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# Partnership for Children of Sampson County Provider Newsletter

Volume 15, Issue 4 April, May & June 2020

“A Smart Start to a Successful Future”

## COVID-19 and It's Affect on Our Daycares

We know there's already a great deal of coronavirus coverage out there. But we wanted to sort through it all to give you the simplest, most up-to-date advice on how to prevent illness spreading at your child care setting, and how you can prepare for potential disruptions.

### How concerned should I be?

First, some good news: So far, it seems that children are much less vulnerable to the coronavirus than adults. According to the World Health Organization, [only 2.4 percent](#) of all recorded cases of COVID-19 have been in people under age 19. Of these cases, [the vast majority have been mild illnesses](#), comparable to a seasonal cold. This is to say, the children in your care are not at great risk. Of course, the outbreak is more complicated than just a personal health issue. For one thing, containing the virus is critically important to make sure the most vulnerable in our society are not in danger. What's more, the coronavirus may interrupt our daily routines — how we socialize, where we shop (and what's available), and how we work.

So, while you're unlikely to personally be in immediate or life-threatening danger right now, you should consider how the outbreak might affect you and your community.

### Adjusting your environment

Before we get into any changes to daily practice or behavior, let's look at how your physical setting might affect the risk of infection.

**Disinfect early, disinfect often** – Research suggests that the coronavirus can reside on surfaces such as glass, plastic or metal for [up to nine days](#). The CDC recommends disinfecting tables, door handles, and other “high touch” surfaces using household disinfectants [a few times a day](#), especially before and after meals.

**Remove germ risk items** – As the outbreak gets worse, it may be worth considering temporarily removing higher risk toys from your environment. In an email interview with Family, Dr. Juan Dumois writes: “Temporarily put away small toys and other objects with which the children come in contact that are difficult to clean. We did that in our own hospital waiting rooms years ago.”

**Encourage hand hygiene** – Consider [hanging posters](#) illustrating thorough hand-washing techniques near the faucets at your setting, and make hand sanitizer readily available. Remember to only use hand sanitizer that is [60% alcohol or more](#).

**Anticipate possible shortages** – Again, the coronavirus is more than a health issue. You may want to stock up with an extended supply of cleaning products, soap and hand sanitizer, dry goods, sanitary products, paper towels, and other essentials.

### Changing children's daily practices

As you probably know from flu seasons past, children's sanitary habits aren't great, even on the best of days. It's impossible to expect them to be models of good hygiene now, but there's a few things you can do to help reduce the spread of germs in your setting.

**Explain what's going on** – Jacqueline Sperling of Harvard Medical School [writes](#), “Try to strike a balance between answering questions well enough without fueling the flame of anxiety.” Gather your class together and explain just what they need to know — Reinforce that they are not in danger, but they should still be careful about germs so as to help keep others healthy. Children do see what's happening, and keeping them in the dark [will only increase fears and anxiety](#). Be open, honest and comforting.

**More hand-washing** – Schedule in hand-washing breaks throughout the day, and make sure children know [how to wash their hands thoroughly](#). Little ones may need your direct help. You should be scrubbing for at least 20 seconds — And for inspiration, [here's a few songs with 20-second choruses](#) you could sing.

**Sneezing 101** – Educate children on how to properly cough and sneeze. Direct it into a tissue or your elbow, and wash your hands afterward, [says the CDC](#).

### Planning for potential disruptions

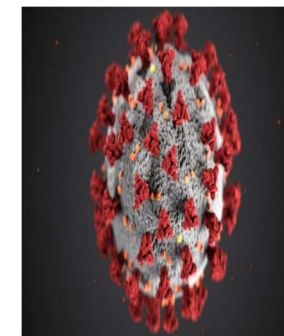
You're not the only one concerned about the coronavirus. Your friends, neighbors, team members and nearby businesses are

all thinking about how it may affect them too. If you work together, you can have a stronger response. Here are some ideas on how:

**Have a plan of action** – Take time to develop an action plan for responding to potential closures or shortages. You should have an idea on how you might react and adapt to staff absences, learning gaps due to missed sessions, payroll interruptions, and methods of contact with parents. You might want to look at the [CDC's example](#) for inspiration.

**Reach out to your local authorities** – Check whether your local health departments have issued [coronavirus preparedness plans](#), and also touch base with your local child care regulatory agency or local authority. Be sure your preparations are in line with their plans.

**Team up with other child care providers** – Talk to other child care and preschool programs in your area to share information that could make your plan better. Discuss ways programs could work together to produce a stronger response and pool resources.



