



September 1, 2020

### **Parent Handbook Addendums/Amendments During COVID-19**

Kids' Stuff...the Family Learning Centre on the Thames is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of our children, our staff, partners and the community. We are closely monitoring COVID-19 and base our response and actions on recommendations from Chatham-Kent Public Health unit, the Ministry of Education Child Care and Early Years branch and additional relevant authorities.

Our guidelines for childcare operations during COVID-19 are approved by the Ministry of Education Child Care and Early Years Licensing Branch and Chatham-Kent Public Health Unit and follow the most current recommendations provided by the Ministry of Health. Kids' Stuff has trained all staff to implement measures that will reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious illness within our centres. These guidelines are subject to change as per the direction of the Ministry of Education Child Care and Early Years Licensing Branch and our local Public Health Unit. Our thanks to the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Childcare and Early Years Division for their contribution to the development and compilation of the enhanced health protocols for re-opening childcare in Chatham-Kent.

### **How You as a Parent Can Help**

- If your child has any signs and symptoms of illness, especially a fever of 37.8 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit) or higher, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, keep them home. Call the program and let them know your child's symptoms, as we track this information for Public Health.
- If someone in your household has come in close contact with an individual who is suspected of having COVID-19 or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, keep your child home. Call the program and let them know, as we track this information for Public Health.

- As much as possible, have the same adult drop-off, and pick-up each day, to reduce the number of adults who come in contact with the staff.
- Plan for drop-off and pick-up to take more time than it usually does to allow for screening for illness and for staff to escort your child to you at the end of the day.
- Provide us with any changes to your contact information or your child's medical information (e.g. allergies)

## **Curriculum & Programming**

Kids' Stuff will continue to deliver a play-based curriculum in our centres. Some adjustments will be made to observe physical distancing.

Examples include:

- Same group of children will stay together (a cohort), and not mix with other groups
- Same staff will work with one group of children
- Storage for children's personal belongings will be spaced (i.e. use every second cubby)
- Less children at each table for play, snacks and lunch
- Toys or equipment that are difficult to clean and disinfect will be stored or use will be monitored (e.g. plush toys, dress-up clothes, puppets, books, board games)
- Craft materials will be provided in individual kits for each child
- Sensory materials like playdough or goop will be provided in individual containers and discarded after each child's use
- Where possible outdoor playtime will be increased
- Staff will incorporate fun learning activities that teach children about physical distancing and personal hygiene

## **Program Procedure Changes**

### **Daily Screening Process**

A screening area is isolated at the entrance of each childcare centre. Each day upon arrival all

parents, children and staff will be asked questions provided by Public Health that are designed to screen for illness. Each individual will also be required to have their temperature taken with an infrared thermometer (no touch). If the parent or any of their children are experiencing signs and symptoms of COVID-19 or have come in in close contact with an individual who is suspected of having COVID-19 or has a confirmed case of COVID-19 or has travelled outside of Canada in the previous 14 days, they will be sent home, and not permitted to enter the centre. You will be instructed to contact your Health Care Provider/Physician or Public Health for further direction. If your child is healthy, and screening is completed, a staff member will meet you at the front entrance and escort your child to their room. **Parents will not be permitted to enter the centre at this time.** Your child must be signed in/out at the screening station. Kids' Stuff may request staggered arrival and departure times for families to drop off and pick up if deemed necessary. Your Program Supervisor will provide you will specific details on the process.

### **Screening for Before and After School programs that are not centre-based**

Before and After school programs that are not centre-based may have unique screening processes. This may include exterior classroom door or window screening. Please contact your Program Supervisor for information on the requirements specific to your site. **Parents will not be permitted to enter the school at this time.** Temperatures of children coming from school into the afterschool program will also be recorded.

### **Cleaning & Disinfecting**

Kids' Stuff has implemented enhanced cleaning and disinfecting measures to help reduce the spread of infections illness. A staff member is dedicated to cleaning and disinfecting rooms, toys and equipment. A schedule of the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting required has been recommended by Public Health. A focus is placed on high touch areas including door handles, sinks, toilets, and toys. Any toy that is difficult to clean and disinfect has been put away (i.e. plush toys, dress-up clothes, puppets). Anytime a child places a toy in their mouth, coughs or sneezes on a toy, it is taken out of rotation until it can be cleaned and disinfected.

