COVID-19
PROGRAM PLAN AND PRACTICES

CHILDCARE SERVICES
SOUTHINGTON-CHESHIRE COMMUNITY YMCA

This is a working document, which may be updated frequently due to the rapidly changing response to this pandemic emergency and ongoing State and Federal guidance updates.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND GROUP GUIDELINES

All Southington-Cheshire Community YMCA Childcare programs operate under the jurisdiction of the CT Office of the Early Child and local health departments. Policies and procedures are dictated by state statute. **COVID-19 also called the coronavirus is having a huge impact on Connecticut families and child care providers.**

The Southington-Cheshire Community YMCA childcare locations are approved for the following capacities:

- Southington YMCA Learning Center 112 Children
- Southington YMCA Main Building 96 Children
- Cheshire YMCA Learning Center 64 Children

Group guidelines are as follows:

- No more than 16 children preschool age in a space
- No more than 16 children school age 6-12 in a space
- Groups of children will remain in separate rooms while in attendance whenever possible
- Groups of children will not come into close contact with other groups of children while in attendance. This includes at the beginning and end of the day, while engaged in outdoor play or during arrival and departure times
- Staffing patterns will minimize movement of staff between groups of children throughout the day

ENHANCED HEALTH CHECKS

- All children and childcare staff will be checked at door upon arrival for temperature and any observable illness.
- A staff member will take each child’s and staff’s temperature upon arrival at the facility. Staff member should compete the health check as follows:
  - Check the child’s/staff’s temperature
  - Ask the child(parent) or staff how they are feeling that day and if they have any symptoms.
  - Staff will ask the parent or staff member if they or the child has traveled in the last 14 days
  - If performing a temperature check on multiple individuals, the thermometer has been thoroughly cleaned in between each check.
  - If you use non-contact thermometers, clean them with an alcohol wipe or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab between each client. You can reuse the same wipe as long as it remains wet.
  - If using contact thermometers staff should wash hands using soap and water or hand sanitizer between health checks.
- When conducting screening, the child care facility should try to maintain sufficient distance between the screener and the child or staff member being screened.
- If social distancing or barrier/partition controls cannot be implemented during screening, personal protective equipment (PPE) can be used when within 6 feet of a child. Staff will make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.
- Persons who have a fever of 100° (38.0°C) or above or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the facility. Staff will encourage parents/guardians to be on the
alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Any child or children with an elevated temperature or who may be ill will be removed from the classroom and wait to be picked-up with a staff member in an identified “sick room”.

HANDWASHING and RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

All staff and children must adhere to regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as follows:

- Before coming in contact with any child;
- Before and after eating;
- After sneezing, coughing or nose blowing;
- After using the rest room;
- Before handling food;
- After nap time
- After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated; and
- After using any shared equipment like toys, computer keyboards, mouse.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol based sanitizer. Adults should always supervise use of alcohol-based sanitizers when being used by children. Likewise, all handwashing activities must be supervised by adults to verify that children are properly washing their hands for twenty seconds. All staff must cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of the elbow. All staff must also encourage children, when appropriate, to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of the elbow. All soiled tissues must be disposed of immediately after use.

FACE COVERINGS

Per the Office of Early Childhood Memo #29, children 3 years of age and older are required to wear masks while in child care setting as of September 21, 2020.

Use of cloth face covering for each employee is required at all times while in the workplace as directed by the Department of Economic Development Safe Workplace Rules for Essential Employees per Executive Order 7BB.

The Southington-Cheshire Community YMCAs recognize that mask wearing by children and staff reduces the spread of disease. Mask wearing helps to protect the children in our care, our staff and their families. We recognize that this is a skill that all children will need to learn and become acclimated to. No child will be excluded from care or separated from their peers for their refusal to wear a mask. YMCA staff will encourage mask wearing through developmentally appropriate practices such as: modeling, social stories, gentle reminders, and in class lessons. ‘Mask breaks’ will be planned and scheduled throughout the day. Mask breaks indoors must maximize physical distance between individuals, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance wherever possible. Children are not required to wear a mask during outside play, while eating, sleeping or resting. During these times staff will also work to maximize physical distance between individuals wherever possible.

