



Revised: July 2021

TOGETHER WE GROW LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTER COVID-19 MANUAL

It is the goal of Together We Grow Learning and Childcare Centre . (hereinafter referred to as “TWG”) to provide support and services to families and children in an environment that is as safe and healthy as possible. We will make every effort to continue to operate our services and protect employees and clients/families from emergency situations including pandemics.

In the event of a pandemic our goal is to remain available as much as possible until authorities dictate otherwise.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for TWG to mitigate risk and prepare for the potential impacts of a pandemic from reduced services to potential closures.

WHAT IS A PANDEMIC

A pandemic is a global event. A flu pandemic starts with a new strain of virus to which people have little or no immunity. To be considered a pandemic, the new virus must be able to spread easily from person to person and cause illness in many of the people who are infected. When it spreads around the world, it is called a pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) sets the pandemic alert level globally. The pandemic level is set based on the spread of the virus, not the severity of the illness.

POLICY

TWG is required to follow guidelines set out by the Public Health Agency of Canada, Ontario Ministry of Health, and the Regional Public Health/Medical Officer of Health for proper infection prevention. Our responsibility is to ensure infection prevention practices are carried out properly to prevent the spread of illness among employees, placement students, children, and volunteers. Policies and procedures are assessed and monitored to ensure our employees are consistently and carefully carrying them out.



TWG will ensure our pandemic plan and service continuity/interruption plans align with all the Public Health Agency of Canada, Ontario Ministry of Health, and the Regional Public Health/Medical Officer of Health plans.

COVID-19

Coronaviruses are spread mainly from person to person through close contact, for example, in a household, workplace or daycare centre.

The 2019 novel coronavirus is spread through respiratory droplets:

- from person to person through coughing, sneezing, close contact; and
- touching contaminated surfaces.

Symptoms range from mild – like the common cold and other common respiratory infections – to severe, and can include:

- Fever (temperature of 37.8°C or greater)
- New or worsening cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Muscle aches
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Shortness of breath (dyspnea)
- Sore throat, or hoarse voice
- Difficulty swallowing
- New olfactory or taste disorders (loss of smell or taste)
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
- Runny nose, or nasal congestion – in absence of underlying reason for these symptoms such as seasonal allergies, post nasal drip, etc.
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)

Complications from the novel coronavirus can include serious conditions, like pneumonia or kidney failure, and in some cases, death.

Atypical Symptoms/ signs of COVID-19 should be considered, particularly in children, older persons, and people living with a developmental disability. Atypical symptoms can include:

- Unexplained fatigue/ malaise
- Delirium (acutely altered mental status and inattention)



- Unexplained or increased number of falls
- Acute functional decline
- Exacerbation of chronic conditions
- Chills, Headache
- Croup, Conjunctivitis
- Unexplained tachycardia, including age specific tachycardia for children
- Decreased in blood pressure
- Unexplained hypoxia (even if mild i.e. O2 sat>90%)
- Lethargy, difficulty feeding in infants (if no other diagnosis)

For more information about COVID-19 visit the Ministry of Health Ontario -

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx or the public health unit at <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus>

COVID-19 Screening for school and childcare :

https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid19-cms-assets/2021-06/COVID-19_printable%20school%20and%20child%20care%20screening_ENG.pdf

TOGETHER WE GROW LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTRE

HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS DURING PANDEMIC

TWG 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 staff, children, or parents/guardians be exposed to COVID-19. **TWG will be operating during the pandemic with modified hours: 7:30am-5:30am.** When hours are due to change to its regular operating hours parents will be notified through email.



Requirements for health and safety

1. TWG will 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 and soft books);
- Increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting objects, toys and frequently touched surfaces to every four hours, or as needed;
- Any items that a child has placed in their mouth, will be removed immediately and disinfected;
- All frequently touched surfaces will be washed at least every 4 hours, including door knobs, light switches, toilet handles, and tabletops;
- We will use disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN).
- TWG will check expiry dates of products used and always following manufacturer's instructions;
- Performing proper hand hygiene, a minimum of 20 seconds (including assisting children with hand hygiene); and,
- Incorporating additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule (before and after meals; after play time and after washroom routine).
- Alcohol-based hand rub containing 60% to 90% alcohol content should be placed at all screening stations.

2. Encourage more physical space between children by:

- Each cohort will remain together throughout the day;
- Cohort group will not mix with other cohort groups;
- Spreading children out into different areas of the room;
- Alternating outdoor playtime.
- Incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children;
- We will follow CCEYA ratios;



Since September 1st, 2020 our centre has been operating at our maximum group sizes set out under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA). The ratios and maximum sizes are as follows:

Maximum children are based on TWG's license by the Ministry.

