

Decisions and Safety Recommendations for Daycares Reopening in Nunavik

Version: October 20th, 2020

Context

Children benefit from attending daycare as it supports their overall development. For some children, attending daycare is a shelter from hostile households. The consequences of keeping daycares closed are broad and long lasting.

COVID-19 infection in small children is less risky for them than many infections commonly transmitted in the region (e.g. bronchiolitis & influenza). Some studies suggest that children are less likely to transmit COVID-19 than adults (however, more studies are required to better understand how the virus is transmitted).

Children bear the brunt of the consequences of a lockdown, with minimal benefit to their own well-being. As a region fighting to heal from intergenerational trauma, the importance of the well-being of children cannot be overstated. Leaders should be careful in crafting decisions and take the big picture into account.

Objectives

- Prevent the spread of COVID-19 to numerous families through the childcare centre.
- Allow protection of vulnerable children
- Allow children to experience enriching activities (educational and traditional)
- Allow parents to resume work

Concise recommendations

If there is no circulation of COVID in the community, prevention measures that have minimal impact on children should be put in place. The goal is to minimize the impact of any given infected child on local transmission, all the while allowing full benefits to all children at daycare.



In communities with COVID cases, daycare services will be offered when deemed safe by Public Health.

Public Health examines every situation of transmission on a case-by-case basis and provides recommendations. Public Health will close daycares if/when it is needed to control an outbreak.

Detailed recommendations for:

Educators during COVID-19

Educators should prepare their rooms prior to the arrival of children.

The following will then occur:





- A designated welcome area will be established for pick-up and drop-off of children.
- Only one adult is allowed with the child in the welcome area.
- Following arrival, the child is brought to their room to their educator
- Room ratios are as followed:
 - 0-17 months = 1 educator per 5 infants
 - 18 months to 47 months = 1 educator per 6 children
 - 48 months and over = 1 educator per 8 children
- The child's belongings will go into a labeled bag and the bag is kept in the child's cubby.
- Rooms should be dedicated to a specific group of children and educators to limit exposure to many different people.
- Encourage and model handwashing and cough etiquette throughout the day.
- Clean the room and the pick-up / drop-off areas as often as possible, paying special attention to regular disinfection of high-touch surfaces.
- Favour outdoor activities in as much as possible as this reduces any risks of transmission.
- If a child is unwell, check temperature and notify management ASAP.



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SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES BOARD OF HEALTH
SOCIAUX DU NUNAVIK AND SOCIAL SERVICES



- The symptomatic child should be isolated into a pre-determined space, and the daycare should contact the child's caretakers so he/she can be picked up. Some symptoms (for ex: any respiratory distress) warrant an emergent evaluation at the CLSC. However, most symptoms should be observed over a period of 24 hours before determining if the child needs COVID testing or not. The COVID-19 Health Line 1-888-662-7482 can help with this decision process (Mon-Fri 8AM-7PM) as can the local CLSC.
- Children with the following symptoms need to be observed at home for 24 hours, and then re-evaluated to see if COVID testing is needed / or if they can return to daycare:

 <p>Children ages 5 and under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rectal temperature of 38.5°C (101.3°F) or higher <p>Children ages 6 and older:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oral temperature of 38.1°C (100.6°F) or higher	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sudden loss of sense of smell without nasal congestion, with or without a loss of taste• Major fatigue• Significant loss of appetite• General muscle pain (not related to physical exertion)	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cough (new or worse)• Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing ⚠️• Sore throat• Runny or stuffy nose	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nausea• Vomiting• Diarrhea• Stomach ache
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- The room should be aired and disinfected with appropriate class management. Considering that many children with these symptoms will not be sick from COVID-19, and considering that children do not seem to be high-risk COVID-19 transmitters, staff should avoid overreacting emotionally and dramatically in their interventions.
- At the end of the day, the child will be dressed and brought to the entryway where a parent will be waiting.
- Once all children have been picked up, the educator will clean the room, disinfect objects with spray and remove garbage.



- Physical distancing between the children of a group is not recommended, and it is healthy for children’s development to play and interact closely with one another. Physical distancing is also not required between the daycare worker and the group of children that she oversees. Physical distancing between adults is recommended (daycare workers during breaks, parents who pick children up, etc.).
- Workers protection guidelines (CNESST) require that daycare workers wear a **face mask** and **eye protection** (face-shield or goggles) when they are within 2 meters of their group of children, except during brief periods which must not exceed a total of 15 minutes cumulatively over the day. Though these recommendations are made to protect the daycare worker from contracting COVID, they also serve towards protecting the children.
- Wearing a mask for lengthy amounts of time can be difficult, and so PH recommends that educators engineer activities into their groups’ schedule where they can safely stand 2meters away from their group of children: supervision of outdoor play, reading a story, reciting songs & rhymes, etc.
- Children’s social, affective, and linguistic development hinges on communication with peers and significant adult figures like daycare workers. Masks with a transparent vinyl window exist, allowing for daycare workers’ facial expressions to be visible for children to read.

