

**INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS
ABOUT CHILD CARE AND COVID-19**

Know the facts about COVID-19 in Manitoba. The province has launched the #RestartMB Pandemic Response System, a new online tool that provides clear, timely information for Manitobans about COVID-19. It helps translate public health indicators and decision-making into a simple, colour-coded system that helps everyone understand what is expected of them, what they can expect from others, and the measures that may be put in place to protect us all.

Parents and caregivers can visit www.manitoba.ca/restartmb to check for the most current information from the Pandemic Response System and how it affects their families. It also includes specific information on the child care sector and the range of actions the province may take in response to the pandemic at all levels of risk. Review the document at https://manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/restartmb/pandemic_response_system.pdf, beginning on page 34, for more information.

All Manitobans must continue to follow the fundamentals to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. This includes staying home when sick, following physical distancing, washing hands regularly and wearing a mask indoors when physical distancing isn't possible.

What parents can expect from their child care providers:

- Physical distancing will be practised to the fullest extent possible.
- Children will participate in activities that help them learn about measuring and maintaining an appropriate distance from each other.
- Children will be assigned to a group (cohort) that they and the staff will stay with throughout the day, whenever possible.
- Good hand hygiene practices will be taught in a playful way. Cough and sneeze etiquette will be modeled, taught and reinforced.
- Parents will be asked to monitor their children every day and keep them home if they show symptoms or are sick.
- All child care staff will be told to stay home if they are sick.
- Increased cleaning and disinfecting will occur throughout the day and at the end of each day.
- Child care providers will follow the direction of public health on who should self-isolate, who needs to be tested, when they can return to a facility and if the facility can remain open.
- Public health will also determine whether a notice to parents and caregivers should be sent.

How parents and caregivers can help keep child care facilities safe:

- In August, Manitoba announced that masks will be required for all students in grades 4 to 12 (ages 9 to 18) when school resumes, if physical distancing isn't possible. This will also apply to all children in this age group who attend child care facilities as of Sept. 8.
 - Parents and caregivers can decide whether younger children will wear masks to their child care programs.
 - Masks are not recommended for children under the age of two and for children of any age who have breathing problems or are unable to remove masks on their own.
 - Outdoor play can be mask-free.
- If children are sick or have symptoms, keep them at home. Use the [self-assessment tool](#) or call Health Links – Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 for more information.
- If children develop symptoms at child care facilities, they will be isolated and their parents or caregivers will be called to pick up their children promptly. Child care providers should have current contact information for parents and caregivers, and back-ups to call if they cannot be reached.
- Keep a safe distance during drop-offs and pick-ups. Whenever possible, have only one parent/caregiver drop off the child and have the same person do it each day.
- E-mail or call child care providers when you need to speak to them, instead of doing so in person.

How to talk to children about COVID-19:

Telling children it is OK to be concerned is comforting. Reassure them about their safety and explain there are many things they can do to stay healthy:

- Washing their hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Coughing and sneezing into their elbows or tissues.
- Staying home when sick.
- Eating healthy foods, keeping physically active, getting enough sleep and enjoying fresh air.

Keep up to date:

More information on COVID-19 is available at www.manitoba.ca/covid19.

Parents and caregivers looking for child care can continue to use Manitoba's web portal <https://eswchildcare.ca> to find vacancies and contact child care providers directly.

The Manitoba government appreciates feedback on COVID-19 response planning, including child care services. Visit EngageMB at <https://engagemb.ca/> to share thoughts or questions.