Infants: 1 educator to 3 children, maximum 10 children

Toddlers: 1 educator to 5 children, maximum 15 children (Toddler 2 class), maximum 10 children (Toddler 1 class)

Preschoolers: 1 educator to 8 children, maximum 23 children (Preschool 1 &2)

- Director and Supervisor will limit their movement between rooms;
 - Supply staff will be assigned to specific cohorts and not mix with other Cohort
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3. For sensory materials, such as playdough, water, sand, etc. we are permitted for single use, to be used by one child for the day only. Each material must be labelled with the child's name. All sensory materials must be discarded at the end of the day.
 4. We will not be offering field trips or special visitors to the centre until further notice;
 5. We will not use community playgrounds; except our outdoor playground and having the appropriate age group in their according playground;
 6. Increase the distance between nap cots, if possible. If space is tight, we will place children head-to-toe or toe-to-toe. Cots and cribs will be disinfected after each use.
 7. Linens will be provided by parents and taken home at the end of the week for laundering and returned after the weekend;
 8. No home prepared food will be allowed during pandemic, unless there are extreme accommodations that need to be met; all baby bottles and sippy cups will be labelled and placed in the child's cubby. Parents are responsible for washing their child's cups and returning to TWG the morning after. Children will not share soothers, bottles, sippy cups, toothbrushes, facecloths, etc. Parents



are responsible for labelling all personal items with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.

9. TWG will reinforce “no food sharing”

10. Meals and snacks will be provided to each child and will be served on their own plate, with their own utensils.

11. Pick-up and drop-off of children will happen in the foyer of the centre. Parents are asked to enter at the front door and exit at the side door weather permitting. If however the side door will not be available due to inclement weather, you will be asked to use the front door.

12. Screening staff will be wearing a medical mask, eye wear/face shield. All staff will be required to be wearing medical/surgical masks. Masks will be required throughout the centre, including inside the classrooms, washrooms, and hallways too.

13. We will clearly communicate to parents to check:

- their child's temperature before coming to TWG;
- If the temperature is equal or greater than 37.8°C or if the child/children have any cold-like symptoms or vomiting and/or diarrhea, they must stay home.

14. Volunteers and students will not be permitted at TWG during a Pandemic.

Screening

15. All individuals, including children, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, must be screened upon arrival using the criteria below. Entry will be denied to any person including the child of a parent/guardian who meets the following criteria:

- Signs or symptoms of respiratory infection, such as cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and/or fever.
- Anyone who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.



- Anyone has come into contact with anyone who has a positive testing of COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

16. A touchless thermometer will be used for screening of children at time of arrival. Each classroom has a thermometer that has a protective cover for each child; after each use, the protective cover and thermometer will be sanitized.

17. TWG will not permit children who are ill to attend childcare.

18. Screening staff will wear the proper PPE gear, including eye wear/face shield, surgical/medical mask. PPE use including eye wear/face shield, and surgical/ medical mask: gown and gloves should be used while cleaning and waste disposal.

20. A record of the following will be completed and made available to all authorities when required: Date of Attendance, Name of Child, Time of Arrival and departure. Classroom Child Screening sheets will provide arrival temperatures. A daily record will be kept by administration of all visitors entering the centre and the approximate length of their stay;

21. If a child is showing any symptoms, such as cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and/or fever will be placed in isolation in the office with an administrator. The administrator will be equipped with a face shield, mask, gown and gloves. If the child is over 2 years, the child will be provided with a disposable mask. Parents will be contacted by telephone immediately and request an immediate pick. Parents will be requested to seek medical attention or call the local public health for further guidance. If the child continues to show symptoms, the child can not return until after 24 hours of being symptom free.

Management of children with possible COVID-19/ Communication to Parents of Confirmed Covid-19 cases



22.If a child begins to experience symptoms of COVID-19 while attending childcare, it is recommended that:If an individual becomes ill while in the child care setting:

- The ill child must be immediately separated from others, in a separate room. Parents/guardians must be contacted for pick-up of symptomatic children.
- Symptomatic children who are separated from others must be supervised.
- Anyone providing care to the ill child should maintain as much physical distance as possible. If physical distancing is not possible (e.g., if a young child needs comfort) staff/providers should consider added PPE (i.e., gloves, gown).
- The staff/administrator caring for the individual should wear a medical mask and eye protection and be trained on proper use of PPE, including donning and doffing.
- The child, if older than 2 years old, will be provided with a disposable face mask..
- Tissues will be provided to the child for proper respiratory etiquette, with proper disposal of the tissues and proper hand hygiene while the ill child is waiting to be picked up.
- Environmental cleaning of the space the child was separated and other areas of TWG will be sanitized once the child has been picked up.
- The ill child and/or their parent or guardian be advised to use the online self-assessment tool and follow instructions which may include seeking medical advice or going for testing for COVID-19. The ill child does not require a medical note or proof of a negative test to return back to the program.
- If a child is tested for COVID-19, TWG will follow the guidance of the York Regional public health unit, health care provider and related direction for isolation and returning to the program. If there are other siblings or members of the household that attend school or child care, the local public health unit will provide any further direction on returning to school/child care.



- Persons who test positive may not return to the child care setting until they are cleared by the local public health unit. Note that individuals do not need to provide a medical note or proof of negative results to return to the program.

