

Child Care and Early Learning e-Newsletter

June 10, 2020

Welcome to The Regional Municipality of Durham's Child Care and Early Learning updates e-newsletter. This edition is to update child care operators on health-related recommendations and information related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Early Learning Updates – Reopening

In Durham, the Children's Services Division as the system manager for early learning and child care, is committed to re-opening early learning and child care programs in a way that ensures learning and care environments are safe places that support healthy development. We understand that re-opening needs to occur in a professional well thought out manner and requires preparation.

We are collaborating with the Durham Region Health Department as the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) to provide you with the information you need to support the re-opening process.

At this time the Health Department is directing child care operators to ensure the attached, [2019 Child Care Guidance](#), document is used as a minimum standard to develop their re-opening COVID policies. It is expected that the requirements in the attached documents are included in reopening policies as a minimum standard.

Additionally, the information on the Durham.ca website in the [Re-opening Toolkit](#) is also being updated with resources and sample policies to assist. **Please check back regularly for updates as all reopening documents and resources will be shared here.**

There is no pressure to open as quickly as you can. The Children Services Quality Assurance Advisors, Beth Carson, Program Manager and Julie Gaskin, Manager, are responding questions and available to listen as you develop your reopen plans. We want the re-opening of child care to be well thought out and to offer quality programs that focus on safety, wellness, pedagogy and viability.

Before Re-opening – Policy Development:

Please find attached the [2019 Child Care Guidance](#) document. Durham Public Health is directing operators to use this document as a minimum standard to develop organizational policies for reopening. **Policies must be submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval prior to reopening.**

The Children's Services Division is developing sample policies to be approved by the Ministry of Education and these samples will be shared with child care operators once approved.

Reporting Ill Children after Reopening:

- Once reopening occurs operators should send their inquiries about ill children, staff, parents or ill visitors to EHL@durham.ca.
- This is the Health Department Help Line and will ensure that someone will get the question. Operators may call 905-668-2020 if they prefer.
- Ministry of Education Serious Occurrences will need to be submitted based on the Direction of the Ministry.
- Operators with a Purchase of Services Agreement with the Children's Services Division must also comply with the CSD Serious Occurrence protocols.

Please continue to send your questions to Julie Gaskin at Julie.Gaskin@durham.ca. Due to the high volume of emails, questions will be gathered to provide information and clarification in the form of email updates to all operators. As we work with our Ministry of Education advisors to build the sustainability plan for Durham, we will continue to provide clarification and communication as quickly as possible. Thank you all for your cooperation and commitment to maintaining early learning and child care in Durham Region.