

New or clarified COVID 19 protocols for licensed childcare.

Based on BC CDC UPDATE March 2022

Please note that licensed childcare outside of the school building is subject to different regulations than school and licensed child care within a school building.

Daily health check

Daily health checks are required with attention given to upgrade assessments on when to stay home and get tested. At Thrive Staff and volunteers are still required to sign the health check each day and children/families are required to do a health check before school and or full-day Thrive programs but still do not need to sign off or record this.

- If the staff or children (or their parents) indicates that the symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition and are not unusual for that individual, they can continue to attend child care settings. No assessment or note is required from a health-care provider.

Physical distancing

Child care settings have enough space to support physical distancing. There is no need to reduce the number of children attending care at any given time.

Adults should practice physical distancing whenever possible.

- When **interacting with adults**, staff and other adults should reduce close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions. If physical distance can't be maintained, a mask should be worn.
- When **interacting with children**, staff and other adults should minimize unnecessary physical contact. Adults may choose to wear a mask when interacting closely with children, recognizing the importance of facial expressions and movements on children's learning and development.

Children are not expected to practice physical distancing. Contact between children is important to their emotional, physical and developmental needs. Child care settings should seek to reduce physical contact between children by:

- Using all of the space available
- Organizing more activities that encourage individual play
- Encouraging children to keep their hands to themselves

Outdoors and ventilation- *Thrive will continue to make it their best effort to have children outside as much as possible. Doors or windows will open in buildings and vehicles when weather permits. Please ensure your child has warm outdoor clothing and footwear every day. Children will be outdoors even in sub-zero weather when safe to do so.*

Masks

Masks are optional for children, staff and visitors. Masks may be worn based on personal choice.

Immunization - is not currently mandated in childcare for children or staff. However, those (children and staff, who may not be vaccinated may be given stricter isolation mandates from the health authority in the event of an exposure. For example, we have seen unvaccinated made to isolate, while vaccinated asked only to monitor.

Sanitization will continue as before, sanitizing before the children arrive, and at least once during a full day of care, as well as the busses and vans

Hand washing: Children and staff will wash hands upon entering the building, before and after eating, or handling food, and after using the washroom. Hand sanitizer will be used on out-trips and when getting on and off the bus.

In the event of exposure

As of January 19, 2022 the CDC announced that staff or children who are exposed to COVID-19 may continue to attend child care, regardless of vaccination status, unless they develop symptoms and/or test positive for COVID-19. If they develop symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive for COVID-19, follow the directions in *What to do When sick*.

What to do When Sick

The following are the guidelines from the Jan 19, 2022 DCD update:

“Staff, children, or other persons in the child care setting who are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home until they are well enough to participate in activities. According to newly released testing guidelines, many staff and children will not be eligible for COVID-19 testing. The [When to Get Tested for COVID-19 resource](#) or the [B.C. Self Assessment Tool](#) to provides more information on whether you should get a test for COVID-19.

Staff, children, or other persons in the child care setting who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance on the BCCDC website as to how long they should self-isolate. They can return to child care when they no longer need to self-isolate. Child care facilities are essential services. They should not be closed for public health reasons unless directed to do so by a Medical Health Officer. Facilities experiencing illness amongst staff may need to close for operational reasons if they are unable to maintain staff to child ratios as required under the Child Care Licensing Regulation. While not required by public health, child care operators may ask to be notified by people who recently attended or worked in a child care and tested positive for COVID-19. Child care operators may notify people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 without breaching individual privacy. The following

language is recommended to share with parents and caregivers if a person in child care recently tested positive for COVID-19:

This notice is to inform you that a person in our child care in the [program] has tested positive for COVID-19. They last attended child care on [date] and began showing symptoms on [date]. You should monitor your child for symptoms of COVID-19. If your child is not experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, your child can continue to attend child care, unless advised by public health to stay home."

It is helpful for parents to tell us if their child does test positive. This way we know what group they were in and can communicate directly with the parents of the appropriate cohort to let them know to monitor their child for symptoms.