



## COVID-19 Safety Plan

### YMCA of Greater Vancouver – Early Years and Kids Clubs

#### What is COVID-19?

In late 2019, a novel coronavirus is believed to have crossed from animals to people. It has spread quickly between people around the world. COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) primarily targets people ages 70 or older, especially those with significant co-morbidities, such as diabetes, cardio-vascular disease, etc. People may experience a range of symptoms, but the most concerning are fever, cough, loss of taste and difficulty breathing. Most people who get sick will experience relatively minor symptoms and recover fully.

As this is a new virus, there are many unknowns about transmissibility, treatment and prevention methods. However, there is a body of evidence from existing respiratory diseases and previous pandemics to provide guidance, which will be modified as new evidence emerges. The virus is believed to be primarily transmitted by passing from person to person in the form of droplets expelled from symptomatic people to others, either directly or onto hands which then touch the person's mucous membranes (e.g. mouth, nose, eyes). Vaccinations have been shown to be highly effective in mitigating negative health effects for those infected with COVID-19.

The main references for this plan are the current guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control including "[Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings](#)", "[Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)" BC's COVID-19 [self-assessment tool](#), BC's COVID-19 [K-12 self check tool](#), as well as ongoing interactions with Dr. Patricia Daly (Medical Health Officer, Vancouver Coastal Health) and Child Care Licensing.

A copy of our plan is posted to [www.gv.ymca.ca](http://www.gv.ymca.ca) and is available at each one of our centres.

#### Mitigating the spread of COVID-19

Public health has mandated several approaches to slowing the spread of COVID-19.

1. Vaccination
2. Everyone experiencing symptoms (as per [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)), or who has been asked to self-isolate is expected to follow public health guidance.
3. Respiratory and personal hygiene practices (e.g. hand washing, covering coughs)
4. Ensuring spaces have functioning ventilation
5. Cleaning and disinfecting, including "high-touch" surfaces
6. Wearing a [non-medical face mask](#) while indoors.

## Vaccination

The YMCA of Greater Vancouver has mandated that all staff be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Anyone who has a legitimate exemption from this requirement may continue to work, provided they are tested for COVID-19, at least once per week.

## Staying home if symptomatic

Anyone who is newly or actively symptomatic or is under an order to self-isolate (e.g. positive COVID-19 test, recent out of country travel) or are awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test, is not to remain in the centre, until symptoms have satisfactorily resolved.

Sign-in sheets will be kept for at least 45 days.

Parents/caregivers are not allowed to enter child care centres at this time, and sign-in and sign-out is done outside the program area. Parents are expected to follow public health guidance and orders, including keeping their children home, in accordance with any symptoms of concern.

If anyone, who is newly symptomatic (e.g. fever, coughing), needs to remain in the program while awaiting transportation, they will be offered a non-medical mask and directed to a pre-designated area to wait. The supervisor/manager for the program is to be notified, as soon as possible.

## Respiratory and Personal Hygiene

Hand washing with soap and warm water is the preferred method of hand hygiene. Each child care centre has an adequate number of sinks and supplies, for both staff and children. Teaching proper hand-washing is already part of child care programming. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is available at the sign-in table. Staff and children will be given adequate opportunity to wash their hands throughout the day including:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After entering or leaving the facility, including going outside or playing with difficult to clean play objects</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After cleaning or removing garbage</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After using the washroom/changing diapers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Before applying and after removing gloves</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After sneezing into one's hand</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whenever hands get soiled</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Before and after preparing or eating food</li></ul>	

Everyone in a child care centre is reminded to cover their coughs, either by coughing into their elbow, or into a tissue, immediately discarding it and washing their hands. Children are not to assist with food preparation. Food will be served in individual portions on personal dishware. Food and drink sharing is discouraged, as always. Dishes are washed using the 3-step method (clean, rinse, sanitize) or in the program's dishwasher.

Gloves are to be worn while diapering children.

### **Adequate Ventilation**

Each licensed child care space has adequate ventilation which meets the BC building code. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems are inspected and maintained periodically to ensure that the system is providing adequate fresh air as well as regulating heating, cooling and humidity. Staff are to relay any concerns about a building's ventilation to Facilities, their property manager, or the risk team.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting, including shared "high-touch" surfaces**

Surface contamination is not believed to be a significant source of COVID-19 transmission. However regular cleaning is seen as a good practice to reduce the risk. Household bleach, diluted for routine cleaning at 500 mL of water to 5 ml/1 teaspoon bleach) is sufficient to kill a coronavirus, including on food contact surfaces. Rinsing with clean water is not required. For other body fluid contamination (e.g. blood, vomit, feces) a concentrated mix at 10:1 (e.g. 1L of water to 100ml/20 teaspoons of bleach) shall be used. The Daily and Weekly Cleaning Checklist in place at each child care centre outlines areas which require cleaning.

The BC Centre for Disease Control recommends that cleaning and disinfecting of all surfaces should occur once per day. Eating areas should be properly cleaned after each person finishes eating.

Toys and play activities which are difficult to clean and sanitize (e.g. plush toys, sand tables) can be used, provided children wash their hands after finishing play, and before moving to another activity.

### **Wearing of Non-Medical Masks**

Any Kids Club and Early Years staff, as well as any children over the age of 2 may wear a non-medical mask based on personal choice.

### **Site Rules (applies to shared spaces such as schools, malls, office complexes)**

Some sites may have additional rules that go above and beyond what is in this plan. While we will strive to work with the site on these issues, we cannot violate the terms of our service/property agreement, privacy legislation, Child Care Licensing, public health recommendations, or agree to requests which unreasonably impact our operations. When asked, we will inform affected people about these site-specific policies, but we will not take a role in enforcing them. Staff are to forward any notifications about changes in site practices to their manager.

## **Bus Transportation**

There are no special requirements for bus services, at this time.

## **Privacy**

Medical information related to COVID-19 is considered personal information which is to be kept confidential and will be shared on a “need to know” basis. Details about COVID-19 vaccination status, testing, symptoms, absences from programming and possible exposures of staff, children and families are not to be shared, except to program or HR managers, where that information needs to be assessed for operational purposes. Broader disclosure will be done with the advice of the applicable Health Authority and under the direction of the Senior Leadership Team.

## **Staff Training and Communication**

Regular meetings are held with site leaders, and with individual teams to discuss new practices, hear concerns and answer questions.

Periodic emails go out Senior Leadership advising staff of new information. Communication to staff and participant parents/caregivers is done in consultation with the VP of Marketing and Communications.

Stakeholder communication will be guided by best practices, transparency, the YMCA’s values and our mission as a health-focused organization trusted by the public.

All staff, leads, supervisors and managers have access to a Risk Management team who can answer questions, research best practices and provide in-person responses.