Child Care and COVID-19

COVID-19, a new respiratory illness that can spread from person to person, has changed every sector of society including the child care and schooling industry. For many families, the option to care for their child at home or to homeschool is not available. Schools and child care programs are essential services needed at this time. They also have an important role in slowing the spread of diseases to help ensure students have safe and healthy learning environments. Strategies are being established to help keep children safe and healthy while balancing the concerns and adapting to the changes brought on by COVID-19.

Here are a few guidelines the Center for Disease Control (CDC) have recommended to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in school and child care settings. Use this checklist to guide you as you consider using child care during this time.

Ask your pediatrician:

- Speak with your child's pediatrician to review your child's medical history to make sure your child is in good overall health.

Ask your child care provider:

- What are their cleaning and disinfecting procedures?
- Are they following the CDC recommendations for keeping surfaces free of germs?
- How are toys being disinfected?
- What are the screening procedures for children and staff?
- If the center does not take temperatures, will parents be asked to take their child's temperatures each day before drop-off?
- If someone gets sick, will they need to get tested for COVID-19?
- If someone test positive, how long should they stay home from child care?
- In case a child starts feeling ill during the day, is an isolation room established?
- What is the policy for children and staff returning to the facility after they get better?
- What is the center's emergency operations plan if an outbreak occurs?
- Who will have contact with your child?
- Will they be required wear face coverings?
- Will your child stay in their classroom and not mix with other classrooms or groups?
- How will social distancing be enforced?
- Will there be fewer children in each group?
- Will there be changes in how caregivers rotate through the classes?
- Will the center keep children 6 feet apart during meals, snacks, and naps?

If you have any concerns discuss them with your child care provider. This can help you find the right balance and keep your family as safe as possible.

Munshi MD, FAAP, D. (2020). Is it safe to send my child to child care during COVID-19?. Retrieved 16 July 2020, from https://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/ask-the-pediatrician/Pages/Is-it-safe-to-send-my-child-to-child-care-during-COVID-19.aspx

Child Care & Education Tips