**Expert perspective: If you suspect****COVID-19 at your child care setting**

In the case that your team members or the children in your care become unwell, and you have reason to believe they have been exposed to COVID-19, stay calm. Take a deep breath.

The NHS recommends [the following steps](#):

- Call your local hospital or non-emergency number and explain your concerns.
- Find a room where the individual can be alone behind a closed door, and open a window for ventilation if possible.
- Advise them to avoid touching all surfaces, objects, and others, and to sneeze and cough safely. This room will need to be disinfected once they leave.
- Wait for medical professionals to arrive to bring the patient to a hospital for treatment and testing.

Then, identify all staff, children and parents that may have had been exposed to the suspected case. Close contact is defined as being within 1.5 meters (about 6 feet) of the individual for more than five minutes, or by making physical contact. The NHS recommends that these exposed individuals [enter two weeks of home isolation](#), to be certain they are not infected. Last week, the [New York Times reported](#) school closures across 3 continents, which would affect over 290 million students.

In his email interview with us, Dr. Juan Dumois clarifies that closing your child care setting entirely should be done only in coordination with local authorities.

“With regard to a general outbreak of COVID-19 in a community, the closure of a single center would likely have little effect. Therefore, it may be best for centers to wait to follow the recommendations of their local public health authorities,” Dumois writes.

**A note on face masks**

There are widespread misunderstandings on whether wearing a face mask can help protect you against the coronavirus. Generally speaking, they are [only helpful when interacting](#) with a COVID-19 patient — which, as Dr. John Dumois explains, is an unlikely scenario for most of us.

“It’s much more likely that people become infected by touching a surface recently contaminated by virus from the hands of a sick person. Therefore, proper cleaning of hands prior to touching one’s face is much more effective than wearing a mask,” Dumois writes.

“Try to think of the last time you remember someone coughing or sneezing in your face. Now think of when was the last time you touched an object in public that may have been recently touched by another person. That’s a much more likely scenario.”

Masks should not be in your child care setting. Not only will they do little to prevent chance infections, but they encourage panic, and decrease supplies for the medical workers who have a genuine need for them.

**Communicating with staff and families**

As you adapt your daily practices, it’s also important that you stay in close contact with the parents and team members at your child care setting.

**Stay informed** – Look to reliable sources for the latest news on the coronavirus, and action steps that you can take. The [CDC](#) in the United States has set up dedicated [resource pages for educators](#) to respond to the pandemic as it develops. As a teacher and a leader, you should discourage undue panic, and patiently correct any misunderstandings about COVID-19.

**Brief your team** – Hold a meeting or send a message out to your team updating them on any adjustments you’ve got planned, and make sure everyone is informed on the [symptoms and signs of COVID-19](#). Provide links to local health and administrative agencies’ response pages for COVID-19, and emphasize the importance of clear, two-way communication during this period.

**Reach out to parents** – Email parents and staff to share helpful tips and show you’re on top of things.

**Helpful tips for communicating with parents**

- Provide information on Coronavirus symptoms.
- Ask parents and caregivers to use antibacterial gel when arriving for pickup or dropoff.
- Ask parents and caregivers to keep their child at home if the child is unwell, or to stay home if they themselves are unwell.
- Clarify that if a child is kept home as a precaution but is not in fact ill, you would provide makeup sessions for the days missed.
- Consider other strategies to enable parents to take proper health precautions without jeopardizing anyone’s finances.

**Think about a Plan B** – In the unlikely scenario that you should have to temporarily close your child care setting, think about how that might affect your parents and team members. Provide suggestions to where parents might find alternative child care options based on your knowledge of the local child care community.

**Coronavirus in the US: Sick leave****strategies**

In the United States, COVID-19 presents a particular challenge to the child care sector, because paid sick days are rare and working remotely is impossible. As you and your team plan your response to the coronavirus outbreak, it’s worth acknowledging the conflict it presents.

[The Nation writes](#), “The Center for Disease Control advises people to stay home if they are sick. But for that good advice to make any practical sense, the rest of the government needs to tell people how they’re supposed to do that and still make rent.” Your team shouldn’t have to decide between meeting necessary expenses and protecting their colleagues and the children in their care. If your center does not offer employees paid sick leave, it’s time to have a conversation about setting aside emergency funds to enable the policy, at least for the duration of the coronavirus outbreak.

