

St. Paul Lutheran YKT Child Care Center/The Learning Garden

COVID-19 Policies and Procedures

St. Paul Lutheran YKT Child Care Center/The Learning Garden follows all the policies and procedures to keep everyone safe from COVID-19. Below you will find many of the additional policies and practices that we must abide by along with our normal minimum standards from licensing.

One thing is for certain: childcare is essential; however, the threat of contacting COVID-19 is still here. We do ask that families make good healthy choices at home to keep all of us out of risk. Our main goal is keeping our staff and the children that attend our center safe.

Parents or guardians should monitor the health of their child and not send them to the center if they are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. Parents or guardians should seek COVID-19 testing promptly and report positive results to the center given the implications for other children, families, and staff.

Tracie Fielding, our Center Director, is available even after hours for questions or concerns. You can contact her by email at tfielding@learninggardenykt.com or by using the HiMama App.

The Learning Garden Drop-Off and Pick-Up Measures:

- Drop-Off – In Classrooms ~ Please be patient you may have to wait if we are busy with other families.
 - Use the Sanitization Station at the entrance.
 - Health Screening
 - Sign-In Your Children
- Pick-Up – In Classrooms ~ Please be patient you may have to wait if we are busy with other families.
 - Use the Sanitization Station at the entrance.
 - Sign-Out Your Children

The Learning Garden Meal Times and Areas:

- Infants ~ Stay in their classrooms.
 - Follow feeding schedules.
- Toddlers, and Two-Year-Olds ~ Eat in their classrooms.
 - Breakfast ~ 8:00AM
 - Lunch ~ 11:00AM
 - Snack ~ 3:00PM
- Preschool, Prekindergarten, and After School ~ Eat in their classrooms.
 - Breakfast ~ 8:30AM
 - Lunch ~ 11:30AM
 - Snack ~ 3:30PM

Based on the CDC guidance, we have created a plan for our child care center by using the following prevention measures:

- Federal and State health protocols for serving children in child care:
- Operate the child care in accordance with the Guidance for Child Care Programs to Remain Open from the CDC.

Prevention Measure:

I. Implement social distancing strategies – social distancing focuses on remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance from others when possible.

- When possible, our employees are to maintain at least 6 feet of separation from other individuals. When distancing is not feasible, other measures such as good hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation will be rigorously practiced.
- If possible, child care classes will include the same group of children each day, and the same child care providers will remain with the same group each day.
- At naptime children's naptime mats (or cribs) will be spaced out as much as possible. (Ideally 6 feet apart however, that is not always possible so at least have them 3 feet apart.)
- We will be minimizing time standing in lines, keeping children at safe distances apart from each other.
- During carpet time, table time, lunch, etc. we will leave a space in between each child when possible.

II. Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts

- Our center is following intensified cleaning and disinfecting efforts during COVID-19 by following CDC guidance and Minimum Standards from Licensing.
- Each teacher will have their own group of children that they work with between the hours of 9am and 4pm to limit cross contamination unless it is not possible.
- Playground equipment is sanitized after each use by following the guidelines outlined to us.
- Cleaning products are not being used near children, and staff are ensuring that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.
- We are continuing to implement our schedule for regular cleaning and disinfecting that we have always used however, now staff are to write down the time it was done and initial that it was done.
- Routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games.
- Clean objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap pads, desks, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- Bathrooms are cleaned regularly throughout the day, at a minimum twice a day by the teachers and then in the evening by the housekeeper.
- Cleaning products are used according to the directions on the label. We are following the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method, and contact time for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- When surfaces are dirty, they are cleaned using the process we are required to use from licensing.
- When possible, we will provide EPA-registered disposable wipes to our staff members so that commonly used surfaces such as keyboards, desks, and remote controls can be wiped down before use.
- All cleaning materials are kept secure and out of reach of children.

- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions are placed in the classrooms disinfecting tub until they are cleaned and disinfected by hand by a staff member wearing gloves. (Licensing 4 step process is used)
- Machine washable cloth toys are used by one individual at a time and will be laundered before being used by another child.
- Toys are not shared with other groups unless they are washed and sanitized before moved to another group.
- Toys will be set aside that need to be cleaned. All classrooms have disinfecting tubs and hampers to place those toys in. They are not to be put back out until they have been properly cleaned.
- Children's books and other paper materials will be rotated when used in the classroom. They will be taken out after each use and not used for at least 36 hours.
- Families are to provide the center with a child size fleece blanket with the child's initials on the tag that can be left at the center. Blankets are to be taken home of Friday's to launder.
- Blankets are stored in the child's blanket bin separate from other blankets.