Parents/guardians will be notified via email of a positive COVID-19 case through our HiMama app. TWG will provide parents/staff with any updates regarding the positive case. Children who have had direct contact with the child/staff that have tested positive will receive a phone call from TWG. admin to notify them that they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive.

Staff Occupational Health & Safety

23. TWG will screen all staff members and visitors upon entering our centre. Each staff member and visitor must wash their hands once their temperature is checked. Each staff member will be provided with a medical/surgical mask and volunteers/ visitors will be provided with a disposable mask while in the centre. Our staff is required to wear their surgical/medical mask while caring for children. During outdoor play, and staff is able to maintain a 2 metre distance they may remove the medical/surgical mask, only during Outdoor Play. Staff are allocated to their own time shift, and classroom.

24. If a childcare worker is suspected to have or diagnosed with COVID-19, the childcare worker must remain off work until symptoms are fully resolved and negative laboratory tests have been confirmed.

25. TWG administration will consult with the local public health unit to determine when the care provider can return to work.

26. If the staff member's illness is determined to be work-related: In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, TWG administration will provide a written notice within four days of being advised that a worker has an occupational illness, including an occupationally-acquired infection, including an occupational infection, to the: Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education and Public Health.



TOGETHER WE GROW LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTRE

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

TWG 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 staff, children, or parents/guardians be exposed to COVID-19. All staff will be properly updated and trained on all new Pandemic Guidelines and Procedures prior to beginning employment or being recalled for employment. .

Guidelines for health and safety procedures

1. Enhanced Cleaning and Sanitizing

CLEANING AND SANITIZATION

Washrooms will be cleaned frequently (after every child and at least 3 times per day, more often if needed) and stocked with soap and paper towels. All diaper changing areas will be disinfected after each use. Staff will be required to wear proper PPE for toileting and diapering routines.

Commonly touched surfaces, shared toys, tables, chairs, plates, cups, etc. will be disinfected frequently. If household or commercial disinfectant cleaning products are not available, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of 5 mL of bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) and 250 mL of water. It is required that the solution is in contact with the surface for 1 minute. High-touch electronic devices (keyboards, tablets, radios) will be disinfected with alcohol or disinfectant wipes.

The following items will be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis:

- Eating areas
- Tools and equipment
- Toys and other play items
- Offices and common areas; washrooms
- Door knobs, light switches, toilet seats, handles, table tops, at least twice a day.



- Play areas, rest areas
- Cloths, smocks, bibs, etc. will be regularly laundered.

There will not be any group use of water or sensory tables.

Children must not share soothers, bottles, sippy cups, etc. These items must be labelled with the child's name if being brought from home and must be taken home every night for proper washing and sanitizing.

Staff will be using disposable gloves.

The use of personal items such as tablets and books are not recommended; use of these items by staff will be closely monitored to ensure items are maintained in a clean and sanitary condition and are not shared between individuals.

It is recommended that enhanced cleaning and disinfection principles be applied to all aspects of the facility and may include the following:

- Cleaning and disinfection of toilets, changing tables, and potties after each use
- Cleaning and disinfection of sleeping mats, cribs and cots after each use
- Bedding for each child is brought from home and sent home at the end of the child's week to be laundered.

TWG will ensure all current infection prevention, control practices and guidelines are adhered to, this includes but is not limited to:

- all toys used at the centre are made of material that can be cleaned and disinfected (e.g., no soft books and no area rugs will be permitted);
- the increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting objects, toys and frequently touched surfaces every four hours, or as needed; staff will use water and soap to wash all toys and materials; once rinsed, items will be sanitized with disinfected and air dried overnight.
- Any items that a child has placed in their mouth, will be removed immediately and disinfected;
- A disinfecting log will be kept in each cohort tracking and monitoring clean schedules;



- In addition, staff will continue to use our regular disinfecting schedule;
- The disinfectant of preference is bleach that will be diluted with water;
- Performing proper hand hygiene: a minimum of 20 seconds of washing hands with soap and water (including assisting children with hand hygiene).
- Staff must continue to wear gloves and medical/surgical masks during washroom/diaper routines; if there is a diarrhea / vomiting staff must also wear a gown.
- Incorporating additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule (before and after meals; after play time and after washroom routine);
- TWG will be fogged with an approved disinfectant every night.

Staff of TWG

- Staffing will be based on qualifications and enrollment; and each age group (ie, infant, toddler, preschool) will have the required number of qualified staff as set out in the CCEYA;
- Staff are required to have their certification in Standard First Aid & Infant and Child CPR
- TWG is required to obtain a Vulnerable Sector Screening in accordance with the CCEYA from staff and other persons who are interacting with children at the centre;
- Staff will be required to read and sign off the Return to Work Declaration;
- Staff will be required to read and sign off the Pandemic Policy;
- Each staff member with the intention of returning to work at TWG, will be required to attend a staff meeting, where proper training and guidelines on the health, safety and operational measures will be outlined; cleaning procedures and use of equipment instructions will be provided; and how to keep records;
- Staff will limit their movement between each childcare centre in order to reduce their interaction with multiple groups of children; so as to limit staff interaction with multiple groups of children;
- Supply staff will be assigned to a specific group
- Staff will be encouraged to social distance during breaks;