If full paid sick leave is financially impossible for your child care setting, you should strongly consider adopting a middle-ground policy that allows employees to be safe and responsible about their response to infection.

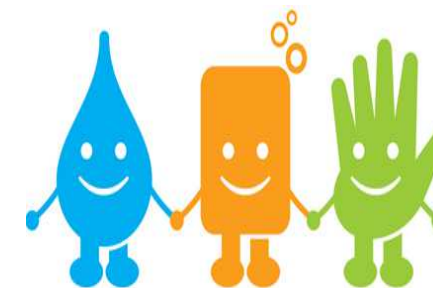
Considering that [90 percent of surveyed US professionals](#) have gone to work with cold or flu symptoms, managing sick leave expenses will ultimately be easier than dealing with a full closure.

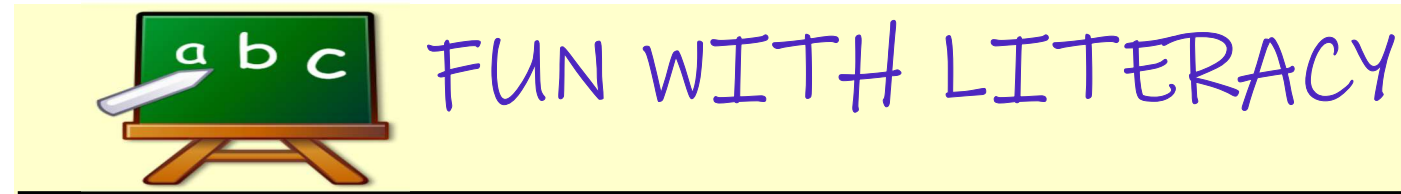
The COVID-19 pandemic has changed much of our daily routines; from how we work, play, and live our lives. Together, we can come together as a community and make it through the crisis, safe, healthy and happy.

<https://www.parentherald.com>

**The soap on your hands  
(Tune: Wheels on the Bus)**

The soap on your hands goes sud, sud, sud.  
Sud, sud, sud.  
Sud, sud, sud.  
The soap on your hands goes sud, sud, sud.  
And the germs go down the drain.





### Teaching the Alphabet Using the Child's Name

You will find differing opinions when it comes to how is best to teach the **alphabet**. Some believe that focusing on **letter of the week** is the way to go. Others feel that there should be **whole alphabet instruction**. Another camp says that we should teach letters in the order of frequency. Then, there is the whole debate over teaching lowercase or uppercase first. It really can make your head spin!

Over the years, I've worked with lots and lots of kids, families and teachers in early childhood education. Over and over, I've seen that if we add a personalized touch to our learning, the rewards are great. So, I suggest when you are trying to decide which letters to teach first, **start with the letters in your child's name!**

The most personalized and meaningful word in a child's world is his or her name. And, that name is made up of letters! Now that we know what letters to start with, how do we teach them? Alphabet instruction for young children needs to include these three things:

- Hands on learning
- Playful
- Repetitive

**Hands On:**

Children need to pick up letters, feel them, sort them. Magnetic letters are a good resource for this. So are letter "cookie cutters" children can use as stencils and to make letter shapes out of dough.

**Playful:**

Incorporating learning letters in your name should be done in a playful way. Include gross motor and sensory activities as well as art. Play dough is a wonderful medium for making letters, as well as stampers to make "dot" letters.

**Repetitive:**

We all need exposure to something multiple times before we can truly learn it. Try putting the child's name to song. Create name art with the child. Let the creative process take over!



### SPIDER WEB GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITY

Kinesthetic learners retain information best when they are moving. All preschoolers learn best through play. Opportunities for themed gross motor activities extend the classroom learning outside on the playground. Use this activity for a theme that includes spiders and insects.

**Spider Web Set Up**

You will need:

- Chalk** (or painter's tape)    **Pretend Spider**

- Draw a chalk spider web by writing a large X.
- Next draw another X perpendicular to the first one. You will end up with what looks like an eight lined snowflake.
- Beginning in the middle, connect the lines with arches increasing in size to create the finished web.

**Play!**

Now that you have a kid-sized spider web there are several games you can play!

- Use the web as a balance beam.
- Throw the spider into a space on the web to play spider hopscotch. Pretend the children are insects as you ask them to navigate from one side of the web to the other without stepping on the sticky web lines!



### Literacy Web

Write numbers, letters, shapes, or sight words inside each space of the web. Invite children to identify the information for you as they step on each space. You can also toss the pretend spider into the web and ask the child to name the letter, number, shape, or sight word that it landed on.

