



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

March 20, 2020

Dear Early Childhood Professional,

We are reaching out to thank you for all you are doing to ensure that the children in your centers and family child care homes are safe and well during this difficult time as the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic continues to evolve.

We would like to ensure that you have the most current information and resources to support your important work in the community. Earlier this week, the Virginia Department of Social Services provided guidance (www.dss.virginia.gov/cc/covid-19-docs/3.18.20%20VDSS%20Child%20Care%20Guidance.pdf) to support the essential services provided by child care programs across the Commonwealth.

The guidance recommends that child care programs encourage families to remain home to care for their children if at all possible, and asks that child care programs only remain open if they can adhere to the provided guidelines for protecting vulnerable populations.

For child care programs that remain open, VDSS encourages them to adapt their services and settings as much as possible to align with public health recommendations, which include social distancing. In order to meet the provisions of the Governor's directive to only have ten people gather in any one place, the guidance directs programs to limit the number of children and staff per classroom to ten.

In addition, programs should follow these guidelines:

- Encourage your staff and community members to protect their personal health www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention
- Educate your child care community and staff of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus
- Ensure students are eating meals in the classroom.
- Require employees to stay home when sick and send home anyone who becomes sick.
- Limit facility events or gatherings (<10 people) that require close contact and stagger entrances and exits to limit contact.
- Have staff and children wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/handwashing/
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are frequently touched.
- Alter programming to increase distance between children, such as allowing only one classroom of children outside at a time.
- Conduct regular health checks of staff and children to look for symptoms of sickness or fever. Separate symptomatic individuals until they are picked up from the facility.

Fairfax County



Office for Children

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More information can be found on the Fairfax County Emergency Information site (www.fairfaxcountyemergency.wpcomstaging.com/2020/03/19/keeping-children-safe-in-child-care-programs-during-covid-19/) which is also available to view in many languages by selecting your preference on the right hand side of the page. Please note that the entire Fairfax County website is also available to view in different languages by going to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/languagetranslation and choosing your preferred language.

For more information on the Coronavirus, please visit the Health Department's coronavirus webpage at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus. You can also get the latest updates by texting FFXCOVID to 888777.

Thank you for all you do to care for Fairfax County's children. Please keep well.

Best regards,



Anne-Marie D. Twohie
Director, Fairfax County Office for Children