



PARENT HANDBOOK FOR CHILDCARE UNDER COVID-19

1. RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Sunflower Montessori is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of your children, our staff, partners, and the community.

We are closely monitoring the evolving COVID-19 situation and will respond appropriately as per the recommendations from Toronto Public Health, the Ministry of Health, Health Canada and additional relevant authorities.

While infection prevention and control (IPAC) has always been an integral part of our child care culture, we have adapted and enhanced our policies and procedures in response to COVID-19 to mitigate risk and ensure the health and safety of all.

The following practices will be in place:

a. Screening

- Staff will complete a 2-part health check prior to each shift: once by telephone and again prior to entry into the facility.
- Children will be screened before entering the child care centre.
- An isolated screening area at the entrance of the child care centre will be in place whereby only one parent can enter the screening area with their child/children. Only one entrance/exit will be used to ensure effective screening practices.

b. Monitoring

- Children will be monitored throughout the day for COVID-19 related symptoms.
- Staff will self-monitor for COVID-19 related symptoms.

c. Infection Prevention

- Staff will receive thorough enhanced infection prevention and control, health and safety training. Training will be frequently updated and provided to ensure best practices and consistency.
- Staff will be required to wear masks or appropriate face-coverings.
- Staff will ensure cleanliness and sanitization of shared spaces or high-touch areas, including sanitization of objects and/or belongings entering the child care centre.
- Staff will ensure children are able to practice social distancing and infection prevention and control practices such as proper handwashing technique.
- There will be enhanced consistent communication around health, safety, and infection among staff but also between staff and parents.
- Prevention and control practices will be shared with families for use at the child care centre and at home.
- Procedures will be updated and revised regularly to ensure best practices in accordance with Public Health authorities.

2. HOURS OF OPERATION

a. Drop-Off Procedure

To ensure health and safety as well as stringent infection prevention and control practices, we will receive your child at **the front entrance** of the child care centre.

At this time, our staff will greet you and health screen your child. We will also receive and disinfect belongings at this time. We understand that this may feel unsettling but this is a necessary step to ensure the health and safety of all, and that the childcare setting remains free of infection.

b. Pick-Up Procedure

Please share instructions and/or custody arrangements with the Supervisor concerning pick-up or access to your child and ensure we are notified of any changes.

We require legal documentation concerning custody arrangements and we will only release your child to individuals that have been authorized for pick-up. When necessary we will confirm identity by requesting government-issued identification.

When you (or your designate) arrive at the centre to pick up your child, we will verify your identity and bring your child to you at **the front entrance** of the childcare centre. This practice is used to ensure physical distancing protocol.

3. ILLNESS

Staff will complete a basic health check and screening to ensure your child is asymptomatic when they arrive. Your child will also be monitored throughout the day.

If you or your child are being managed by Toronto Public Health, (e.g., confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) follow instructions from TPH to determine when to return to the facility.

a. At Home

If your child exhibits illness symptoms at home (e.g. sore throat, stomach ache, headache, cough, lethargy, change in appetite) your child should not attend care and should remain home and isolate for 14 days. If symptoms persist on the 14th day, please contact the Supervisor for further direction.

b. At the Centre

If your child becomes sick at the centre, they will be separated in an isolation room and supervised by one of our staff members. We will notify you to pick up your child. If it is appropriate and feasible, we will place a mask on your child. If your child requires immediate medical attention, your child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance and examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner.

4. IMMUNIZATION

We are required to collect and retain up-to-date immunization for children in our care. Please provide us with current immunization information.

If your child has not been immunized, please provide the Statement of Medical Exemption form completed by your health practitioner. You may also complete the Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief form, which requires a signature by a Commissioner of Oath.

If you cannot provide either of these documents, we are unable to provide you with emergency childcare.

If an outbreak occurs, a child who is not adequately immunized will not be able to attend care unless the child receives the required vaccine or until the outbreak is over.

5. MEDICATION

For the safety of the children, **all medication must be handed directly to the staff** so that it can be securely stored away from the children's reach.

a. Prescription

Our staff will only administer prescription medication. Prescription medication must be provided in the original bottle/packaging, clearly labeled with your child's name and instructions for administering. Parents must complete and sign the appropriate medication administration form before the medication can be administered by our staff. Please try to minimize the amount of medication that is administered at the child care centre.

b) Non-Prescription

Non-prescription or over-the-counter medication must be accompanied by a written prescription by a medical practitioner outlining the exact dosage and time(s) to be given and symptoms of when to administer the medication.

c) Individual Medical Plan

An Individual Medical Plan will be developed and put in place for any child requiring medication for a chronic or acute condition or diagnosis or who requires medication on an emergency basis. All Individual Medical Plans will be developed in partnership with the child's parent/guardian.

