

Directly Operated

***Early Learning and
Child Care Centres***

Family Guide



COVID-19 ADDENDUM

This addendum is to be used with the Early Learning and Child Care Centre Family Guide. It is providing families with COVID-19 specific information relevant to the child's enrollment in our child care programs. If you have any questions about the information contained herein; please speak with the program supervisor. As new regulations and recommendations become available, we will strive to update this addendum and keep families well-informed of the best practices that we are adhering to. It is important to us, that families feel comfortable entrusting their child(ren) to our care, and we take your concerns seriously.

Safe Arrival, Health Screening and Departure

To ensure that your child is safely entering the Child Care Program, it is important that the family member dropping the child off follow the instructions posted at each program site.

Everyone entering the premises must have completed the latest version of the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Assessment Tool and entered the results in the HiMama App or notified your child care program. Face masks must be worn, and we ask that you use hand sanitizer upon entry. Each child will have a designated space to store their personal items along with any jackets, hats, mitts, etc.

Should you be unable to complete the pre-screen available on-line, the child care staff will assist you when you arrive at the program.

We ask that only one family member enters the playroom at a time and that everyone maintains a distance of at least 2 metres. Because drop-off and pick-up tend to be very busy times for the child care program, should you wish to have a further conversation about your child's day or concerns, please ask the staff to call you or book an appointment to have a face-to-face meeting after child care operational hours.

Rapid Antigen Testing

The Ministry of Education has provided each child care program with a limited number of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) to be distributed to families when a symptomatic child is sent home from the program. We ask that you adhere to the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit's latest guidelines for self-isolation and children return to care when they are 24-48 hours symptom free and have 2 negative RAT's taken at least 24 hours apart.

Symptoms, Isolating, and Outbreaks

Please note the following protocols will be adhered to at the recommendation of the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit.

1. We do not require a medical note or proof of a negative COVID-19 test for a child to return to care that has been asked to isolate.
2. If the child has a chronic alternate diagnosis (i.e., seasonal allergies, asthma), documented proof from a health care provider is not required to return to child care.
3. If a child tests positive for COVID-19 on a Rapid Antigen Test or displays symptoms of COVID-19 you must follow the latest self-isolation directions provided by the local district health unit.
4. If a child displays one or more symptoms (that are new or worsening and that are not due to a pre-existing medical condition or seasonal allergies) while in attendance at a child care program, staff will isolate the child immediately from the playroom, assist the child (if over 2 years of age) to put on a medical grade mask, and contact the parent or guardian to have the child picked up as quickly as possible. Staff will don the necessary PPE and remain with the child until the child is picked-up.

5. A child can return to care after receiving a negative COVID-19 Rapid Antigen test if:
 - i. They have not been identified as a close contact of COVID-19
 - ii. They have not travelled outside of Canada in the previous 14 days
 - iii. They have not been advised by their health care provider or the health unit to continue self-isolation
 - iv. They have not had a fever for 24 hours (without the use of medication) or 48 hours for vomiting and/or diarrhea
 - v. Symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours
6. If symptoms compatible with COVID-19 are persisting/worsening, the child must continue to stay home, and it is recommended that you seek medical care; consider repeat testing.
7. The health unit may declare an outbreak when there is a reported 30% absenteeism rate in any one playroom or program. Families will be notified as soon as possible.
8. The child care program may voluntarily close a playroom or entire program in consultation with the public health unit due to COVID-19 related illnesses. Families will be notified of any pending closures.
9. The child care program is under the direction of the local public health unit and it is the responsibility of the health unit to determine if an outbreak exists, provide direction for outbreak control measures to be implemented, and determine when the outbreak is declared over.

Sanitary Practices & Infectious Disease Control

Our child care programs work closely with, and is periodically inspected by, the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit to ensure all health and safety regulations and guidelines are adhered to. The child care program has developed rigorous health and safety protocols to assist with the control of infectious diseases within the child care environment. As well, each program has a housekeeper on staff to assist with enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of furniture, toys, and equipment. For more information on the COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols, please go to our website (www.psdssab.org) or ask the program supervisor for a copy.

All child care program staff, students, and volunteers must complete mandatory PPE and COVID-19 specific Health and Safety training prior to interacting with the children. They are monitored frequently for compliance with the health and safety protocols and undergo further training as deemed necessary.

Staff are required to wear PPE as directed by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and the NBPSDHU. All staff must wear medical-grade masks and eye protection when inside a child care program unless they have been granted a medical exemption. Staff are not required to wear masks and eye protection while outdoors. We are also required to follow Ministry of Health regulations for children ages 6 years and over wearing masks. An exemption from mask wearing may be granted in extenuating circumstances such as children with asthma or other underlying medical conditions. Please speak with the program supervisor should your child require an exemption.

Staff are trained and able to assist children on appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including the use of alcohol-based hand rubs. Hand hygiene will be scheduled as part of the child's daily routine as well as what is usually recommended (i.e., before and after meals, after using the washroom).

Children are not permitted to bring toys and other objects from home. Each child may bring a comfort object for their rest time, and these will be laundered at the child care program or sent home to be laundered.

Immunization Disclosure

We recognize the importance of being immunized against COVID-19. Our Immunization Disclosure Policy can be found on our web site at www.psdssab.org.

Ill Children

It is important, to us, that every precaution is taken to reduce the spread of diseases and infections.

Families need to keep their child home and notify the program if any of the following symptoms are present:

- a) a fever,
- b) vomiting within the last 24-hour period,
- c) diarrhea (2 consecutive loose bowel movements) within the last 24-hours,
- d) any discharge from the eyes and/or ears,
- e) a severe cough, runny nose and/or congestion,
- f) any undiagnosed skin rashes or infections,
- g) gastrointestinal infection, and/or
- h) any other symptom as determined by the provincial and/or local medical officer of health.

Be aware, we are required to follow the provincial and local medical officers of health orders for excluding children of ill health, therefore the above list of symptoms is not exhaustive. We will make every effort to keep families informed as we receive directives.

If a child arrives to care with any of the above symptoms, families will be asked to return home and if the child develops symptoms or if symptoms become worse during the day, families will be contacted and asked to pick their child up as soon as possible. Likewise, if you have administered any medication to your child for fevers, gastro-intestinal upsets, or colds, please let the staff know upon arrival to the program. *Children are expected to be able to fully participate in all indoor and outdoor activities throughout the day.*

Should a child be excluded from care because of illness or is absent from care due to illness, they must be 24 - 48 hours' symptom free before returning to care. Depending on the recommendations of the local medical officer of health, children may be required to have two (2) test negative Rapid Antigen Tests before they can be admitted back to the child care program.

We strive to keep families informed of the most current Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health regulations; however, these regulations change frequently and often with little or no notice. If there is any discrepancy between the information shared here and the latest regulations, we are required to follow the latest regulations posted. Please visit the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit at <https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/health-topics/coronavirus.asp>.

If you have any questions about the protocols mentioned here or would like additional information, please speak to the child care program supervisor.