

NEW HEALTH POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The provincial health officer has prohibited gatherings in the excess of 50 people; however this order **does not** apply to child care settings. Due to Ministry of Children and Families Licensing having strict regulations, child care settings have already set protocols for groups of children that meet the PHO's recommendations.

We have updated our Health Policy (below) for your records that will stay implemented after the Covid-19 pandemic. It has taught the Ministry of Health that health measures should be implemented stricter than before the pandemic due to the unknown viruses, influenza's, and other respiratory illnesses that can at anytime transmit between people. We have been mandated to change our policy as follows:

ILLNESS HEALTH POLICY

A child should remain at home at home or seek alternate care if he/she is suffering from one or more of the following symptoms and cannot return for a minimum of 10 days after the onset of symptoms AND until symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer:

1. Have a common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease.
2. Pain - any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain
3. A cold with fever, runny nose and eyes, coughing and sore throat (with or without green discharge) Lethargy.
4. Difficulty in breathing - wheezing or cough
5. Fever (100°F / 38.3°C or more) with or without accompanied by general symptoms such as listlessness may be an early sign of illness that requires a physician's attention
6. Sore throat or trouble swallowing
7. Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
8. Headache and stiff neck
9. Severe itching of body and scalp
10. Any known or suspected communicable diseases

Unexplained diarrhea or loose stool combined with nausea, vomiting or abdominal cramps (These symptoms may indicate a bacterial or viral (gastrointestinal) infection which is very easily passed from one child to another. The child should be kept home until all symptoms have cleared.

IF A CHILD IS ASSESSED BY THEIR FAMILY PHYSICIAN OR NURSE PRACTITIONER AND IT IS DETERMINED THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE COVID-19 OR CONTAGIOUS DISEASE, THEY MAY RETURN TO THE CENTRE ONCE SYMPTOMS RESOLVE (ZERO SYMPTOMS) AND A DOCTORS NOTE MAY BE REQUIRED. If a child returns with symptoms, they will be sent home and not permitted at the facility.

Unimmunized Children

It is our policy to accept all children whether he/she are or are not immunized. If there is an outbreak of any communicable disease or infectious disease and/or virus that has a vaccine e.g. Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Covid-19, etc., understand that children who do not have up to date immunizations and/or vaccines will be asked not to attend until the outbreak is over. As our fees state, we do not give refunds and it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to find alternate care during the outbreak.

We have also put into practice the following measures to maintain the health and safety of all children, adults, and staff that attend Starlight Learning Centre:

- ✚ Adults must drop off and pick up from outside the facility to diminish adult contact inside the facility.
- ✚ All children wash hands as they arrive before engaging into activities for the day. Lunch kits, etc will be sanitized as they enter.
- ✚ We have incorporated additional hand washing into our daily routines.
- ✚ Children have more time outside
- ✚ Activities are planned ensuring personal space measures (e.g. more tables for coloring, playing across from each other not beside, individual toys available, etc.)
- ✚ Playgrounds are **safe** to play on
- ✚ Windows will be open more often for ventilation
- ✚ General cleaning and disinfecting of the equipment/facility 2-3 times per day.
- ✚ Frequently-touched surfaces cleaned and disinfected at least 2 times per day. (door knobs, light switches, faucet handles, table counters, chairs, toys)
- ✚ We have no dress up at this time
- ✚ Nap mats are spaced further away from each other and bedding sent home weekly.
- ✚ We ask daily upon arrival whether your child has any symptoms of a cold, influenza, Covid-19, or other respiratory disease.
- ✚ The staff remain physical distanced from each other as much as possible.
- ✚ No handshakes, high fives, or hugs. We are doing a “hands to yourself” approach. We will give affection to a child who requires it as their socio-emotional development will always be a priority. Even the Ministry of Health has informed us to keep the children’s emotional needs supported.
- ✚ As the groups get larger, we will separate into smaller groups and stagger outside times, circle times, art times, and move tables to accommodate spaces for snacks/lunch or take them outside (weather permitting).
- ✚ We will only have the staff that work at our facility in our facility to ensure less transmission contact from other adults.
- ✚ We encourage children cough and sneeze into their elbow or use a tissue.
- ✚ We encourage “hands below your shoulders” as not to touch their eyes, nose, or mouth or they must wash hands
- ✚ If there is someone in the household who has Covid-19, been tested for Covid-19, symptoms of Covid-19 or has traveled within the last 14 days, your child must be self-isolated for 14 days before retuning symptom free to the centre.

If you have further questions or concerns about how we are adapting to the Covid-19 pandemic or why we are putting things into practice, please speak to Nancy or Paula. Stay safe! Remember this is for now not forever!

Paula Wangler
Owner