Face coverings should be comfortable to wear for long periods of time, fit the face snuggly against the cheeks, cover the nose and mouth completely and be secured under the chin. Masks with exhalation valves or vents are not permitted. Cloth face coverings
should be freshly laundered each day. Disposable masks are intended for one time use and should be disposed of at the end of the day. Only breakaway lanyards are permitted. Lanyards will not be worn during outdoor play, rest time or activities which the YMCA staff deem unsafe. Face shields are permitted in addition to mask but not in lieu of masks. Parents of preschool aged children should provide at least 3 face coverings for their child. One mask will be kept with their child’s extra clothes. The other 2 masks will be for use during the day and will be sent home at the end of the day for laundering.

Children may be exempt from the mask wearing requirement if they; 1. Have a documented medical condition, special health care need, or developmental need (such as sensory integration) for which wearing a mask or face covering would be contrary to their health or safety. 2. Have a documented disability or special education need for which wearing a mask or face covering would be contrary to their needs. In addition, children and staff involved with certain special education and related services activities like speech and language therapy or where lip reading is required may remove a face-covering mask intermittently.

By enrolling in our programs parents agree to support and encourage mask wearing for their child while participating in a YMCA Childcare Program. If a parent does not support and encourage mask wearing for their child, they will not be permitted to enroll their child. For children currently enrolled, non-compliance by the parent may result in dismissal from the program.

This policy will remain in effect through the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergency unless modified earlier by the Commissioner of Early Childhood.

In conjunction with the public school requirements all children and staff in our school age childcare programs will be required to wear a cloth face covering during the program, exclusive of “mask breaks”. Mask breaks will be allowed only when six-foot social distance can be maintained.

**STORAGE OF BELONGINGS**

Children must take all belongings out of their cubbies each day. Cubbies are disinfected nightly and need to be clear of all items. Extra clothing provided by parents may remain at the center as they are stored in plastic containers.

Families will be encouraged to send in a water bottle for their child labeled with the child’s name. The water bottles will be kept in the child’s cubby or backpack. Staff will have new water bottles available for those children that do not have one. These will be labeled with the child’s name and kept in the child’s cubby or backpack. Children will not be permitted to use water fountains or shared water containers.

**CLASSROOM ACCESS**

Families will be greeted at the door by a staff member. Parents/Guardians may share information with the staff member before the child transitions to their classroom as parents/guardians are not permitted in the building at this time.
Groups of children shall be no more than 16 children.

Groups of children will not come in contact with other groups of children while in attendance, including at the beginning and end of the day, while engaged in outdoor play and during arrival and departure times.

If needed, groups of children may share an indoor space as long as groups of children remain a minimum of six feet from other groups in the space. When groups occupy the same space there shall be a physical or visual barrier to delineate the space.

Staffing patterns will minimize movement of staff between groups of children throughout the day.

All staff have been trained on the policies and procedures that ensure the above conditions.

**CLEANING PROTOCOLS**

- All protocols for routine cleaning and disinfection of the child care center including the sanitization and disinfection of toys must be followed according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the State Department of Public Health guidelines as well as guidelines of Best Practice set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- Enhanced cleaning will be performed throughout the day, in particular in common spaces such as bathrooms, outdoor space and doorways/hallways when used by different groups.
- Soap and water will be routinely used by staff to clean flat surfaces and high touch areas throughout the center.
- A disinfectant will be used routinely to disinfect flat surfaces and high touch areas throughout the center.
- Shared toys will be cleaned as needed.

