

## COVID

### 2021 NECDC PROGRAM PLAN

Group care programs are at risk for illnesses spreading rapidly. All mandated practices have officially ended per the Governor's Executive Orders. All policies and procedures are considered best practices.

\*Note- State health and licensing regulations may supersede CDC recommendations.

NECDC is committed to the health and safety of families, children and staff attending the program.

NECDC will implement best practices to the best of our ability to meet the State of Minnesota Division of Licensing, Centers for Disease Control and MN Department Health recommendations for childcare centers.

#### **PROCEDURE FOR IDENTIFYING ILLNESSES**

##### **Temperatures**

It is recommended that staff take their temperature before arrival daily.

Parents are to monitor their child's temperature prior to arrival. Before a child can be checked in on Brightwheel there are health questions including temperature that should be answered.

While in the classroom, if a child's temp reads **100** – call the office for a second temp check and further instructions.

##### **Illness Documentation**

NECDC uses Employee Illness Log provided by MNCCHC + MDH (Public Health Nurse) to document staff illnesses.

Each child's overall health and demeanor are monitored. Staff check their eyes for any signs of drainage, their noses for drainage whether clear or colored, evaluating if child is coughing or wheezing and their temperature.

DHS guidelines are slightly different than CDC and MDH for the temperature. **DHS designates a temp of 100 degrees on our thermometer for exclusion.**

MDH and DHS recommends centers monitor temperatures and observe for any of the one or more common symptoms associated with the Covid virus. If your child has a new onset or worsening cough or respiratory symptoms such as shortness of breath or wheezing you may be called to pick up your child for a medical evaluation. If your child is sent with an illness note you must have your child seen by your primary care facility. In that event, you must bring a note from your doctor in order to return your child to childcare.

\*\*\*NECDC will follow exclusion guidelines set by DHS not a primary care provider.

##### **Vaccines**

East Side Neighborhood Services strongly encourages ALL STAFF to get vaccinated for COVID to ensure the safety of all ESNS/NECDC clients and staff.

Unvaccinated staff or staff who choose will wear masks during their full shift.

##### **Exclusions**

We recommend sick children and staff stay home. We will use the MDH exclusion decision tree when a child or staff is ill: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf>

If your child has a covid test please send a copy of the results to [mbragg@esns.org](mailto:mbragg@esns.org) or [kodell@esns.org](mailto:kodell@esns.org).

You may also provide a paper copy upon return. All return dates are subject to NECDC guidelines for exclusions.

Children under 12 at this time cannot get vaccinated. The Delta variant (and future identified variants) is spreading very quickly among this age group. Vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals can spread this variant. Individuals may not exhibit symptoms.

### **Masks**

Staff and Parents will wear masks during drop off and pick up hours. Teachers will wear masks from 7:30-9:30 & again 3:00-5:00 pm. Children must see adult mouths for age-appropriate language development. Teachers have the option to wear masks during the day depending on the age of the children in their group.

Our program is also supportive of people who are fully vaccinated, but choose to wear a mask, as a personal choice or because they have a medical condition that may weaken their immune system. NECDC ensures their selected mask use policy does not conflict with local, state, and territorial laws, policies, and regulations.

The organization has received a very large donation of small sized masks that will fit children. These will become available for your child (3-5 years old) to wear.

### **Naptime**

Toddlers will be split in the room with younger children sleeping in the front of the room and older toddlers sleeping in the back of the room. Cots will be spaced as far apart as possible to maintain visual supervision.

Preschool will be split in separate areas in the classroom.

The children will remain with their primary teacher unless the center must secure a substitute. Substitutes will wear masks during their shift.

### **Social Distancing**

Because of the essential service that NECDC provides, we should not exclude children from in-person care to keep a minimum distance requirement.

Maintaining physical distance is often not feasible in a group care settings, especially during certain activities (e.g., diapering, feeding, holding/comforting, etc.) and among younger children in general. When it is not possible to maintain physical distance in group care settings, it is especially important to layer multiple prevention strategies, such as cohorting, improved ventilation, handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and regular cleaning to help reduce transmission risk.

Mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is particularly important when physical distance cannot be maintained. A distance of at least 6 feet is recommended between adults who are not fully vaccinated.

### **Drop off & Pick up**

Parents are not allowed in the classrooms. Drop off is at the outside doors to the classroom. Infants will enter from 2<sup>nd</sup> streetside. Parents will ring the doorbell. Toddlers and Preschool enter through the play yard and ring the doorbells. There is a QR code for parents to use for check in/out and to enter their child's daily health info.

## **WORKPLACE – ENVIRONMENT SANITIZING AND CLEANING**

NECDC will observe cleaning procedures in as many aspects of programming as possible to eliminate spreading germs.

### **Tablets**

1 staff person per tablet is identified in each age group to use the tablets.

All tablets are wiped down with sanitizing cloths.

### **Cleaning**

All children's tables are cleaned before use with a 3-step process. Soap and water first, plain water second and bleach solution final step to sanitize.

Staff will use disinfecting wipes on the staff room table before and after they eat.

MDH issued a new stronger bleach solution that is recommended to sanitize and kill Covid 19. We will continue to use this at the end of each day. Classrooms will get a fresh mixture daily.

These spray bottles are marked with a bold black **X**.

All bottles for cleaning are kept at a minimum of 5 feet off the floor.

One staff person per room will be designated to spray down the room once children have left for the day. This is used **ONLY** at the end of each day on every surface including doorknobs, frames, chairs, tables, changing stations, floors, and toys.

Staff will continue to use the 3-bottle method of cleaning tables before and after meals, cleaning up spills etc.

Maintenance will work with NECDC administration for using the positive ion fogger in classrooms.

### **Drop off & Pick up**

Parents will continue to drop off and pick up using the outside doors.

Infant staff will meet the parent and baby and take all supplies and put them away.

Parents are to ring the doorbell. Classroom staff will open the door and guide the children in. Goodbyes are done at the door.

Teachers assist the child putting away their coat, clothes, diapers and changing their shoes.

All staff will wash their hands upon starting their shift in the room.

All children will wash their hands immediately after hanging up coats, jackets as needed.

There is a QR code for parents to use and enter daily health info.

### **Limiting the room usage.**

For toddlers and preschoolers:

At arrival and departure each day classrooms will have activities set out at separate tables per group. Only the children from that group will play at that table with the specific toys.

All games, puzzles, cars, trucks, blocks that are used for drop off will be fully sanitized before putting away.

### **Items for cubby and nap**

1. Staff will give you notice for extra clothes/diapers/wipes.
2. Limit toys or stuffed animals which may be brought from home into the classrooms. Teachers discretion.
3. Center will continue to launder blankets on a weekly basis.

### **OUTDOOR Play**

Children will go on walks daily as well as play in the fenced in play area. Teachers will divide their group up into smaller groups and rotate them through play areas.

### **All practices are subject to amendments.**

Enrollment in classroom has changed and NECDC will make every effort to maintain social distancing.

### **Classroom space**

Infants have redesigned their environment to accommodate space for older infants and younger infants.

Toddlers have redesigned their environment to divide younger and older infants and rotate inside and outside.

Preschool has redesigned their environment to make 3 distinct areas for their groups to utilize in the classroom.

### **Additional information**

MDH's [testing recommendations](#) for various situations; this chart breaks down testing recommendations for not fully vaccinated and fully vaccinated individuals.

When a case of Covid is reported to the center or to the Health Department a form is sent with information to them. If you would like to see a fake report let the office know.

Finally, here is [information](#) from the CDC regarding COVID-19 guidance and best practices for schools and childcare programs. Remember these are recommendations and best practices and the state guidelines supersede the CDC in some situations.