

Child Care COVID Response & Preparedness Plan

Program Information

Child care program name:

Foundations Preschool of Washtenaw County

Introduction

Our Commitment to Health & Safety

Foundations Preschool of Washtenaw County is committed to protecting the health of our children, families, staff, and community. The following policies were designed in response to guidance from the Michigan Departments of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and Health and Human Services, in accordance with best practices from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and with everyone's well-being in mind. To limit the potential spread of COVID-19, we will be making some temporary changes to our programming that include robust cleaning and disinfecting procedures and minimizing opportunities for person-to-person exposure (e.g., an infected person spreading respiratory droplets through actions such as coughing, sneezing, or talking). The following plan outlines the recommended practices and strategies we will use to protect the health of our children, staff, and families while at the same time ensuring that children are experiencing developmentally appropriate and responsive interactions and environments.

Changes to Our Physical Spaces

We will use the following strategies in our classrooms and facilities to minimize the spread of illness:

1. Where possible, limiting or eliminating use of common spaces in the classrooms/facility. When common spaces must be used, we will rotate use of the space and clean between groups.
2. Rearranging classroom areas to seat children as far apart as reasonably possible and limiting the number of children sitting together.
3. Ensuring ventilation systems operate properly and increasing circulation of outdoor air as much as possible (e.g., keeping windows and doors open to the extent that this does not pose safety risks).
4. Using touchless trash cans to provide a hands-free way to dispose of tissues and contaminants.
5. Before re-opening we will ensure all water systems and drinking fountains are safe following CDC guidelines.

Availability of Toys and Classroom Materials

At this time, we will make the following changes to the toys and materials in our classrooms:

1. We will remove toys and objects which cannot be easily cleaned or sanitized between use.
2. Given that cloth toys are not recommended at this time, we will remove these from classrooms.
3. We will temporarily suspend use of water and sensory tables.
4. Toys will be washed and sanitized before being moved from one group of children to another.

Mealtimes

To limit opportunities for exposure during mealtimes, we will engage in the following recommended practices:

1. We will space seating as far apart as possible (ideally 6 feet apart) by limiting the number of children sitting together and rearranging seating.
2. We will modify our family-style meal service and have staff plate each child's meal so that multiple children are not using the same serving utensils.
3. Staff and children will wash hands before and immediately after children have eaten.

Naptime

To reduce potential for viral spread, we will engage in the following recommended practices:

1. Using bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed.
2. Storing each child's bedding in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags.
3. Ensuring that children's naptime mats/cots/cribs are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart.
4. When possible, children will be placed head-to-toe (i.e., one child with their head at the top of the mat, the next child over with their head at the bottom of the mat).

Items Brought From Home

During this time, we are limiting the number of items brought into the facility to reduce transmission the virus. However, we recognize that placing limits on children's comfort items may increase stress for children and staff as they may be especially needed during this time of transition. Please discuss any comfort items needed with your child's teacher.

We ask that families and staff follow these guidelines with regard to children's comfort items:

1. To avoid these items coming into contact with many children, efforts will be made for these items to be placed in a cubby or bin and be used at naptime or as needed.
2. If possible, comfort items should remain at the child care facility to avoid cross-contamination.
3. Items should be washed weekly (at our facility or the child's home) and daily if the comfort item is a soft material (e.g., blanket, stuffed animal, clothing).

Other policies related to naptime/items from home include:

All cots will be sanitized daily after each use and prior to being stored.

Screening Families & Staff for COVID-19 Symptoms and Exposure

Upon arrival to the program, staff and families are required to report if they or anyone in their household:

**have received positive COVID-19 results;
been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19; and/or
have experienced symptoms such as persistent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills,
change in smell or taste, diarrhea, and/or vomiting.**

The procedures we will use to screen staff for symptoms and exposure include:

Every staff person must be screened prior to entering the building. Temperatures will be taken and a health questionnaires will be conducted. If illness is detected, the staff person will be sent home with guidelines for follow-up care. Return to work will be dependent on CDC recommendations.

