

Ministry of Education  
Early Years and Child Care Division

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Ministère de l'Éducation  
Division de la petite enfance et de  
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**TO:** Consolidated Municipal Service Managers / District Social Services  
Administration Boards  
Licensed Child Care Operators  
Chairs of District School Board  
Directors of Education  
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

**FROM:** Shannon Fuller  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Early Years and Child Care Division

**DATE:** July 22, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Revised Operational Guidance for Child Care Programs

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As the child care sector continues the important work of re-opening, I am happy to share a revised version of the [Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak](#) resource with you today. The resource has been revised to reflect the change in cohort size in child care centres as of July 27, 2020, as well as other changes in consultation with the Ministry of Health and through conversations with the sector. We continue to put the health and safety of Ontario's children, families, child care centre staff and home child care providers at the forefront, and we are basing the revisions and updated information on advice from Dr. David Williams, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and the experts at the COVID-19 Command Table.

Key changes are listed upfront in the guidance document and include:

- Increased cohort size for child care centres from up to 10 individuals per room to up to 15 children plus staff per room as of July 27, 2020;
- Revised guidance on how screening must be conducted;
- Revised guidance related to testing for COVID-19;
- Revised protocols for when an individual shows symptoms or becomes sick; and,
- Revised language about physical barriers between cohorts.

The guidance document is designed to be used in conjunction with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and its regulations, direction provided by a local public health unit, and other available resources, like the Child Care Centre and Home Child Care Agency Licensing Manuals. Where there are differences between the guidance document and other materials (e.g., licensing manuals), the guidance document prevails; however, child care programs must ensure they are following any direction from their local public health unit, even if it contradicts this resource.

Additionally, the ministry has developed a new resource entitled, *Building on How Does Learning Happen? Pedagogical approaches to re-opening licensed child care*. This resource shares ideas, reflective questions and lessons learned from emergency child care to help to support child care and early years settings as they work to provide healthy physical, social and emotional spaces for children and their families as they gradually re-open.

The Ministry of Education continues to work with the Ministry of Health and other sector partners on the health and safety restrictions in place and will make updates and amendments as the situation safely allows. The ministry remains committed to working closely with all partners to support children and families and to keep everyone safe.

Thank you,

Shannon Fuller