3. Use of Masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- All child care staff are required to wear medical masks and eye protection (i.e., face shield/eyewear) while inside a child care setting, including in hallways and staff rooms (exemption while eating – time with masks off should be limited and physical distance should be maintained)
- Surgical/medical masks may also be taken off during outdoor play as long as physical distancing is being maintained.
- All other adults (i.e. parents/guardians, and visitors) are required to wear a face covering or non-medical mask while inside the premises
 - The Screening Staff will use a face shield/eyewear, mask;
 - Staff will use medical/surgical masks , face shield/eyewear, gloves during these periods of times:
 - * Washroom/diaper routine
 - * When cleaning and disinfecting blood or bodily fluids
 - * And if a child is showing any symptoms of illness
 - When wearing a mask, you should wash your hands before donning the mask and before and after removing the mask.

Expectations for children:

- All younger children (grade 3 and below) are encouraged but not required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering while inside a child care setting, including in hallways.
- Masks are not recommended for children under the age of two.
- See information about the use of masks on the provincial COVID-19 website.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing their child(ren) with a nonmedical mask(s) or face covering each day and should be reminded that if children are wearing masks, they will require a way to store their mask when not in use.



- Masks should be replaced when they become damp or visibly soiled.
- The use of masks is not required outdoors for adults or children if physical distancing of a least 2 metres can be maintained between individuals.
- Exceptions to wearing masks indoors could include circumstances where a physical distance of at least 2 metres can be maintained between individuals, situations where a child cannot tolerate wearing a mask, reasonable exemptions for medical conditions, etc.
- TWG will support nutrition breaks/mask breaks in a safe manner (i.e., a space where staff/providers can maintain at least 2 metres to remove masks and eat).
- TWG may require a doctor's note be acquired for an exception related to a medical condition,
- The use of medical masks and eye protection is for the safety of child care staff/providers and the children in their care. This is very important when working with young children who may not be wearing face coverings (i.e. under the age of two).
- TWG will secure and sustain an amount of PPE (including but not limited to face shields or goggles, medical masks, gloves, etc.) and cleaning supplies that will support the current and ongoing operations.

4. PHYSICAL DISTANCING at TWG & SPACE SETUP

The Ministry of Education recognizes that physical distance between children in a child care setting is difficult and they are encouraging child care staff and providers to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for the children. Physical distancing of at least 2 metres must be maintained between cohorts and will be encouraged, where possible, between children within the same cohort by:

- Spreading children out into different areas, particularly at meal and dressing time;



- Incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children;
- Using visual cues to promote social distancing.

Where possible, children will be given their own supplies (e.g. crayons, markers, scissors) and these items will be kept in a labelled Ziploc bag or container to be used solely by that child. These individual areas will be sanitized after every meal/snack and between activities.

As always, proper hand hygiene will be practiced by all children and staff prior to meal times. Children will be served their meals by a staff member. We will not be allowing children to self-serve food during mealtimes.

Outdoor play in our own play area outside is encouraged in small groups. Each cohort will be allocated a time for outdoor play, weather permitting. Play structures will be used by one cohort at a time and will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use by each cohort. Where possible, each cohort will have designated toys and equipment to be used solely by that cohort. Where toys and equipment are shared, they will be cleaned and disinfected prior to being shared. alternating outdoor playtime (only 1 cohort group will make use of the outdoor playground at a time); 2 playgrounds: Toddler playground separate from the Preschool playground. Where cohorts are using the same indoor space (for example, the gym), the director or supervisor will ensure that the space is disinfected before the next cohort group comes to use the room.

When setting up cots and cribs for nap time, they will be set up in such a way to keep the children 2 metres apart or set up so that they are head to toe. Each child will have their own cot or crib, which will be labelled and disinfected after each use.

Certain toys and activities will be limited. Toys and equipment that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected will be removed from the classrooms (e.g. plush toys, dress up clothes, puzzles, etc.). Mouthed toys will be cleaned and disinfected immediately after the child is finished using it. In an effort to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres between individuals and limit the spread of pathogens, items such as toys will be limited to one child at a time and cleaned and disinfected after each use.



Staff will be encouraged to avoid getting close to faces of all children, where possible and using visual cues to promote physical distancing;

Staff will encourage more physical space between children by spreading children out into different areas and incorporating individual activities with space between children; especially during meal & dressing time;

5. Equipment & Toy Usage and Restrictions

- Toys in each cohort will be made of materials that can easily be cleaned and disinfected;
- All area rugs will be removed;
- Mouthed toys will be cleaned and disinfected immediately after the child is finished using it;
- Each cohort will have their own designated toys and equipment in their classroom, therefore there is no sharing between cohorts;
- For sensory materials, such as playdough, water, sand, etc. we are permitted to be for single use, to be used by one child for the day only. Each material must be labelled with the child's name. All sensory materials must be discarded at the end of the day.