Address Mental Health/Psychosocial support needs

- Encourage children to ask questions and voice their concerns.
- Provide information in an honest and age-appropriate manner.



Parents Guidelines during COVID-19

- When a parent/guardian enters the centre, please follow the preventive measures set in place for the safety of the child and staff. Upon arrival, the parent/guardian will see that childcare centres have closed off the entryway to make a designated pick up and drop off area.
- Only one parent/guardian per family will be permitted in this area.
- Prior to being sent to daycare, parents should screen their children for symptoms. If the child is showing signs of illness, he-she must be kept home for observation 24hours, and an assessment of evolution at that point will determine if child can reintegrate daycare, or needs COVID testing (please refer to the **“Can My Child Go to Daycare Today?”** assessment tool at the end of this document).
- Please have an identified bag to place the child’s belongings, the educator will take the bag with the child upon arrival.
- The educator will bring the child to wash their hands and then to their room.
- Throughout the day the child will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly.
- If the child begins to feel unwell and/or shows flu-like symptoms, the child will be placed in a designated quarantine area room and the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- Communicate clearly in advance with the parent/guardian to schedule a time that the child will be picked up so the educator will prepare the child to be met in the lobby.
- Provide age-appropriate explanations about the pandemic situation. Share information in a reassuring way. e.g. If your child is feeling sick and staying at home or at the hospital, you could say, “You have to stay at home/at the hospital because it is safer for you and your friends. I know it is hard, scary or even boring at times, but we need to follow the rules to keep ourselves and others safe.”

N.B. The return to daycare is voluntary. Parents are encouraged to contact their daycares to discuss the terms of their child’s return.



Can my child go to daycare today?

Use this step by step tool to know whether your child should go to daycare today or not.

If you need help to decide, please call the **COVID-19 Health Line** at **1-888-662-7482 (Mon-Fri 8AM to 7PM, Sat-Sun 12PM-7PM)** or call your CLSC.

STEP 1

If your child has any of these symptoms, keep him/her at home for 24h to observe:



Children ages **5 and under**:

- **Rectal** temperature of 38.5°C (101.3°F) or higher

Children ages **6 and older**:

- **Oral** temperature of 38.1°C (100.6°F) or higher



- Sudden loss of sense of smell without nasal congestion, with or without a loss of taste
- Major fatigue
- Significant loss of appetite
- General muscle pain (not related to physical exertion)



- Cough (new or worse)
- **Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing** ⚠️
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose



- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Stomach ache

Siblings that have no symptoms can go to daycare or school.

⚠️ If you notice any of the following it is an emergency, call your local CLSC and bring your child to the clinic quickly:

- Difficulty in breathing
- Blue lips
- Difficulty moving
- No urine for 12 hours
- Confusion
- Disorientation
- Difficulty staying awake / sleepiness



Can my child go to daycare today?

STEP 2

After 24 hours of observation at home, I reassess my child.

If you need help in doing this please call the COVID-19 Health Line at 1-888-662-7482.

SITUATION 1: My child is doing much better, and has no more symptoms.

He/she does not need to be tested. It is safe to send him/her back to daycare.

If the child had a **FEVER** :

1. before considering the fever over, make sure the child is off medication (motrin/tylenol), and
2. wait 48 hours after the last fever before sending the child back to daycare.

SITUATION 2: My child still has symptoms.

Keep your child home. He/she might need to be tested for COVID before he/she can safely go back to daycare.

Here are the symptoms and combinations of symptoms that need COVID testing:

Any of these symptoms:

- **Fever** (38.5°C+ rectal temperature (101.3 °F) or higher)
- **Cough** (new or worse)
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Difficulty breathing**

One combination of symptoms*:

- **Fever** (38.1°C+ rectal temperature (100.6°F) or higher)
- AND***
- **Runny nose or nasal congestion or sore throat**
 - **Abdominal pain, vomiting, or diarrhea**

*Fever must be there to be considered as COVID symptoms

If you think your child needs a COVID test, call the COVID-19 Health Line at **1-888-662-7482** during opening hours (Mon-Fri 8AM-7PM, Sat-Sun 12PM-7PM) or call your CLSC.

If your child is **still sick** but does not have these symptoms / combination of symptoms, you fall into **situation 3**:

SITUATION 3: My child still has symptoms, but none of the above list that require testing.

1. Your child **does not need a COVID test**, and
2. He/she can safely go back to daycare **24h after symptoms have significantly improved**.
Please note that if there was fever, return to daycare must be at least **48h after the last fever**.