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The following are the current guidelines for Oyster Babies Early Childhood programs, while remaining open during the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- Social-distancing strategies
- Drop-off and pick-up procedures
- Screening procedures
- Maintaining an adequate ratio of staff to children to ensure safety
- Masks/Face coverings
- Cleaning and disinfection procedures

Please note, guidelines will be updated with the most current information on an ongoing basis. Families will be provided with any revisions in as timely a manner as possible. All staff will receive training on COVID-19. Our top priority is the health and safety of our children, staff, and, families.

Social-Distancing Strategies

Childcare classes will include the same group each day; Childcare providers will remain with the same group each day.

- Special events, such as, festivals, holiday events, and, performances are cancelled or postponed;
- Daily group activities that may promote transmission will be halted and we will:
 - Keep each group of children in a separate room;
 - Limit the mixing of children, such as, staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities, such as, art, music, and exercising;
 - Nap time: we will ensure that children's naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6-feet apart. Children will continue to sleep head-to-toe to further reduce the potential for viral spread;
 - Drop-off and pick-up times will be "staggered" with "curbside" assistance.

Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Children will be dropped off "curbside" at the main entrance of the Center. Driver will bring child(ren) to the check-in station, where a health check will be done for admittance.

- Temperature will be taken with a Forehead scan thermometer;
- Ideally, the same designated person(s) should drop-off and pick-up the child every day. If possible, older people, such as, grandparents, or, those with serious underlying medical conditions, should not pick-up children, because they are more at risk;
- Driver will wear mask or health check cannot be done. Mask will be provided if need be.
- Scheduled, staggering arrival and drop-off times will limit direct contact with parents as much as possible:

- Childcare providers greet children outside as they arrive;
- A designated staff member will walk all children to their classroom, and at the end of the day, walk all children to the front door for pick-up;
- Designated adult must wear face masks to for student pick-up;
- Young Infants, under 6 months may be transported in their car seats. Car seat will remain in lobby.
- Hand hygiene stations will be set up at the entrance of the facility, to be used at admittance;
- Children will clean their hands as they enter. A sink with soap and water is available. The Center will provide hand sanitizer. Families will sign “hand sanitizer permission form”;
- Families will document attendance / timeclock, virtually or on paper.

Screening Children Upon Arrival

- Persons who have a fever of 100°F (38.0°C) or above, or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the facility. We encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick;
- Children with a 100°F fever will not be admitted to the Center and will need to stay home the following day. Children must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning. The Center will contact the family to approve the child’s return.

Masks/Face Coverings

- Staff members will wear face mask within the facility. Masks/face coverings will NOT be put on babies and children under age two because of the danger of suffocation;
- Children 2-5 years old do not have to wear masks but will be taught how to.

Clean and Disinfecting Procedures

Toys will be cleaned and sanitized, as used. Other hard surfaces, including, diaper changing stations, doorknobs, and, floors will be disinfected.

- The Center has an established schedule for cleaning and disinfecting;
- Surfaces and objects that are frequently touched will be routinely cleaned and sanitized, especially toys and games. This includes, cleaning objects/surfaces daily, such as, doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, cribs, cots, mats, toilets, desks, chairs, cubbies, and, playground structures.

Clean and Sanitize Toys

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used;
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions will be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Method is “clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry;”
- Machine-washable cloth toys (costumes, puppets, scarves) will be used by one individual at a time. These toys will be laundered before being used by another child;
- We will not share toys with other groups, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other;

- Children's books, like other paper-based materials, such as, mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

Clean and Disinfect Bedding

- Each child's bedding will be separated and stored in individual cubbies or bags. Cots and mats are labeled for each child and will be cleaned and sanitized after each use;
- Bedding will be sent home daily to be washed and returned to the Center.

Diapering

When diapering a child, a caregiver will always wash their hands and wash the child's hands before they begin, and wear gloves. The following safe diaper changing procedures will be followed, which will be posted at all diaper changing areas. Steps, include:

- Prepare (includes putting on gloves)
- Clean the child
- Remove trash (soiled diaper and wipes)
- Replace diaper
- Wash child's hands
- Clean and disinfect diapering station
- Wash child's hands
- After diapering, staff will wash hands and disinfect the diapering area

Breast Milk, Formula, and Food

Individual bottles and meal will be provided by families daily. Containers will be rinsed and go home daily. Unused portions will be discarded after every meal. No leftovers will be sent home.

Washing, Feeding, or Holding a Child

It is important to comfort crying, sad, and/or anxious infants and toddlers, and they often need to be held. To the extent possible, when washing, feeding, or holding very young children: Childcare providers will protect themselves by wearing an over-sized, button-down, long-sleeved shirt and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.

- Childcare providers will wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions;
- Childcare providers will change the child's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. They should change the button-down shirt, if there are secretions on it, and wash their hands again;
- Contaminated clothes will be placed in a plastic bag;
- Infants, toddlers, and their providers will have multiple changes of clothes on hand;
- Childcare providers will wash their hands before and after handling infant bottles. Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and, other equipment used for bottle-feeding should be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing with a bottlebrush, soap, and, water. Items should be washed again at home.

Healthy Hand Hygiene Behavior

- All children, staff, and volunteers should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:
 - Arrival to the facility and after breaks
 - Before and after preparing food or drinks
 - Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
 - Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
 - Before and after diapering
 - After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
 - After encountering bodily fluid
 - After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
 - After playing outdoors or in sand
 - After handling garbage
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available. After assisting children with handwashing, staff should also wash their hands.

Food Preparation and Meal Service

- All meals will be served in individual classrooms. Staff will plate individual meals;
- Caregivers will ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating;
- Caregivers will wash their hands before preparing food and after helping children to eat;
- All class baking, making playdough etc. will be suspended.

Travel Notification

All staff and families will provide the Center notification of any travel.

Absenteeism

- Staff and families will report all absentees and possible exposure to COVID-19;
- The Center will contact all families on the day of an absence to discuss reason;
- Children with a 100.4°F fever for more than 24 hours, will require a doctor's note to return;
- The Center will report all possible COVID-19 exposures and cases to the DOH and follow the department's directives as to how to proceed regarding testing or quarantine.