6. Water Play

- Indoor water play is permitted, and any material used will be single use for that child only. Water will be discarded after use;
- Outdoor water play (such as a water sprinkler) will be allowed; however, children must be a minimum of two (2) metres apart.

7. Field Trips & Indoor Gatherings

- We will not be offering field trips until further notice;
- No special visitors/guest will be allowed in the centre;



- No celebration gatherings at the centre until further notice;

8. Outdoor Play Areas

- Children will only use our outdoor playground;
- Only one (1) cohort will be permitted to use the playground at a time;
- Playground structure and toys in the playground will be disinfected after each cohort uses it.

9. Nap/Sleep Time

- Increase the distance between cots, if possible. If space is tight, we will place children head-to-toe or toe-to-toe. Cots and cribs will be disinfected after each use;
- Bedding linens must be folded on child's bed, and will be sent home at the end of the week for laundering;
- Cots and crib mattresses designated to a child will be disinfected at the end of the week .

10. Food & Supplies

- Children are not permitted to bring home-food during a pandemic; unless there are extreme accommodations that need to be met.
- Children are not permitted to bring any personal items from home, such as toys.
- all baby bottles and sippy cups must be labelled and placed in the child's cubby;
- At the end of day, place all personal items such as cup and bottles in cubby as parents are responsible for washing their child's cups and returned to TWG the morning after;
- Children will not share soothers, bottles, sippy cups, toothbrushes, facecloths, etc. Parents are responsible for labelling all personal items with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing;
- Staff must reinforce "no food sharing";
- Meals and snacks will be prepared on-site and delivered to the classrooms, door by door;



- Each child must be served on their own plate, with their own utensils.

11. Communication with Parents

- Parents will be requested to take their child's temperature before coming to TWG;
- If the temperature is equal or greater than 37.8 degrees Celsius or if the child/children have any cold-like symptoms or vomiting and/or diarrhea, they must stay home;
- Parents will be advised of all new policies and procedures via email.

12. Screening & Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

- Pick-up and drop-off of children will occur via the foyer for drop off, and side door for exit; Parents are asked to enter at the front door and exit at the side door weather permitting. If however the side door will not be available due to inclement weather, you will be asked to use the front door.
- Staff will enter from the foyer as well;
- Screening staff will be wearing a face shield/eyewear, and medical/surgical mask.
- Parents will not be permitted into the centre, beyond foyer for pick up and drop off;
- Masks are mandatory for entering the centre for both staff and parents;
- Parents MUST wear masks for pick up and drop off;
- All individuals, including children, parents/guardians, staff, visitor, will be screened upon arrival using the criteria below. Entry will be denied to any person including the child of a parent/guardian who meets the following criteria:
- Signs or symptoms of respiratory infection, such as cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and/or fever.
- Anyone who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.
- Anyone has come into contact with anyone who has a positive testing of COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- All staff, children and visitors into the centre will sanitize their hands upon entering the centre.



- Alcohol-based hand rub containing 60% to 90% alcohol content should be placed at all screening stations.
- Upon entering your classroom, staff, children and visitors must wash their hands with soap and water.
- A touchless thermometer will be used for screening of children at time of arrival.
- TWG will not permit children who are ill to attend childcare.
- If a child is showing any symptoms, such as cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and/or fever, staff must notify the Director or Supervisor immediately;
- the child will then be placed in isolation in the office with an administrator. The administrator will be equipped with a face shield, mask, gown and gloves. Parents will be contacted by telephone immediately and request an immediate pick up;
- Parents will be requested to seek medical attention or call the local public health for further guidance. If the child continues to show symptoms, the child can not return until after 24 hours of being symptom free.

13. Attendance Records

- A daily record of the following will be completed and made available to all authorities when required: Date of Attendance, Name of Child, and temperature at time of arrival. Attendance records of the child's arrival and departure will be on the classroom attendance. Classroom Child Screening sheets will provide arrival temperatures. A daily record will be kept by administration of all visitors entering the centre and the approximate length of their stay;
- Records will be kept at the centre in our COVID attendance binder. Records must be kept up-to-date and available to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak (i.e., records can be made available to public health within 24 hours of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak).

14. Management of children with possible COVID-19



- If a child begins to experience symptoms of COVID-19 while attending childcare, it is recommended that:
- Symptomatic children are immediately separated from others in the office area until they can go home. In addition, where possible, anyone who is providing care to the child should maintain a distance of 2 metres;
- If a 2-metre distance cannot be maintained from the ill child, the administrator with the ill child will wear a face shield, mask, gown and gloves.
- Tissues will be provided to the child for proper respiratory etiquette, with proper disposal of the tissues and proper hand hygiene.
- Environmental cleaning of the space the child was separated from will be sanitized once the child has been picked up.
- The ill individual and/or their parent or guardian will be advised to use the online self-assessment tool and follow instructions which may include seeking medical advice or going for testing for COVID-19. Note that individuals do not require a medical note or proof of a negative test to return back to the program.
- Check your local public health unit's website or call to see if those without symptoms should go to school/child care. Some public health units have different rules based on local risk.
- If a child is tested for COVID-19, follow the guidance of the local public health unit, health care provider and related direction for isolation and returning to the program. If there are other siblings or members of the household that attend school or child care, the local public health unit will provide any further direction on returning to school/child care.
- Persons who test positive may not return to the child care setting until they are cleared by the local public health unit. Note that individuals do not need to provide a medical note or proof of negative results to return to the program.