6. ALLERGIES AND ANAPHYLAXIS

If your child requires an auto-injector due to a severe allergy, it must accompany them into care. **We require specific, written details of your child's allergy and symptoms** of an allergic reaction from a medical practitioner including a prescribed epinephrine auto-injector.

All allergies will be listed in our program to ensure all employees can respond appropriately to any potential reactions. Please let us know if your child has an allergy that requires the administration of an auto-injector.

7. ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

If your child has an accident or injury at home, please inform the staff when you drop off your child the following day, so we are aware of the incident.

a. Responding To

Despite close supervision at our centres, accidents may occur. If your child is injured at the centre, the staff will provide immediate first aid. If the situation requires attention beyond basic first aid, we will contact you or the emergency contact person on file. If required, we will call 911. If your child experiences a head or other serious injury, you will be contacted.

b. Documenting

Staff will provide you with an accident report documenting the accident or injury. A parent or guardian's signature is required at the bottom of the form to verify that you were informed of the accident/injury. A copy of the signed report will be provided to you.

8. NUTRITION

9. CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please provide us with everything your child requires on a daily basis. This includes diapers, diaper cream, bottles, soothers, indoor and outdoor clothing, toys and stuffies (that can be easily disinfected), and sleeping security items.

a. Outdoor Play and Proper Attire

Outdoor time will be used to support our efforts to maintain physical distance requirements and support children's immune systems. It is important that children be dressed for various types of weather to ensure they can actively participate in the outdoor program. Please ensure that adequate and suitable clothing and footwear is provided as well as individually labeled sunscreen.

10. RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT

Everyone has the right to feel safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment and discrimination **will not be tolerated**. This is an expectation of everyone entering into any of the centres. Failure to adhere to this expectation may result in denied access to the centre.

If a parent/guardian or employee feels threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Supervisor.

11. COMPLAINTS

We monitor complaints and use them to improve the quality of service we provide. Complaints are treated confidentially and steps are taken to help protect your privacy.

a. Submitting Concerns or Complaints

If you have a concern or complaint concerning your child's care, we encourage you to speak directly to the Supervisor of your child's program. If after this, you feel your concern or complaint has not been addressed or resolved to your satisfaction or you prefer to speak to someone else, you may contact the Director. If after this, you wish to escalate your complaint, you can call...

b. Written Complaints

All written complaints will be responded to in writing.

c. Verbal Complaints

If you are making a verbal complaint, you may be asked to put your complaint in writing, especially if it involves a serious or complex matter.

d. Resolving Complaints

Complaints are reviewed promptly and we attempt to resolve them quickly. You will be informed when a decision is made and provided with an explanation for the decision. Complaints involving staff conduct will be

investigated and you will be informed when it is resolved; however, no disciplinary information can be shared.

While there are certain steps that need to be taken to ensure fairness for all concerned in a given complaint, there can be unavoidable delays. However, we treat each case in as prompt and thorough a manner as is possible.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, and staff, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

13. DUTY TO REPORT

We have a duty to report suspicions of and/or disclosure of child abuse. If the Supervisor and/or staff of the centre have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may have been abused, the suspicion and the information upon which that suspicion is based, **must** be reported immediately to the Children's Aid Society.

A professional who works with children can be charged and fined for failing to report. It is the responsibility of the child protection agency to investigate and follow-up on the situation, as necessary.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected while in our care, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. Any concern or complaint made by a parent or visitor that suggests an allegation of abuse will be reported to a local Children's Aid Society by the staff who received the complaint.

14. BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

Our staff use behaviour guidance strategies that support children to develop appropriate social and emotional skills. Sunflower Montessori and the Child Care and Early Years Act prohibit the following practices:

Corporal Punishment as defined as the:

- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting him/herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.

- Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

If a staff member implements any of these practices, the appropriate children's protection agency would be immediately notified and disciplinary action taken. This includes notification to the College of Early Childhood Educators. Incidents of this nature are reported to the Ministry of Education as a Serious Occurrence.

15. COLLECTION AND USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

All personal information requested in connection with the admission of your child, as well as his/her child care records established with the child care centre, will be collected, used, maintained and in future destroyed in full compliance with rules established under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.