<https://growingbookbybook.com/how-to-teach-the-alphabet-start-with-letters-in-your-name/>



## Helping Children Develop Social and Emotional Literacy

Activities that stimulate social and emotional development can enhance your child's ability to relate with others and boost feelings of confidence. Social and emotional competence is important for academic and occupational success. Healthy social and emotional skills can reduce the chances of risky behaviors and prepare your child for the challenges of life.

### Promote Personal Growth

Recognize the uniqueness of your child's interests. Find community programs, after-school activities, sports or classes that foster growth in those areas. Acknowledge accomplishments and provide encouragement to nurture your child's participation in these activities, suggests the Edutopia website, a project of the George Lucas Educational Foundation. When engaged in conversation, give attention to your child's interests. By embracing individuality, you can help your child feel confident enough to pursue personal passions.

### Value Storytime

Begin a habit of reading to your child early. This not only enhances language ability but also can provide a platform to connect with your child by

giving examples of socially and emotionally healthy behaviors through stories, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.

- When characters in books behave appropriately, you can talk to your child about these positive behaviors. In the same vein, when you read about inappropriate behaviors, discuss the impact of the character's negative actions and what could have been done differently.

### Interactive Play

Children benefit from playing with other kids their age. Socializing can equip your child with problem solving skills in relational matters. For younger children, these early social experiences provide an opportunity to practice interacting with others in an appropriate way. When difficult situations arise, teach your child how to find appropriate solutions. Ask your child questions that lead to the best choices, such as "what do you think you should do?" or "if you choose this solution, what will the consequences be?"

### Positive Parenting

Using the right parenting techniques may complement your child's involvement in

social activities. Respond to your child calmly and gently when problematic circumstances occur, be willing to apologize when you are wrong and avoid humiliating or mocking your child, CASEL advises. NYC Project Launch urges parents to set and then stick by clear boundaries while showing understanding, respect and patience. Offer support and foster emotional growth by acknowledging your child's feelings and listening to any concerns.

### The Wrap Up

Activities that stimulate social and emotional development can enhance your child's ability to relate with others and boost feelings of confidence. When engaged in conversation, give attention to your child's interests. In the same vein, when you read about inappropriate behaviors, discuss the impact of the character's negative actions and what could have been done differently. Socializing can equip your child with problem solving skills in relational matters. Offer support and foster emotional growth by acknowledging your child's feelings and listening to any concerns.

-Written by Sharon H. Bolling  
13 June, 2017



The Partnership for Children is opened Monday through Thursday Hours are as follows: Monday— Thursday 8:00am-5:00pm . For your convenience we are opened one Saturday each month 8:00am-12:00pm. A variety of workshops will be provided on these Saturdays. The resource center will also be available. Call for dates and more information.

Tuesday May 12, 2020

<p><b>ITS SIDS</b></p> <p>This is a required state training for any staff member that works with infants. The certification needs to be renewed every two years.</p>	<p>Large training room</p>	<p>Nicole Wilson</p>	<p>6:30p-8:30p</p>
<p><b>Make it Take it Summer Edition</b></p> <p>This training is targeted towards older preschool children. Activities will focus on developmentally appropriate activities that can be done in the summer months.</p>	<p>LendingLibrary Work Area</p>	<p>Elizabeth Marquez</p>	<p>6:30p-8:30p</p>
<p><b>Practical Strategies for Positive Behavior</b></p> <p>This training will focus on strategies teachers can use in the classroom to help foster positive behaviors in children.</p>	<p>Small training room</p>	<p>Donna Jackson</p>	<p>6:30p-8:30p</p>

Tuesday June 16, 2020

<p><b>CLASS Overview</b></p> <p>This training will focus on the CLASS assessment tool and how it measures interactions within the classroom.</p>	<p>Small Training room</p>	<p>Nicole Wilson</p>	<p>6:30p-8:30p</p>
<p><b>Tips for a Successful Day</b></p> <p>This training will focus on schedules as well as transition strategies to help your classroom day run smoothly.</p>	<p>Large Training Room</p>	<p>Donna Jackson</p>	<p>6:30p-8:30p</p>
<p><b>Building Relationships and Creating Supportive Environments</b></p> <p>This training will focus on teacher and child relationships as well as how to encourage relationships among children. The relationship between social and emotional development and a positive environment will be discussed as well.</p>	<p>Lending Library Work Area</p>	<p>Elizabeth Marquez</p>	<p>6:30a-8:30p</p>