*Detailed cleaning procedures and protocols can be found in “Covid-19 re-opening, risk mitigation and facility cleaning plan” document.*

**SOCIAL DISTANCING**

- When possible child care classrooms will include the same group each day, and the same staff will remain with the same group each day.
- Daily schedule and activities will be designed in a way to avoid transmission.
  - Each group of children will be in a separate room.
  - Limit the mixing of children, such as staggered Gross Motor times and keeping groups separate for special activities such as swimming.
  - At nap time, children’s naptime cots will be spaced out as much as possible.
- There will be designated waiting spaces for families at drop-off and pick-up.
- Parents will not be permitted in the program space.
- Hand hygiene stations will be set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands before they enter. Hand sanitizer with will be kept at the program entrance.
- Staff will sign children in and out each day.
COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND EXCLUSIONS

Children who are not feeling well should stay at home. Generally, any child who is not able to participate in all daily activities should not attend YMCA programs. Parents are required to inform the YMCA if their child will be absent due to illness, has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Staff are required to notify their supervisor if they will be absent due to illness, have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

We will be following CDC guidelines [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) for any child or staff who has COVID-19 symptoms. Children or staff can return to care once 10 days have passed from when symptoms first appeared, and it has been 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever reducing medications, and the other symptoms of COVID-19 have improved. An exception will be made, if we receive a doctor’s note stating that the child or staff was treated for a non COVID-19 illness and is able to return to program.

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever or chills (over 100 degrees Fahrenheit)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19. The most up to date list of symptoms can be found here, [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html).

Please refer to the attached decision tree for guidance on specific scenarios.

USE OF NEBULIZERS IN CHILDCARE PROGRAMS

Due to the CDC protocols required to administer nebulizer treatments we will not be able to administer nebulizer treatments on site in any of our programs. Parents should consult with their physicians about children attending our program while receiving these treatments.

COVID-19 EXPOSURE and DIAGNOSIS

If a child or staff member who has been present in the program is diagnosed with COVID-19, families and staff of the child care program will be notified immediately about the exposure.
In February 2020, COVID-19 was added to the List of Reportable Diseases. Those required to report such diseases must report cases of COVID-19 infection immediately to the Connecticut Department of Public Health and to the local department of health in the town of residence of the case-patient by telephone on the day of recognition or strong suspicion of the disease.

The practices below will be taken in addition to any recommendations made by the Local Health Department or CT Department of Public Health:

- Contact local health department and the Office of Early Childhood.
- Determine the date of symptom onset for the child/staff member.
- Determine if the child/staff member attended/worked at the program while symptomatic or during the two days before symptoms began.
- Identify what days the child/staff member attended/worked during that time.
- Determine who had close contact with the child/staff member at the program during those days (staff and other children).
- Exclude the children and staff members who are determined to have had close contact with the affected child/staff member for 14 days after the last day they had contact with the affected child/staff member.
  - Conduct appropriate cleaning and disinfection:
    - Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
    - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
    - Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning or disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
    - 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.
    - Continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

Depending on the size of the program and the number of people affected, closure of a particular room in the program (for larger centers) or the entire program might need to be considered.

If a child or staff member who has been present in the program has been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 (a household member, caregiver in the home, or an individual who has had close contact for a prolonged period of time), they shall follow CDC guidelines and the guidance of their local health department for isolation.

**COVID-19 TRAVEL RESTRICTION PROCEDURES (ADDED 7/8/2020)**

The State of Connecticut Executive Order 7BBB, effective June 25, 2020, states that anyone traveling into Connecticut from a state that has a new daily positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents or a state with a 10% or higher positivity rate over
a 7-day rolling average are directed to self-quarantine for a 14-day period from the time of last contact within the identified state.

In order to maintain a safe environment for all children, families and staff; all enrolled children and staff are required to comply with the quarantine requirements that are outlined in Executive Order 7BBB. Families and staff are expected to inform the YMCA Program Director if they will be traveling out of state or internationally. Detailed information regarding travel restrictions can be found here, https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Covid-19-Knowledge-Base/Travel-In-or-Out-of-CT. Parents and staff are urged to consider these restrictions when traveling to impacted states whenever possible due to the risk of infection and the need to self-quarantine on return. Everyone is urged to continue to check the list as it is fluid and will be updated on a weekly basis.

This procedure shall remain in effect throughout the duration of the travel advisory or the expiration of Executive Order 7BBB.