The procedures we will use to screen children/families for symptoms and exposure include:

Every child and family member must be screened prior to entering the building. Temperatures will be taken and a health questionnaires will be conducted. If illness is detected, the staff person will be sent home with guidelines for follow-up care. Return to school will be dependent on CDC recommendations.

If families or staff are absent or otherwise off-site but experience exposure or symptoms, they should contact:

Foundations Preschool office at 734-677-8130. We will give guidance over the phone per CDC guidelines and school policies.

Daily Temperature Checks

Temperature Checks

As fever is the key indicator of COVID-19 in children, we will check each child's temperature upon daily arrival to the program. Staff will also have their temperatures taken upon arrival to work. Staff will re-check children's temperatures throughout the day if they appear ill or "not themselves" (e.g., flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing without recent physical activity, fatigue, or extreme fussiness).

When children arrive to the program, temperature checks will occur

before children enter the building.

Each child's temperature will be taken by:

program staff.

The following staff members will be responsible for temperature checks:

Various staff members (administrators, office staff and building support staff) will be assigned for this duty.

To minimize potential spread of illness, staff will:

1. wear a face mask while taking the child's temperature.
2. **disinfect non-disposable thermometers between uses (e.g., cleaned with an alcohol wipe or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab).**

Responding to Symptoms and Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

Responding to COVID-19 Symptoms On-Site

If a child or staff member has a temperature above 100.4 degrees and/or symptoms such as persistent cough, difficulty breathing, chills, diarrhea, or vomiting, they will be sent home immediately with the recommendation to contact their primary care physician/medical provider. If anyone shows emergency warning signs (e.g., trouble breathing, persistent pain/pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, or bluish lips or face), we will seek medical care immediately.

If a child develops symptoms during care hours:

- Parents will be contacted for prompt pick-up.
- The child will be isolated from other children and as many staff as possible (the child will not be left alone).
- The child will wait with the following designated staff member(s):: Available administrators or building support staff
- The child and designated staff will wait in the following safe, isolated location:: Sick Bay outside of upstairs offices.

If a staff member develops symptoms during care hours:

- If no other caregiver is immediately available to be with children, the staff member will put on a cloth face covering (if not already on) and limit close interactions with children until they can be relieved by another staff member.
- If the ill staff member needs to be picked up or otherwise cannot leave the facility immediately, they will wait in the following safe, isolated location: The sick bay outside the upstairs offices.
- They will be asked to go home immediately.

Reporting Exposure

Reporting Exposure

If a child, staff member, family member, or visitor to our program shows COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for the virus, we will contact our local health department and licensing consultant. Based on the guidance of the local health department, we will determine whether to close individual classrooms or our facility, the duration of the closure, and other next steps. When communicating with families and staff about any COVID-19 cases, we will respect the privacy of individuals and not share health information of a specific person.

Our local health department can be contacted at:

734-544-6700

Returning to the Program After Experiencing Symptoms and/or a Positive COVID Test

If a staff member or child has a fever OR a cough (but no other symptoms):

If a child exhibits a concerning, persistent cough then the parent will be required to pick up the child and seek medical advice. The child may return as indicated on a doctor's return to school order as long as no other symptoms present themselves.

If a child has a fever, they must stay home for 72 hours (3 days) after being fever free without the use fever reducing medication.

If a staff member or child exhibits multiple symptoms of COVID-19, possible exposure is expected, OR an individual tests positive for COVID-19, the individual must stay home until:

They have been fever-free for at least 72 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers AND
Other symptoms have improved AND
At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared.

As per [Executive Order 2020-36](#), if staff or their close contacts have possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19, staff will be allowed to remain home without penalty of discharge, discipline, or other retaliation.

To accommodate for the potential need to quarantine staff or allow for longer absences from work than normal, we will implement the following staffing plan to ensure we can meet staff to child ratios:

Foundations Preschool will have several building support staff who will act as substitutes if immediately needed (2 which are trained teachers). We will also have a substitute teacher roster to call as needed. Last minute unfilled needs will be met by our administrative staff.