15.Occupational Health & Safety

- TWG will screen all staff members and visitors upon entering our centre. Each staff member and visitor must sanitize prior to being screened. Each staff member will be provided with a medical/surgical face mask and visitors will be provided with a disposable medical/ surgical mask while in the centre if they do not have one of their own. .



- If a childcare worker is suspected to have or diagnosed with COVID-19, the childcare worker must remain off work until symptoms are fully resolved and negative laboratory tests have been confirmed.
- TWG administration will consult with the local public health unit to determine when the care provider can return to work.
- If the staff member's illness is determined to be work-related: In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, TWG administration will provide a written notice within four days of being advised that a worker has an occupational illness, including an occupationally-acquired infection, including an occupational infection, to the: Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education and Public Health.

16.Provision of Special Needs Resources Services (SNR)

- In-Person special needs services in our centre will continue as needed.
- All SNR and Enhanced Staff members will be screened upon entering the centre and provided with a disposable face mask.
- They will be logged into our visitor's attendance record of their time spent in our centre.
- SNR's and Enhanced Staff are not included in our cohort ratio.
- If and when a SNR and/or Enhanced Staff is scheduled to enter our centre, an email will be sent to all families to advise them of this fact.

17.Serious Occurrence Reporting

TWG has a duty to report confirmed cases of COVID-19 under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. TWG will contact our local public health unit to report a child or staff member suspected to have COVID-19. We will follow any and all specific guidelines provided by the health unit on what control measures should be implemented to prevent the potential spread and how to monitor for other possible infected staff members and children. Currently, only where a child, staff, student, or a person who is ordinarily a resident /regularly present at a home child care premises has a confirmed case of



COVID-19 (i.e., a positive COVID-19 test result), TWG will report this as a serious occurrence to the ministry.

TWG will report to the local public health unit and provide any materials (e.g., daily attendance records) to public health officials to support case management and contact tracing and other activities in accordance with all applicable legislation, including the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Public health officials will determine any additional steps required, including but not limited to how to monitor for other possible infected staff/providers and children and the declaration of an outbreak and closure of rooms and/or entire child care settings. If a closure is ordered by the local public health unit and the licensee has already submitted a serious occurrence for a confirmed case, the existing serious occurrence must be updated to reflect the closure. Should additional individuals at the child care program develop a confirmed case, TWG will either:

- Revise the open serious occurrence report to include the additional cases; or,
- Submit a new serious occurrence report if the first has been closed already.

While TWG is no longer required to report a serious occurrence for suspected cases; if the local public health unit determines that a full or partial closure is required (i.e., program room, home premises or entire child care centre must remain closed for a period of time), a serious occurrence report must be submitted under the “Unplanned Disruption of Service” category.

Outbreak Management

An outbreak may be declared by the local public health unit when: within a 14-day period, there are two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in children, staff/providers or other visitors with an epidemiological link (e.g., cases in the same room, cases that are part of the same before/after school care cohort) where at least one case could have reasonably acquired their infection in the child care setting. The local public health unit will work with the licensee to determine whether epidemiological links exist between cases and whether transmission may have occurred in the child care setting. If the local public health unit declares an outbreak, they will determine



what happens next. This could include closing particular child care rooms or cohorts or an entire child care setting. The public health unit will help determine which groups of children and/or staff/providers need to be sent home or if a partial or full closure of the child care setting is required. If the public health unit determines that partial or full closure of the child care setting is required, TWG must revise their existing serious occurrence report for a confirmed COVID-19 case to include information about the closure.

PANDEMIC POLICY

In the event of a pandemic our goal is to remain available as much as possible until authorities dictate otherwise.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for TWG to mitigate risk and prepare for the potential impacts of a pandemic from reduced services to potential closures.

WHAT IS A PANDEMIC

A pandemic is a global event. A flu pandemic starts with a new strain of virus to which people have little or no immunity. To be considered a pandemic, the new virus must be able to spread easily from person to person and cause illness in many of the people who are infected. When it spreads around the world, it is called a pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) sets the pandemic alert level globally. The pandemic level is set based on the spread of the virus, not the severity of the illness.

POLICY

TWG is required to follow guidelines set out by the Public Health Agency of Canada, Ontario Ministry of Health, and the Regional Public Health/Medical Officer of Health for proper infection prevention. Our responsibility is to ensure infection prevention practices are carried out properly to prevent the spread of illness among employees, placement students, children, and volunteers. Policies and procedures are assessed and



monitored to ensure our employees, placement students, and volunteers are consistently and carefully carrying them out.

