch your mask you must wash/sanitize your hands immediately after. Change your mask if it becomes moist, dirty, you touch it with soiled hands, or it comes into contact with another surface

Eye Protection

Staff can choose between face shields or safety goggles

Gloves

Types of gloves used are:

- Disposable nitrile or vinyl gloves- Used for tasks that include anticipated contact with blood and/or bodily fluids
- Dishwashing style gloves - Used for mixing disinfectant or immersing hands in sanitizer / disinfectant. These are reusable, staff should be assigned their own pair, and they should be disinfected after use

Gloves must be worn when:

- It is anticipated that hands will come into contact with mucous membranes, broken skin, tissue, blood, bodily fluids, secretions, excretions, contaminated equipment or environmental surfaces.
- Toileting routines, diaper changes
- Mixing sanitizer and disinfecting products.
- When conducting in-person screening and temperature checks. Gloves must be replaced, and hand hygiene performed if you touch the individual while screening them.
- Hand hygiene must be practised before donning (putting on) and immediately after removing (doffing) gloves.
- Nitrile/vinyl gloves are task specific (i.e., gloves must be changed, and hand hygiene practiced when changing tasks)
- Using gloves does not replace the need for hand hygiene
- Hands must be clean and dry before putting on gloves Ensure gloves are intact, clean and dry inside
- Consider removing jewelry which could tear/puncture the gloves
- Do not use hand sanitizer on gloves

Updated Case and Contact Management Guidance

The Ministry of Health has revised the COVID-19 Integrated Testing & Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge, with updated guidance for close contacts in the community and in households:

Asymptomatic individuals who are close contacts of a case or a symptomatic individual in the community are no longer required to isolate but must self-monitor for 10 days following last

exposure. During the self-monitoring period, close contacts must wear a well-fitted mask in all public settings and avoid activities where they need to take off their mask.

- For children under 2 a well-fitted mask is not required. However, parents must monitor for symptoms for 10 days following last exposure.

Asymptomatic household contacts of a case or a symptomatic individual are also not required to isolate if they are 17 or younger and fully vaccinated; 18 and older and have already received their COVID-19 booster; or tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and have completed their isolation period. Asymptomatic household contacts who are not required to isolate are also required to self-monitor for 10 days following last exposure, as outlined above.

- Children under 5 who are asymptomatic household contacts are required to stay home for 5 days.

Note that the Ministry of Health has also consolidated guidance documents into the updated https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/contact_mngmt/management_cases_contacts_omicron.pdf which includes information that is applicable to schools and child care. As a result, the Ministry of Health's school and child care-specific guidance documents, COVID-19: Interim Guidance for Schools and Child Care: Omicron Surge and COVID-19 Guidance: School Case, Contact, and Outbreak Management, have been discontinued.

Lifting of Cohorting and Distancing

Cohorting and distancing will no longer be required for indoor or outdoor activities.

Hand Hygiene, Respiratory Etiquette, Cleaning and Disinfecting

In accordance with local public health direction, appropriate hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting should continue.

The following measures will continue to be in place until the end of June:

Ventilation Measures

Licensees and home child care providers are encouraged to implement best practices and measures to optimize ventilation (see Public Health Ontario's guidance: Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems in Buildings and COVID-19). Adequate ventilation should be provided by opening windows, moving activities outdoors when possible and through mechanical ventilation including HVAC systems. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning

systems (HVACs) and their filters are designed to reduce airborne pollutants, including virus particles, when they circulate through the system.

- Ensure HVAC systems are in good working condition.
- Keep areas near HVAC inlets and outlets clear.
- Arrange furniture away from air vents and high airflow areas.
- Avoid re-circulating air.

Cleaning Child Care Centres / Homes

Operators must keep a cleaning and disinfecting log to track and demonstrate cleaning schedules as per the Child Care & Early Years Act, 2014 and Food Premise regulations.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are among the most important protective strategies. Child care staff, home child care providers, home child care visitors and students on educational placement should be trained and able to assist children on appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR), and reinforcing its use.

Hand hygiene should be conducted by anyone entering the child care setting and incorporated into the daily schedule at regular intervals during the day, above and beyond what is usually recommended (for example, before eating food, after using the washroom).

Child care staff, home child care providers, home child care visitors, students on educational placement and children should be provided with targeted, age-appropriate education in proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Local public health units can provide additional guidance. Age-appropriate posters or signage should be placed around the child care setting.

- Soap and water are preferred as the most effective method and least likely to cause harm if accidentally ingested.
- ABHR with a minimum 60% alcohol concentration must be available (60-90% recommended, including ideally at the entry point to each child care room) and/or plain liquid soap in dispensers, sinks and paper towels in dispensers.
- ABHR can be used by children. It is most effective when hands are not visibly soiled.
- When hands are visibly soiled (for example, dirt, blood, body fluids (urine/feces)), hands are to be washed with soap and water.
- Safe placement of the ABHR to avoid consumption is important, especially for young children.
- Support or modifications should be provided to allow children with special needs to regularly perform hand hygiene as independently as possible.
- Tissues and lined, no-touch waste baskets (for example, foot pedal-operated, hand sensor, open basket) are to be provided, where possible.

Refer to Public Health Ontario's [how to wash your hands \(PDF\)](#) fact sheet and [respiratory etiquette infographic](#). Refer to Health Canada's [hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\): list of hand sanitizers authorized by Health Canada](#), including which sanitizers may be appropriate for different groups of staff and students.

Food Offered during EarlyON

EarlyON providers should follow regular food preparation guidelines. Providers may want to consider the following best practices regarding food and drink provision:

- Promoting proper hand hygiene practices before and after eating
- If EarlyON programming decides to offer food by a third party, food must have been prepared by a third party with an “Industrial Kitchen”.

Staff Training

As part of the Ministry of Education's EarlyON Re-Opening Guidelines, the CDSSAB must ensure that training is provided to all EarlyON staff/ providers on health and safety measures prior to re-opening.

Public Health Ontario have developed videos to assist with understanding our role in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Links to videos are provided below and all child care staff / providers must complete the training prior to reopening. New training is not required with each iteration of this guidance but should be offered in a way that includes child care staff/providers at least once, whether they have re-opened through the summer or later into the fall. Sign off documents will be provided by the CDSSAB.

7 Steps of Hand Hygiene

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/7-steps-handhygiene>

Putting on gloves <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-gloves-on>

Putting on Mask and Eye Protection

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-maskeyes-on>

Taking off Mask and Eye Protection

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-maskeyes-off>

Taking of a Gown and Gloves

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-gowngloves-off>

Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-on>

Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-off>

Note: Other training opportunities may arise and will be mandated upon need.

Communication with Families

Where possible, the use of in-person communication should be limited.

EarlyON Operators must:

- Inform families of enhanced health & safety measures and any new policies created for the re-opening. This will be posted on EarlyON Centres Facebook pages, and EarlyON CDSSAB website. CDSSAB will provide EarlyON Child & Family Centres with Social Media advertising to families.
- EarlyON Centres must share with parents the policies and procedures regarding health and safety protocols to COVID-19, including requirements and exceptions related to masks.

Liability and Insurance

EarlyON providers may wish to consult with their legal counsel or insurance advisor about any other considerations for operating and providing EarlyON Centre programs and services during this period.

Please note that this is a living document and will be updated when required. For questions or concerns about this document, please contact CDSSAB Program Manager EarlyON Quality Assurance, Gabriella Desmarais-Brunet 705-268-7722 ext 251 desmarag@cdssab.on.ca

