

Child Care COVID Response & Preparedness Plan

Program Information

Child care program name:

Maple Tree Preschool

Introduction

Our Commitment to Health & Safety

Maple Tree Preschool 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, dividing large group spaces to allow more children to safely use the space (e.g., using child-sized furniture, such as rolling shelves and kitchenettes, to divide a room and prevent mixing between groups of children).
2. Rearranging classroom areas to seat children as far apart as reasonably possible and limiting the number of children sitting together.
3. Using touchless trash cans to provide a hands-free way to dispose of tissues and contaminants.
4. 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.

Mealtimes

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

1. Staff and children will wash hands before and immediately after children have eaten.

Naptime

Items Brought From Home

During this time, we are trying to limit the number of items brought into the facility because this can be a way to transmit the virus, so we ask that families refrain from bringing items from home as much as possible. 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.

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:

Before entering the preschool, the staff will answer questions about symptoms and exposure and will have a temperature check.

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

An online COVID-19 screening form must be completed and each student's temperature will be taken before a child enters preschool. Staff members will protect the children's privacy.

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

Cindi Thompson via email mapletreepreschool1979@gmail.com or phone message 616-534-5465 x114

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 be asked to take their own temperatures 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:

Teachers and First Reformed Church staff

To minimize potential spread of illness, staff will:

1. wear a face mask while taking the child's temperature.
2. wear disposable gloves, which will be changed before the next check if physical contact with the child occurred.

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 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):: Director, Teacher, or Teacher Assistant
- The child and designated staff will wait in the following safe, isolated location:: Kitchen

If a staff member develops symptoms during care hours:

- They will be asked to go home immediately.
- 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.

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:

616-632-7228

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):

They must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. With a fever, we will be following the recommendation that students must be fever free, without the use of medication, for 72 hours before returning.

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:

The Director or other staff members will fill in. A roster of substitute caregivers will be created.

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

Preschoolers, 30 months until 3 years of age

Preschoolers, 3 years of age until 4 years of age

12

Preschoolers, 4 years of age until school-age

16

School-agers

Other policies related to group size include:

Classes will be separated into defined centers. Centers will be limited to a small group of children at a time. Toys will be swapped and sanitized throughout the day.

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.

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. Staff will greet children and families curbside or outside the building and walk children in and out of the building.
3. Children should enter the building without car seats.
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:

Upon entering preschool, the children will wash their hands. The staff will sign preschoolers in and out.

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).

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. Normal routine cleaning of **outdoor spaces**, with special attention to high-touch plastic/metal surfaces (e.g., grab bars, railings).
3. Use of a **schedule** for regular cleaning and disinfecting tasks.
4. Cleaning **dirty surfaces** using detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
5. Use of **CDC-recommended disinfectants** such as EPA-registered household disinfectants, diluted bleach solution, and/or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol
6. 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").

Safety Equipment

Face Mask/Coverings for Staff

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

Other - Write In: Staff will wear masks or face coverings while inside. Staff may remove masks or face coverings while outside if they can maintain the appropriate social distancing.

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:

Children are not expected to wear masks while in the preschool classroom, but may be encouraged to if it is the parent's preference. Parents will be asked to supply a mask for their child to wear while walking through the church.

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 : Cindi Thompson

The staff responsible for handling questions and outreach for **families** is : Cindi Thompson

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, some will have initial challenges with separation from their parent(s), some may demonstrate anger at the "disappearance" of their child care provider, 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.

We will make the following resources available for staff and families to support children:

[Crisis Parent and Caregiver Guide](#), from the Michigan Children's Trust Fund

[Talking with Children about COVID-19](#), from the CDC

[Helping Young Children Through COVID-19](#), from Zero to Thrive (includes Arabic and Spanish translations)

[Georgie and the Giant Germ](#), from Zero to Thrive and Tender Press Books

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

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Comments: