



Child and Family  
Development

## YMCA Child Care/Before & After School Program

### Revised Parent Handbook Guidelines for COVID-19

YMCA Child Care Guidelines for COVID-19 are aligned with all Ministry of Education Child Care and Early Years Licensing Branch and local Public Health guidance, and follow the most current recommendations provided by the Ministry of Health. The YMCA has trained all staff to implement the following measures that will reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious illness within the center. These guidelines are subject to change as per the direction of the Ministry of Education Child Care and Early Years Licensing Branch and local Public Health units.

#### How You as a Parent Can Help

Screen your child for illness every morning, including taking their temperature, using the [Ministry of Health COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children in School and Child Care](#). If your child is ill with any of the following symptoms, or has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days, or has been in close contact with a suspected or confirmed positive case of COVID-19, please keep your child home and follow the guidance in the following chart.

<p>1. If your child has any of the following <b>new or worsening</b> symptoms*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever and/or chills (temperature of 37.8°C/100.0°F or greater)</li> <li>• Cough</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Decreased or loss of smell or taste</li> </ul> <p>*Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. asthma)</p>	<p><b>Your child should stay home to isolate immediately.</b></p> <p>Contact your child’s health care provider for further advice or assessment. The health care provider can help you determine whether the symptoms are related to another non-COVID-19 condition, or if they should get tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>Report your child’s absence, including their symptoms and whether they are being/have been tested for COVID-19, to the YMCA.</p> <p>If the ill child has a sibling who attends the same centre, the sibling can continue to attend the centre as long as they not experiencing symptoms of ill health.</p>
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	<p>You do not need a note from the doctor or proof of a negative COVID-19 test before your child returns to the YMCA.</p>
<p>2. If your child has <b>ONLY ONE</b> of the following <b>new or worsening</b> symptoms*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sore throat</li> <li>• Stuffy/congested/runny nose</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea</li> <li>• Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches/malaise</li> </ul> <p>*Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. asthma, seasonal allergies, returning inside from the cold, migraines, irritable bowel syndrome, side effect of medication)</p>	<p><b>Your child should stay home for 24 hours from when the symptoms started and have their symptoms closely monitored.</b></p> <p>If the symptom is improving, your child may return to the YMCA when they feel well enough to do so. Mild symptoms may be ongoing at time of their return to child care. A negative COVID-19 test is not required to return.</p> <p>If the symptom persists or worsens, contact your child’s health care provider for further advice or assessment. The health care provider can help you determine whether the symptoms are related to another non-COVID-19 condition, or if they should get tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>Report your child’s absence, including their symptoms and whether they are being/have been tested for COVID-19, to the YMCA.</p> <p>If the ill child has a sibling who attends the same centre, the sibling can continue to attend the centre as long as they not experiencing symptoms of ill health.</p> <p>You do not need a note from the doctor or proof of a negative COVID-19 test before your child returns to the YMCA.</p>
<p>3. If your child has <b>TWO OR MORE</b> of the following <b>new or worsening</b> symptoms *:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sore throat</li> <li>• Stuffy/congested/runny nose</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea</li> <li>• Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches/malaise</li> </ul> <p>*Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. seasonal allergies, returning</p>	<p><b>Your child should stay home to isolate immediately.</b></p> <p>Contact your child’s health care provider for further advice or assessment. The health care provider can help you determine whether the symptoms are related to another non-COVID-19 condition, or if they should get tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>Report your child’s absence, including their</p>

<p>inside from the cold, migraines, irritable bowel syndrome, side effect of medication)</p>	<p>symptoms and whether they are being/have been tested for COVID-19, to the YMCA.</p> <p>If the ill child has a sibling who attends the same centre, the sibling can continue to attend the centre as long as they not experiencing symptoms of ill health.</p> <p>You do not need a note from the doctor or proof of a negative COVID-19 test before your child returns to the YMCA.</p>
<p>4. If your child has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days</li> <li>• Been identified as a close contact of someone who is confirmed as having COVID-19 by Public Health (or from the COVID Alert app if they have their own phone)</li> <li>• Been directed by a health care provider, including a Public Health official, to isolate</li> </ul>	<p><b>Your child should stay home to isolate immediately</b> and follow the advice of Public Health.</p> <p>If your child develops symptoms, contact your child’s health care provider for further advice or assessment, including if your child needs a COVID-19 test.</p> <p>Report your child’s absence, including their symptoms and whether they are being/have been tested for COVID-19, to the YMCA.</p> <p>If the child has a sibling who attends the same centre, the sibling can continue to attend the centre as long as they are not experiencing symptoms of ill health and the three examples to the left do not apply.</p>

## Curriculum & Programming

The YMCA will continue to deliver our Playing to Learn and A Place to Connect play-based curriculum in our centers. Some adjustments will be made to observe physical distancing. Examples include:

- Same group of children will stay together and not mix with other groups
- Same staff will be assigned to one group of children
- Toys or equipment that are difficult to clean and disinfect will be stored or use will be monitored to ensure children wash their hands before and after using (e.g. plush toys, dress-up clothes, puppets, books, board games)
- Craft materials will be provided in individual kits/baskets for each child
- Sensory materials, like playdough or goop, will be provided in individual containers and discarded after each child’s use

- Where possible, outdoor playtime will be increased
- Staff will incorporate fun learning activities that teach children about physical distancing and personal hygiene

## **Program Procedure Changes**

### **Daily Screening Process**

Each day before entering the YMCA program, all individuals (i.e. parents, children, staff, students) will be asked the questions on the [Ministry of Health COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children in School and Child Care](#). Each YMCA program has a screening plan in place that meets the requirements of the local Public Health unit and that that may include: emailing or texting your screening results from home, or answering the screening questions face-to-face or over the phone. Your program Supervisor will provide you will specific details on the process.

Each individual entering the YMCA program may also be required to report their temperature. Depending on the requirement of the local Public Health unit, you may be able to take your child's temperature at home and self-report, or the YMCA program staff will assist you in taking your child's temperature when you arrive.

If your child does not pass all the screening questions, they will not be permitted to enter the center. See **How You as a Parent Can Help** above for next steps. If a child does not pass screening, but their sibling does pass, the sibling can attend the YMCA program. Please Note: Peel Region requires siblings to be excluded depending on the particular symptoms.

If your child is healthy, and screening is completed, a staff member will meet you at the front entrance and escort your child to their room. Parents will not be permitted to enter the center.

### **Cleaning & Disinfecting**

The YMCA has implemented enhanced cleaning and disinfecting measures to help reduce the spread of illness. Staff members are scheduled to clean and disinfect rooms, toys and equipment while each group is playing outdoors. A schedule of the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting required has been recommended by Public Health. High touch areas, including door handles, sinks, toilets, and toys, are cleaned and disinfected more frequently each day. Anytime a child places a toy in their mouth or coughs/sneezes on a toy, it is taken out of rotation until it can be cleaned and disinfected. Before & After School Program rooms, toys, and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected before the core school day commences, and at the end of the core school day before the YMCA program commences.

### **Personal Hygiene**

Staff and children follow a routine of **hand washing** with soap and water throughout the day. For example, we wash our hands when we arrive at the center, after using the washroom, before

and after eating, before and after playing outdoors, and after using a tissue. Staff schedule hand washing routines into the day and plan fun activities and rhymes to teach children how to properly wash their hands.

When running water is not available (e.g. outdoors), children over the age of 2 years use **hand sanitizer**. Staff monitor children using hand sanitizer to ensure it is applied safely.

Staff practice how to **cough and sneeze** into the arm or shoulder with children. Anytime a child uses a tissue, they are taught to discard the tissue in a garbage bin and to wash their hands.

As much as possible, staff will remind children to avoid touching their face, eyes, nose and mouth.

Please ensure all your child's personal items, including water bottles, creams, lotions, and diapers, are labelled with your child's name. All personal items will be stored in an individual container and/or cubby just for your child.

### **If a Child Becomes Ill at the Centre;**

In the event a child shows any signs or symptoms of illness that cannot be explained (e.g. teething, seasonal allergies), the parent will be called to immediately pick-up their child. If the parent is not available by phone, their emergency contact will be called. While the child waits to be picked-up, they will be separated from the other children and staff (isolation) and supervised by one staff member. The staff member will wear a mask, eye protection and any other required personal protective equipment, and children over the age of 2 years who can tolerate a mask will be asked to wear one.

If the ill child has a sibling that also attends a YMCA program, the sibling will only be sent home if they also have symptoms of illness. Note: Peel Region requires siblings to be excluded depending on the particular symptoms.

### **If Staff Becomes Ill at the Center;**

If a staff member becomes ill at the center, they will be separated from children and other staff and sent home immediately.

### **Reporting Suspected Cases of COeVID-19 & Testing**

The YMCA is required to report any positive cases of COVID-19 to Public Health. Public Health will advise the program Supervisor and parent of any requirements for testing and/or self-isolation. One case of COVID-19 does not necessarily result in a center being closed. Public Health will conduct contact tracing to determine who the individual came in close contact with at the center and will determine the requirement for closure of a room or center based on their findings. All parents will be informed if there is a positive case of COVID-19 in the YMCA

program and reminded to monitor their child for symptoms of COVID-19 if a child in their group is sent for testing.

The YMCA is also required to report any suspected cases where testing is conducted and positive cases of COVID-19 to the Ministry of Education. A notification for parents will be posted for your information.

## **Masks**

### **Child Care and Before & After School Program Staff**

All staff are required to wear a medical mask and eye protection while indoors. The use of face masks and shields is not required when eating, during physical activity, or outdoors if physical distancing of 2-meters can be maintained between individuals.

### **Children 2-4 years – Full Day Child Care Program**

Children 0-4 years of age registered in a Full Day Child Care program are not required to wear masks. There are many other practices recommended by Public Health being implemented (e.g. screening, keeping the same children and staff together, providing individual activity materials, increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting, and hand washing) that are designed to protect children from illness.

Public Health does not permit children under 2 years of age to wear masks.

If you wish for your child to wear a mask, the staff will help your child to understand the proper method to put on/take off a mask to prevent spreading illness.

### **Children 4-12 years of age – Before & After School Program**

Children in grades 4 and above are required by the Ministry of Education to wear a non-medical or cloth facemask while inside the school and Before & After School Program. The Ministry of Education recommends that all children in Kindergarten to Grade 2 also wear masks indoors but it is not a requirement.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing their child with a mask.

Some school boards may require students in Kindergarten to grade 3 to wear a mask indoors. In this case, the YMCA will follow the school board's requirement in the Before & After School Program.

If your child has a medical exemption from the school board stating they do not need to wear a mask at school, the YMCA will follow the school board's exemption in the Before & After School Program.

The use of facemasks is not required when eating, during physical activity, or outdoors if physical distancing of 2-meters can be maintained between individuals.

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## **Nutrition**

### **0-3.8 years**

Children will continue to be provided with snacks and lunches from our catering partners. Staff will be responsible for serving all foods and drinks to children, and bowls of food will be kept out of the reach of children on a cart or counter. Parents are required to put all feeding instructions in writing for children under 1 year of age. Please do not send any food from home unless approved by the staff, and labelled with your child's name.

### **4-12 years**

Children will be provided with a morning and afternoon snack. Staff will be responsible for serving all food and drinks to children, and bowls of food will be kept out of the reach of children on a cart or counter. Parents will be required to provide their child with a bagged lunch on professional activity days. Please ensure all containers are labelled with your child's name, and that any products that contain or may have come in contact with nuts are not sent. Most centers have limited fridge space, so we advise you to include an ice pack in your child's lunch.

## **Visitors, Field Trips and Special Guests**

All special activities, including field trips, special guests that do presentations, and visitors, are suspended until further notice. As the situation improves, and Public Health advises, community activities will be reconsidered. Children can continue to take neighborhood walks, as long as physical distancing is maintained from members of the public.

## **Pick-Up**

At the end of each day, parents are asked to call the center phone number when they arrive. A staff member will escort their child to the front entrance for pick-up.

## **Absence from Care during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Fees will be credited toward future payments for up to 5 days, per occurrence, for absences due to any of the symptoms listed below (based on the [Ministry of Health COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children in School and Child Care](#)) related to COVID- 19 or when testing has occurred:

**If your child has new or worsening symptoms, or symptoms different from known causes or conditions:**

- Fever and/or chills (temperature of 37.8°C/100.0°F or greater)
- Cough including croup (barking cough, making a whistling noise when breathing)
- Shortness of breath (out of breath, unable to breathe deeply)

- Decrease or loss of smell or taste

**If your child has ONE or MORE new or worsening symptoms, or symptoms different from known causes or conditions:**

- Sore throat (painful swallowing or difficulty swallowing)
- Stuffy nose/or runny nose (nasal congestion)
- Headache (persistent, unusual, unexplained, or long-lasting)
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Fatigue, lethargy, muscle aches or malaise (general feeling of being unwell, lack of energy, extreme tiredness, poor feeding in infants)

### **Positive Case of COVID-19:**

Fees will be credited toward future payments for the period of exclusion up to 14 days, determined by Public Health unit, for absences due to isolation related to a positive case of COVID-19.

- If your enrolled child has been confirmed as having COVID-19 (positive) by Public Health
- If your enrolled child has been identified as a close contact of someone who is confirmed as having COVID-19 (positive) by Public Health

### **Closure Due to Positive Case of COVID-19**

Fees will be credited toward future payments for the period of exclusion up to 14 days, determined by Public Health, for absences due to isolation related to a program or centre closure due to close contact with a positive case of COVID-19.

- If your enrolled child's YMCA program or school classroom is ordered to close by Public Health due to close contact with a positive case of COVID-19, fees will be credited toward future payments for up to 14 days. YMCA will credit fees only for the days of closure.
- If your enrolled child develops symptoms of COVID-19 and they are waiting for test results, the YMCA will credit up to an additional 5 days beyond the credit for the closure ordered by Public Health while the child waits for test results.

**Fees will not be credited** for the following circumstances:

- If your child has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days or has come in close contact with someone who has travelled outside Canada in the past 14 days (e.g. anyone living in the household who has travelled outside Canada in the past 14 days, or your household has hosted visitors from outside of Canada in the past 14 days).
- If a health care provider or Public Health recommend your child be tested for COVID-19, and you opt out of having your child tested, then your child must isolate for 14 days before they can return to the YMCA program. Note: Fees will be credited for the first 5 days of the isolation period.



- If a parent/guardian chooses to continue isolation, even though Public Health has authorized reopening of the YMCA or school. Note: Fees will be credited only for the days Public Health ordered closure.
- During a closure, if a parent/guardian chooses to keep a sibling home not effected by the closed classroom. Note: Fees will only be credited for the child in the closed classroom.

### **Withdrawal Notification**

If you choose to withdraw your child from the YMCA, 10 days' notice of withdrawal is required. Withdrawal notices can be submitted online using the [Registration Change Form](#). Payments will be adjusted upon receipt of the withdrawal notification.

Withdrawal notifications received with less than 10 days' notice will be charged for the 10-day period.

\*Please note: Families receiving municipal child care subsidy are also required to provide 10-day notice of withdrawal