Because child care staff members are part of Michigan's essential workforce, they are eligible to be tested for COVID-19.

Staff can visit [this resource](#) to locate a nearby test site.

Maintaining Consistent Groups

During this time, we will maintain the following group sizes:

Leave blank if this age group does not apply to your program.

Infants and Toddlers, birth until 30 months of age

8

Preschoolers, 30 months until 3 years of age

8

Preschoolers, 3 years of age until 4 years of age

8

Preschoolers, 4 years of age until school-age

8

School-agers

To support these smaller group sizes, we will implement the following policies:

Our early preschool and upper preschool classrooms will be occupied by eight children and one teacher. The teacher will be supported (for breaks, classroom management needs, etc.) by our building support and administrative staff.

Enrollment status will not be affected by absences due to illness. Tuition will still be charged for absences due to illness that last a week or less. If CDC recommendations require a child to be absent for a duration of 10 or more days, the family may work with the Executive Director on tuition options.

In the event that the health department closes the school, there will be no tuition charged during the span of the closure.

To minimize potential spread of COVID-19, we will engage in the following best practices:

1. To the extent possible, classrooms will include the same group of children and providers each day.
2. We will limit the mixing of children across groups by staggering times for outdoor play and other activities where children from multiple classrooms are typically combined.
3. Canceling or postponing field trips and special events that convene larger groups of children and families.
4. Limiting non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities including groups of children or adults.
5. Any in-person staff meetings will be limited to 10 people and social distancing requirements will be followed as much as possible.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

We will use the following recommended practices during drop-off and pick-up times to protect the health of children, families, and staff.

1. Only one adult per family should be present at drop-off/pick-up. Ideally, this would be the same parent or designated person every day, though we recognize this is not always possible.
2. We will implement staggered drop-off and pick-up times to limit contact among parents.
3. We will have a hand hygiene station at the entrance to our building so children and parents can clean their hands.
4. We will ask parents and other visitors to wear masks while in the building.
5. We ask that parents avoid congregating in a single space or a large group.

Other policies related to drop-off and pick-up include:

Staff will meet parents at the entrance and will sign in/out children each day to eliminate the need for parents to use a touch screen.

Upon drop-off, one adult will be allowed to escort their child to the classroom providing they pass the health check at the door and wear a mask.

At pick-up, staff will escort preschool children to the entrance. Parents must arrive at a predesignated time to pick up the child at the door. For the toddler room, one masked parent will be allowed to enter the building (after health screening) to pick up their child.

Transportation

We will use the following CDC-recommended practices to ensure the safety of children and staff during transportation:

1. We will limit non-essential work-related travel and have staff participate in training and technical assistance virtually whenever possible.

Hand Washing

We will reinforce regular health and safety practices with children and staff and continue to comply with licensing regulations and CDC hand washing guidelines as follows:

- Staff and children will wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available. Staff and children should cover all surfaces of their hands with hand sanitizer, rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Staff should assist children with hand washing (especially infants who cannot wash hands alone) and use of hand sanitizer to ensure proper use and prevent ingestion.
- Staff and children (with frequent reminders and support) will cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve and wash hands immediately after.
- Wearing gloves does not replace appropriate hand hygiene.
- Hand hygiene is especially important after blowing one's nose, going to the bathroom, before eating or preparing food (or helping children do any of these actions).

