

COVID-19: What Families Need to Consider when looking for Licensed Child Care in Halton

As centres prepare to re-open, direction has been provided by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and Halton Region Public Health in regard to health and safety guidelines, cleaning and sanitary procedures, and modified policies.

Licensed child care centres must still ensure they are meeting all requirements of the Child Care and Early Years Act.

What to Consider:

Screening and Drop Off

- There will be screening for everyone who enters the child care facility.
- Screening information will be kept on file for contact tracing in the case of a COVID-19 outbreak.
- You will not be able to go past the screening area and a staff member will bring your child to his/her classroom.
- When picking up, you may notify staff to allow for your child to meet you.
- Staggered pick-ups may be required in order to minimize the number of families within the space at the same time.



Physical Distancing

- Seating children in a distanced way at the table as much as is possible while still encouraging socialization and conversation.
- Planned activities that do not involve shared objects or toys are encouraged. Moving activities outside to allow for more space is also encouraged when possible



Health and Safety

- Frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, faucets, electronic devices, water fountains, and tabletops will be disinfected at least twice per day.
- Toys and equipment will be cleaned regularly at least twice a day, and soft/plush toys may not be seen in classrooms.
- During meal times, self-serve is not permitted. Your child's meals will be served in individual portions to them, with no sharing of serving utensils or food.
- Personal belongings (e.g. backpack, clothing, etc.) should be minimized. Belongings should be labeled and kept in child's cubby/designated area. Keeping children's necessary personal items onsite instead of sending home every day is helpful.



Staffing and Play Experiences

- Materials like sand, water, playdough may be used by individual children, and may be labelled with your child's name (if offered)
- Outdoor play may have 2-meter physical distancing
- Access to child care facility may be restricted and non-essential visitors will not be permitted onsite
- Play structures are to be used by one group at a time, and should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use by each group



Questions to Consider around COVID-19



- Will my child need to wear a mask?
- Will my child be using hand sanitizer?
- Is there a different policy in place if my child becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms?
- Is there a different policy in place if my child becomes ill without COVID-19 symptoms?
- Will any items I bring in such as sunscreen, diapers, wipes, sippy cups, bottles, soothers be sanitized?
- Can I bring my child's favourite blanket and stuffed toy?
- How will my child's sleeping space and bedding be cleaned?
- If my child is injured, what First Aid protocols will be taken?
- What protocols are in place to ensure open communication with parents safely?
- My child has special needs. What measures will be put in place to support my child's needs?

Please also note that guidelines and requirements can change quickly. Readers should refer to the Ministry of Education, Halton Region Public Health and Children's Services for the most current and up to date information

Child Care Directory and Information Line

Connect with the **Child Care Directory and Information Line (CCDIL)** for a list of licensed child care options within your area in Halton. You may reach out to each option to learn about their reopening status, and add your name to their wait list for the timeframe that you require care. You may learn more about CCDIL here: www.thrc.ca/ccdil

If you require financial assistance to pay for licensed child care:

If you are a resident in Halton, and will be having care within a licensed child care facility in Halton, you may be eligible for financial assistance for child care fees. You may learn more about child care subsidy here: <https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Children-and-Parenting/Need-Help-with-the-Cost-of-Child-Care>