

CHILD CARE GUIDANCE

INFECTION CONTROL IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS

Updated February 1, 2022

This guidance is intended for licensed child care centers, regulated child development homes and before-and after school care.

ILLNESS SCREENING



- ▶ Each child should have direct contact with a staff person upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease.
- ▶ The center shall post notice at the main entrance to the center where it is visible to parents and the public of exposure of a child receiving care by the center to a communicable disease, the symptoms, and the period of communicability. If the center is located in a building used for other purposes and shares the main entrance to the building, the notice shall be conspicuously posted in the center in an area that is frequented daily by parents or the public.
- ▶ The center shall provide a quiet area under supervision for a child who appears to be ill or injured. The parents or a designated person shall be notified of the child's status in the event of a serious illness or emergency
- ▶ Ensure that staff and children are not admitted to a child care setting when they are ill.
- ▶ Sick children should be separated until they are able to go home.
- ▶ For specific information, see:
https://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/128/childhood_illness_1_31_update%20%281%29.pdf



HYGIENE

- ▶ Support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap, paper towels, tissues, no-touch/foot pedal trash cans, and hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol.
- ▶ Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect (e.g., plush toys). Clean bedding that touches a child's skin weekly or before use by another child.
- ▶ Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each child their own art supplies) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.



CLEANING AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

- ▶ Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains, grab bars, hand railings, bathroom stalls, tables) at least daily or between each use as much as possible.
- ▶ Use of shared objects (e.g., toys) should be limited when possible, or if shared use is required, thoroughly clean objects between each use.

- ▶ Outdoor areas generally require normal routine cleaning and do not require disinfection. Target use of disinfectants on outdoor hard surfaces and objects frequently touched by multiple children and staff (for example, handrails, benches).
- ▶ Ensure ventilation and water systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors.
- ▶ Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children or staff using the facility.
- ▶ Child-safe fans may be used to increase effectiveness of open windows, when applicable. For more information see: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/ventilation.html>
- ▶ Drinking fountains should be cleaned and disinfected, but encourage children and staff to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains. Install touchless water bottle refilling stations, if possible.

While we acknowledge that some parents may want their child to continue to wear a cloth face covering for reasons that make sense for their family or that child's specific health condition, we urge providers to allow parents the opportunity to make their own decision about mask usage.

Should a parent choose to send their child in a mask, consider the following:



TOOLS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF RESPIRATORY ILLNESS

- ▶ Masks and face coverings are a common and effective tool for preventing the spread of seasonal respiratory illness. Cloth face coverings are generally not needed when eating or outside and must not be worn while sleeping.
- ▶ Unvaccinated individuals may be encouraged to wear face coverings, if medically appropriate.
- ▶ All children younger than two years of age should not wear face coverings.
- ▶ People who have trouble breathing and people unable to remove the mask without assistance should not wear cloth face coverings.
- ▶ If used, masks and cloth face coverings should be stored in a space designated for each child that is separate from others when not being worn (e.g., in individually labeled containers or bags, personal lockers, or cubbies) and washed or disposed of regularly after use.



CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES OR SPECIAL NEEDS

- ▶ Wearing masks may be difficult for young children with certain disabilities (for example, visual or hearing impairments) or for those with sensory, cognitive, or behavioral issues.
- ▶ Therapists, early intervention specialists, and others should be allowed into your facility to provide important services to children with special health needs.
- ▶ If space allows, limit the interaction of the specialist to only the child(ren) they need to see.