Other policies related to hand washing include:

Children must wash hands after entering the classroom from any alternative location.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and Disinfecting Surfaces

We will engage in the following cleaning and disinfecting practices in accordance with CDC recommendations:

1. Daily cleaning/disinfecting of **high-touch surfaces** (e.g., sinks, toilets, light switches, door knobs, counter and tabletops, chairs).
2. Regular cleaning of **electronics** (e.g., keyboards, parent/staff check-in kiosks) according to manufacturer's instructions.
3. Use of a **schedule** for regular cleaning and disinfecting tasks.
4. Ensuring staff wear **disposable gloves** to perform cleaning, disinfecting, laundry, and trash pick-up, followed by hand washing.
5. Cleaning **dirty surfaces** using detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
6. Use of **CDC-recommended disinfectants** such as EPA-registered household disinfectants, diluted bleach solution, and/or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol
7. Keeping cleaning products **secure and out of reach** of children, **avoiding use near children**, and ensuring **proper ventilation** during use to prevent inhalation of toxic fumes.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Toys

We will engage in the following best practices to clean and disinfect toys:

1. We will clean toys frequently, especially items that have been in a child's mouth.
2. We will set aside toys that need to be cleaned (e.g., out of children's reach in a dish pan with soapy water or separate container marked for "soiled toys").

Other policies related to cleaning and disinfecting include:

We will use a 3-step process (soapy water, fresh water, sanitizing solution) to clean dirty surface and toys that can be submerged in water.

The use of a sanitizing machine will be used for larger, bulk items.

Safety Equipment

Face Mask/Coverings for Staff

Our plan for staff around face masks/coverings is as follows:

Other - Write In: Teaching staff will wear face masks when inside the building. . They will wear clear face shields in lieu of masks during meal times. Other staff will wear masks when stepping out of their office.

Use of Gloves

Staff will wear gloves in a manner consistent with existing licensing rules (for example, gloves should be worn when handling contaminants, changing diapers, cleaning or when serving food). Staff members should wash hands before putting gloves on and immediately after gloves are removed. Gloves are not recommended for broader use and do not replace hand washing..

Face Masks/Coverings for Children

Our plan regarding children wearing cloth face coverings during care is:

Per the Governor's executive order (2020-164) children ages 2 and 3 are encouraged to wear masks in the classroom and in shared spaces. Children ages 4 and over will be encouraged to wear masks in the classroom and be required to wear masks in shared spaces. Masks are not required for any age group.

Partnering and Communicating with Families & Staff

Communicating with Staff and Families

We will actively communicate with staff and families to determine when they will return to work/care if they have been out, discuss concerns or questions, share new policies and expectations, and confidentially discuss any extenuating circumstances that have emerged and/or any health concerns/conditions that may elevate risk for complications if exposed to COVID-19.

The staff responsible for handling questions and outreach for **staff** is : Executive Director

The staff responsible for handling questions and outreach for **families** is : Executive Director

Training Staff

To support staff in effectively engaging in best practices and making personal decisions, we will provide learning opportunities to help all of us understand how COVID-19 is transmitted, the distance the virus can travel, how long the virus remains viable in the air and on surfaces, signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and our new policies and procedures as outlined in this plan.

Supporting Children's Social-Emotional Needs

Staff and families will partner together to support the needs and emotional reactions of children during this time. We anticipate that children will experience a wide range of feelings during this transition period. Some children will be relieved to be returning to school, some will have initial challenges with separation from their parent(s), some may demonstrate anger, and some may act out toward other children. Whatever the reactions, we acknowledge that staff and families may need some new tools in their toolkit to assist the child with emotional regulation and we will work together to support all caregivers.

Supporting Staff Members' Social-Emotional Needs

To ensure the well-being of the children, it is also imperative to ensure the well-being of their teachers and caregivers, and to provide them with the emotional and administrative supports necessary during this time of re-integration, and in the months ahead. As essential workers in the COVID-19 pandemic, we understand our staff may have worries about their own physical or psychological health, and the potential risk to their family members at home. Because young children internalize the stress of the adults who care for them, we know it is vitally important to provide supports and services to ensure the emotional well-being of our staff.

Contact Information

Email address

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Comments: We are struggling with the new executive order to require children ages 2 and over to wear masks. We cannot ask our low-income families to pay for these, yet we struggle with paying for them ourselves. When orders like this are announced, it would be helpful to also include funding for child cares to pay for the necessary changes.