III. Modify drop-off and pick up procedures

- Pick-up and drop-off of children is in the child's classroom.
- If you arrive while another family is here dropping off their children, please use social distancing and stand where we have placed signs.
- Hand sanitizer will be available to you upon arrival to use before you sign your child in and out each day.
- If possible, we ask that older people such as grandparents should not pick up children since they are more at risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

IV. Implement screening procedures upon arrival

- The following individuals must be screened every day before entering the facility:
 - Operations staff;
 - Persons with legal authority to enter, including law enforcement officers, Texas Rising Star staff, Licensing staff, and Department of Family and Protective Services staff;
 - Professionals providing services for children;
 - Parents and those on pick up lists who have children enrolled and present at the operation
- We are taking precautions to protect our staff while conducting temperature screenings.
- Temperature screenings
 - Any person who have a fever of 100° or above shall not be allowed to stay at center
- Any person being screened who has any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19 will be sent home:
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache

- Sore throat
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Diarrhea
 - Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100°
 - Known close contact with a person who has come in contact with someone exposed to COVID-19 or that is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19
- Any employees or children with any of the above symptoms cannot come back to the center for at least 3 days (72 hours) unless they have been evaluated by a medical professional and present a note what they were diagnosed with and that they are cleared to return to the center.
 - If any employee or child who has symptoms of COVID-19 they must be evaluated by a medical professional and present a note clearing the individual before they can return, or they will be placed on a 14-day quarantine.
 - If any employee, family, or child believe they have had close contact to someone with COVID-19 but are not currently sick, they should monitor their health for the above symptoms during the 14 days after the last day they were in close contact with the individual with COVID-19.

Preventative Health Measure

1. Require sick children and staff to stay home

- If your child is sick, it is important to keep them home.
- Children who are in close contacts of COVID-19 positive individuals, especially household members, should stay at home even if they do not have symptoms.
- Staff should stay vigilant for symptoms and stay in touch with the center Director if or when they start to feel sick.
- Children and staff who come to the center sick or become sick while at the center will be sent home as soon as possible.
- Sick children and staff will be separated from well children and staff until can be sent home.
- Sick staff members should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- We will provide as much guidance as we can to our families during this time.

2. Our plan if someone is or becomes sick

- When a child or staff member becomes sick, they will be taken to an isolated area away from other children and staff until they can go home.
- We will follow CDC guidance and licensing standards on how to disinfect our center when someone becomes sick at our center.
- When a sick child has been isolated in our center, clean and disinfect surfaces in the area that we isolated them in until they have gone home.

3. If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member

- We are to contact our local health authority to report the presence of COVID-19 in our facility. Our local health authority will advise us on re-opening procedures.
- We are to then contact Child Care Licensing to report the presence of COVID-19 in our facility.
- We are to close areas used by the person who is sick.
- We are to open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.

- We are to wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before we clean or disinfect to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
- We are to clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
- If more than 7 days have passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
- We are to continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

4. Monitor and plan for absenteeism among your staff

- We have developed plans to cover classes in the event of increased staff absences by using our extra staff and our substitute.
- If we have more staff out than we have in extra staff or the substitute we will have to do what is necessary for us to meet ratios even if that means having to close the center for the day or until we have enough staff to meet ratios.

Caring for Infants and Toddlers:

1. Diapering

- Each diaper changing area has the procedures that are to be followed posted in the changing area.
- Staff and Children's hands are washed before and after each diaper change.
- Gloves are used and changed between each child.
- Surfaces are sanitized between each diaper change.
- If reusable cloth diapers are used, they are not rinsed or cleaned in the facility. The soiled cloth diaper and its contents (without emptying or rinsing) are placed in a plastic bag or into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered diaper pail to give to parents at the end of each day.

2. Washing, feeding, or holding a child

- Staff are to wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Staff are to change the child's clothes if secretions are on the clothing as well as their own clothing and wash their hands.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag and taken home to wash.
- Infants, toddlers, and their providers are to have multiple changes of clothes on hand at the center. Children are not allowed to wear other children's clothes.
- Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment (example bottle warmers) used for bottle-feeding should be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing with a bottle brush, soap, water, and using the bottle sterilizer. Sippy cups should be cleaned after each use by washing in the dish washer.
- Each child should have at the least 2 bottles or sippy cups here at the center at all times.

3. Healthy hand hygiene

- All children, staff, and visitors that are allowed in the center should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:
 - Arrival to the facility and after breaks
 - Before and after preparing food or drinks
 - Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
 - Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
 - Before and after diapering
 - After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom

- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After playing outdoors or in sand
- After handling garbage
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Each hand washing area have posters with procedures to follow as well as songs that can be sung with the child to insure, they are washing for 20 seconds.)
- Assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone.
- After assisting children with handwashing, staff should also wash their hands.
- Hand sanitizers are to only be used if you a sink is not available. Children under 2 years old are NOT allowed to use hand sanitizer.

4. Transporting your children to and from the center

- We do not transport children at our center however, parents do every day. Here are some tips to help stop the spread of germs and COVID-19.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting:
 - ✓ Open the windows and let the vehicle air out.
 - ✓ Clean vehicles after each use.
 - ✓ Disinfect the inside of the vehicle but keep windows open when you do so to prevent buildup of chemicals that could cause eye and respiratory problems.

5. Food preparation

- We do not serve family style meals
- No outside food or drinks
- Sinks used for food preparation are only used for that purpose.
- Caregivers ensure children wash their hands before and after meals.
- Caregivers wash their hands and wear gloves in the meal area.
- We follow all applicable federal, state, and local regulations and guidance related to safe preparation of food.

6. Training

- All our staff are required to take health and safety training related to COVID-19 through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension.

7. Staff members at risk for COVID-19

- Those staff that are in the higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are given the choice if they would like to continue working or take a leave of absence.
- If they decide to take a leave of absence they can come back to work when they feel comfortable to do so.

Policies may be updated and changed at any notice. If this happens you will be given notice of these changes.