TWG will ensure our pandemic plan and service continuity/interruption plans align with all the Public Health Agency of Canada, Ontario Ministry of Health, and the Regional Public Health/Medical Officer of Health plans.

IMPACT PLANNING

TWG will review and plan for the following:

- Sudden increase in employee and child absenteeism
- Maintaining staffing ratios
- Interruption of supplies and services (food, paper product, cleaning products)
- Regular program services and supplies scaled back or not available (transportation, field trips, etc.)
- Maintenance/cleaning services reduced or cancelled
- Administration activities are changed, reduced, or cancelled
- Cross training additional employees to ensure organizational stability in case the Director is unable to be in charge (Supervisor or designate)
- Reduction of outside support (consultants, children's services etc.)
- Temporarily or permanently laying off employees
- Potential closure (short term and long term)
- Financial loss due to decreased revenue, funding, and increased or additional costs
- Potential changes or additional duties for employees
- Spread of the infection within the centre and within the community
- Communication of the plan with employees, families/clients, funders, and community
- Re-opening of the organization after a shutdown
- Occupational health and safety implications



INFECTION PREVENTION

TWG will take all steps required to ensure a safe and healthy environment in all our programs including:

- Early identification of ill employees and children
- Isolating children who become ill during the program until they are picked up
- Sending employees home should they become ill during the day
- Sending children home if they have been exposed to an identified contagion
- Sending staff home if they have been exposed to an identified contagion
- Following all governmental/public health recommendations related to removing staff, children, and parents from the program if they have been exposed to a potential health risk
- Requiring an employee, who has travelled or been in contact with someone who has travelled to areas deemed a health risk to follow government guidelines regarding self-isolation (i.e. quarantine for a number of days)
- Requiring employees to sign a declaration stating they have not traveled during a pandemic or have been in contact with someone who has travelled to areas deemed a health risk or travel advisory.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

The Director and Supervisor oversee implementing the organization's emergency communication plan.

Internal communication to all employees, families/clients will be by phone or email, signs will be posted on all entrances/exits and social media.

Information will be specific to the nature of the situation:

- Safety and well being of everyone at the centre



- Reduction of services and programs
 - Changes in delivery of services and programs
 - Shutdown of the organization
 - Refund/no refund policy to be shared with clients
 - Status updates
 - Evacuation plan/location
 - Reopening of the organization
 - External communication to the municipal, regional, licensing bodies, and the community will be conducted by the Director and/or Supervisor.
- The external contact information for the following agencies/individuals are located/posted by each phone in each classroom.

AUTHORITY TO SHUTDOWN THE ORGANIZATION

TWG will follow all directions and recommendations from public health officials and the Provincial/Federal Government should a pandemic be declared.

The Public Health Act and The Emergency Measures Act authorize all levels of government to order a shutdown of services during a pandemic.

PROCEDURES

TWG will proactively develop a contact list of alternatives to provide supports and services to the organization. The list of names and contact information will be kept in our policy handbook.

- Supply Staffing
- To deliver additional supplies (cleaning, program, personal protection equipment, etc.)
- To provide cleaning services
- To authorize funds to acquire emergency supplies

If a pandemic is declared and the organization remains open:



- Secure staffing to maintain ratios and safety utilizing all available part time, supply, or an outside agency staff
 - Ensure additional staff are available to provide relief where required
 - Modify shifts where required
 - Identify which programs can be modified to accommodate possible increased or decreased needs
 - Ensuring shared spaces and structures can be cleaned and disinfected
 - Secure additional cleaning supplies, routine-care supplies, and program supplies
 - Ensure extra personal protection supplies are available
 - Ensure policies and procedures are updated including health and safety
 - Ensure food service is secure
 - Secure/access reserve funding for additional expenses
 - Ensure families/clients are informed as per the organization's communication plan
 - Ensure any other reporting requirements (licensing, municipal, etc.) are done
- If TWG is ordered to close:
- If the centre is open, all parents will be contacted via email to pick up their children
 - Provide a letter or send out an email with specific details including refund/no refund policy
 - Ensure families/clients who are absent are informed
 - Inform the required regulatory bodies
 - Inform all employees who are not present
 - Initiate emergency closure plan
 - Ensure all confidential information, records, and files are secured and locked
 - Implement business continuity plan

PANDEMIC BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

Pandemics will have an impact on TWG's continuity of the organization and may not be evident immediately however it is important to have a plan to deal with the financial losses due to decreased revenues and increased or additional costs. It is important for TWG to continue to manage basic functions should the organization face reduced operations or complete closure. The purpose of developing a business continuity plan is



to identify critical areas that require immediate decisions to reduce/minimize the financial risk to the organization. To ensure TWG will be able to carry on operations in the event of a disaster or pandemic. The following areas will require decisions to be made in the best interest of the organization and its families/clients based on the length of limited services or complete closure.