### **Personal Hygiene**

Staff and children follow a routine of **hand washing** with soap and water throughout the day. For example, we wash our hands when we arrive at the center, after using the washroom, before and after eating, after playing outdoors, after using a tissue, and any time hands are visibly soiled. Staff schedule hand washing routines into the day and demonstrate how to wash hands and monitor children while they wash their hands.

When running water is not available, for example outdoors, children over the age of 2 years can use **hand sanitizer**. Staff monitor children using hand sanitizer to ensure it is applied properly.

Staff will demonstrate for children how to **cough and sneeze** into the arm or shoulder. Anytime a child uses a tissue they are taught to discard the tissue in a garbage bin, and to wash their hands.

As much as possible staff will remind children to avoid touching their face, eyes, nose and mouth.

Children's personal creams, lotions, and diapers should be labelled with the child's name, and will be stored in an individual container just for that child that is kept out of reach of children on a shelf, or in cupboard.

### **If a Child Becomes Ill While at the Centre**

In the event that a child shows any signs or symptoms of illness that cannot be explained (e.g. seasonal allergies), the parent will be called to immediately pick-up their child. If the parent is not available by phone, the emergency contact will be called. While the child waits to be picked-up they will be separated from the other children and staff (isolation) and supervised by one staff member. The staff will wear a mask, shield, gown and gloves, and children over the age of 2 years who can tolerate a mask will be asked to wear one.

### **Reporting Suspected Cases of COVID-19 & Testing**

The Public Health unit requires childcare centres to report any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. In the event an individual is suspected of having COVID-19 the Public Health unit will advise the Program Supervisor and parent of any requirements for testing, and/or self-isolation. Public Health will do contact tracing to determine who the individual came in close contact with at the centre and will determine the requirement for closure of a room or centre based on their findings.

Licensed childcare centres are required to report any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID19 or testing being conducted to the Ministry of Education.

### **Use of Masks and Face Shields**

Wearing a face mask and face shield is one strategy to reduce the spread of illness, including COVID-19. All Kids' Stuff staff are required to wear a face mask and a face shield inside and also outside, if unable to maintain a distance of 2 metres. Other strategies being implemented (e.g. screening, keeping the same children and staff together, providing individual materials, increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting, and hand washing) all work together to reduce the chance of the spread of illness.

Staff will be required to wear personal protective equipment including a gown in the screening area, when escorting your child to their classroom, when cleaning and disinfecting blood or bodily fluids and when caring for a sick child or a child showing symptoms of illness.

If you wish for your child to wear a mask, the staff will help your child to understand the proper method to put on/take off a mask to prevent spreading illness. Public Health does not permit children under 2 years of age to wear masks. School age children in grade 4 and older will be required to wear a face mask. Kids' Stuff is not responsible for providing masks to children.

### **Nutrition**

Children will continue to be provided with snacks (all sites) and lunches from our centre based kitchens. Staff will be responsible for serving all foods and drinks to children, and bowls of food will be kept out of the reach of children on a cart or counter. Parents are required to put all feeding instructions in writing for children under 1 year of age. Please do not send any food from home unless approved by the Program Supervisor and labelled with your child's name.

### **Rest Time**

Children 0-3.8 years are provided with an opportunity to rest each day. Children who do not sleep, or wake up, are provided with quiet activities. Where cribs and cots cannot be placed 2 meters apart, children will lay down head to foot on their own crib or cot.

### **Pick-Up**

At the end of each day, when you arrive at the centre, call the centre phone number. A staff member will escort your child to the front entrance where you can pick-up. Curbside delivery is also a pick-up procedure that may be used at some locations.

### **Placing Your Childcare Space on Hold**

Existing families who are not ready for their child(ren) to return to care upon the reopening of the childcare program can place their childcare on an internal waitlist at this time. Space availability in the future will be dependent on current registration levels and groups size maximums. Waitlist priorities have been developed for enrollment in the limited spaces currently available.

### **Parental Agreement**

Extensive protocols to re-open childcare have been put into place to ensure the health and safety of the children, staff, partners and community during the time of COVID-19.

Following review of the handbook please sign the attached agreement and submit to your Kids' Stuff site Program Supervisor.

## **Parental Agreement**

I have read and understand the COVID-19 procedures put in place by Kids' Stuff...the Family Learning Centre on the Thames.

I understand that failure to comply with the COVID-19 protocols will jeopardize my childcare space(s).

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_