- Operating Costs
- Payroll obligations (short-term)
- Temporary Layoffs (refer to Extended Closure/Layoff Policy)
- Receiving grants and subsidies
- Collecting fees
- Payment of rent
- Payment of utilities (phone, internet, hydro etc.)
- Payment of suppliers and services (food, cleaning etc.)

PREPARING FOR POSSIBLE SHUTDOWN

In the case of a mandatory shutdown an off-site office will be set up by the Director. An electronic file of essential services and contacts is ready to be taken off-site and includes:

- Access to essential services
- Contact information, account numbers, and passwords for Financial/Banking Institution
- Contact information and policy for the Insurance Company
- Contact information for the Accountant, Bookkeeper, Lawyer
- Ensuring continued access to payroll, finances, and accounting systems
- Current list of families/clients
- Current list of employees
- Current list of suppliers, services, and service agreements
- Keys, and passwords

SECURING RECORDS AND BACK-UP OF ALL INFORMATION

- Ensure all records, documents, and computer files are backed-up to a hard drive



- Keep a back-up copy of the computer's operating system, and critical software off-site
- Ensure all filing cabinets are locked
- Ensure the office is locked down
- Ensure the facilities are locked down

COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING

TWG will establish the following system to communicate with employees and with clients/families. The organization will provide timely updates regarding the status of the closure by email, and social media platforms. TWG will monitor information and updates from the local Officers of Health, and the Provincial Government.

RECOVERY

TWG will follow the directions of the Government, Public Health, and the school boards regarding reopening the centre(s) once the shutdown has been lifted.

The Director and Supervisor will meet regarding establishing priorities and assess what needs to be done to restore the premises, resume services and programs that were interrupted or affected by the pandemic.

TWG will review their Return to Work/Recall Policies including their Risk Assessment as programs and services may not return to their previous format and should consider:

- Possible changes in staffing/children ratios
- Clients/parents who do not return
- Changes in enrolment patterns
- Increase or reduction in space requirements
- Additional costs in requiring new personal protection equipment, sanitizing equipment, cleaning services etc.



- Developing procedures for drop off and pick up inline with physical distancing measures outlined by Public Health
- Reviewing policies and procedures to reflect any updating requirements under the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, and the Ministry of Education
Under the Health and Safety Act the obligation to provide a safe and health work environment includes:
- We will ensure the premises have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before reopening the centre
- The Director and/or Supervisor will confirm with staff and families/clients once the premises are ready to be opened
- We will ensure critical supplies (cleaning products, disposable gloves, face masks etc.) are re-stocked to protect both staff and children
- Recall employees to review policies around changes in routines, cleaning protocols, ill children, and sick leave policy for staff
- Have employees read and sign return to work declaration stating they have not traveled during a pandemic nor have they been in contact with someone who has travelled to areas deemed a health risk or have a travel advisory

BEST PRACTICES

TWG Families Returning to the centre

- TWG will send out an email, welcoming families/clients and thanking them for their understanding during a very difficult and challenging time.
- The invitation to return will include specific details regarding start dates and what has changed
- We assure our TWG Community that new practices will be put in place and how suspected illnesses will be handled
- Existing policies in the Parent Handbook may have to be updated, if so, parents will be advised via email
- TWG families will require to read and sign a return declaration stating they have not tested positive of the pandemic virus; they are not feeling symptoms



associated to the pandemic virus; they have not been in contact with someone who has tested positive for the pandemic virus; they have not traveled during a pandemic or have been in contact with someone who has travelled to areas deemed a health risk or have a travel advisory

TOGETHER WE GROW LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTRE

Extended Closure Policy/ Refund

TOGETHER WE GROW LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTER (hereinafter referred to as “TWG”) strives to provide a safe, healthy environment for your child(ren). However, despite our best efforts there may be times when the centre may have to be closed for an extended period. Decisions to close for an extended period are made based on recommendations by one or more of the following ministries, the provincial and federal ministries of health, education, labour, as well municipal departments of health and child care licensing bodies.

The reasons for an extended closure may include but are not limited to, faulty construction, mold, flooding, serious illness outbreak, pandemic, etc.

In the event of a serious illness outbreak or pandemic, you may be required to sign a declaration confirming that you and your child have not been exposed to the identified contagion.

Based on recommendations by the federal, provincial or municipal departments of health, you may be asked to remove your child from the program for a specified period of time, if they or any family member residing in the home, have been exposed to an identified contagion.

If your child has been removed from the program for any of the above health reasons, you may be required to provide a doctor’s letter confirming that your child is fit to return to the program.

In the event of absences due to the above reasons the following refund policy will apply:



We will make every effort to reopen the centre as quickly as possible. Your child's spot in the program will not be affected by the closure.

For closures lasting 2 weeks or less, no refund will apply. For closures lasting longer than 2 weeks, enrollment fees will resume once the centre is reopened.

Should a child be required to stay home due to testing positive to Covid -19 or show symptoms of Covid-19 and must quarantine due to illness, No refund or credit will apply.

Should you inform TWG in writing that you wish to relinquish your child's spot in the program while the centre is closed, no refunds or withdrawal fees will apply.