



Early Years Child Development Center LLC.

COVID Guide

2021 / 2022



VERSION CURRENT AS OF

September 23rd 2021

WHERE WE ARE NOW

While COVID-19 remains in our community and cases will continue to occur, Vermont has achieved among the highest vaccination rates in the **country** which continues to allow our program to be open for five days per week, in-person learning **for full program hours.**

Dear Early Years Family,

When many of us started the summer back in June, we thought we would be returning to a mostly normal school year this fall. While some things will feel a little more normal, without the availability of a vaccine for children under 12 years old, we are continuing to keep a number of layered safety measure in place.

Health Commissioner, Dr. Mark Levine, has made it clear that the Delta variant is in our community. However, with our knowledge and experience from last year, along with our families commitment to follow the recommendations outlined by the Vermont Department of Health, the VT Chapter of AAP, CDD and the Vt. Agency of Education, I am confident we can have a successful school year. The primary recommendations to keep our school community safe include staying home when you're sick, mask wearing, regular testing and quarantining when necessary to stop the spread of the virus.

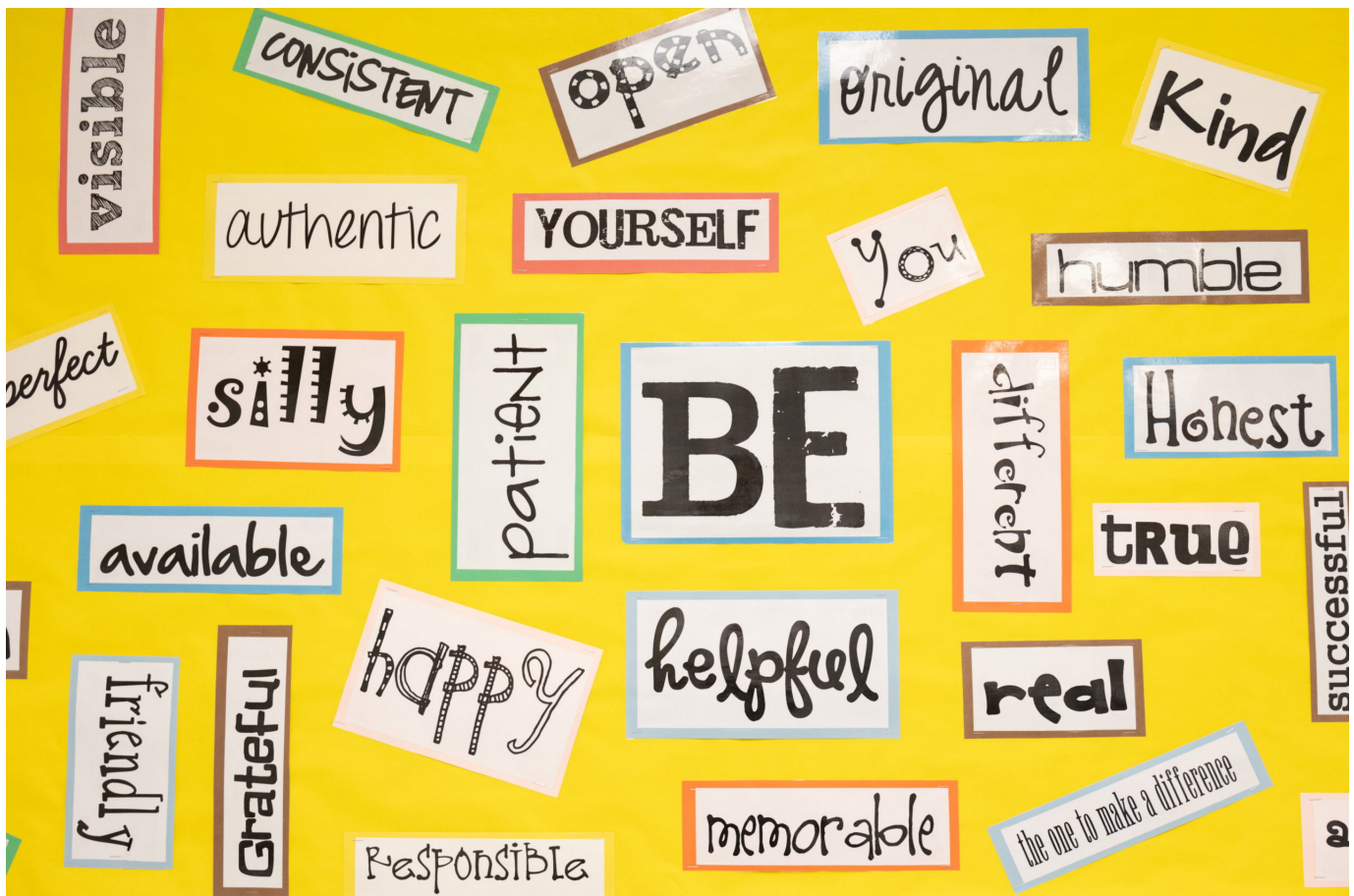
Thank you for your continued support. We are grateful to have you as an important part of our Early Years family, and look forward to another wonderful year with your amazing and inspirational children.

*Julie and Early Years
Teaching Team*



"I AM DOING THE BEST I CAN IN AN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION"

By: Dr. Erica Wollerman
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HEALTH & SAFETY



When you send your child to school, you are certifying that they are well. Every family will complete the Tadpoles daily health check for their child before leaving home for school. If you are unsure if your child is well enough to attend school, please call the program for guidance. Every child who enters school should be feeling well and able to fully participate in all program activities. Children should not be displaying symptoms of illness, on any fever reducing medications, and may not have been knowingly exposed to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.



Symptoms of COVID-19: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, chills, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle aches, headache.

Based on current data and the state's high vaccination rate, this year the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE), the Child Development Division (CDD), the Department of Health (VDH) and the Vermont American Academy of Pediatrics (VTAAP) issued advisory recommendations which include fewer mitigation measures than last year.

There are three primary strategies highlighted in the recommendations:

1. Stay home when sick,
2. Mask wearing, and
3. Regular testing and quarantining when necessary.

① ② ③ Stay home when sick

Children and teachers who are sick should stay home. This is the most important prevention measure. If symptoms begin while at school, the child or teacher will be sent home as soon as possible. All families should have a plan in place to have an adult or emergency contact available to pick up their child **within 45 minutes of being contacted by the program. Children and teachers MUST stay home if:**

(regardless of vaccination status)

- *They are showing any symptoms of COVID including a fever >100.4
- *They are currently in quarantine due to close contact with an individual with COVID; or They are in isolation due to testing positive for COVID.

WHAT IF...

If your student wakes up with COVID-19 symptoms, please use the pediatric algorithm created by VCHIP, UVM Children's Hospital and VDH to determine next steps. Please reach out to the program with questions, we are happy to help. The algorithm does not apply to children who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months. The program will consult VDH in this instance to determine next steps. The link to the algorithm is provided below.

http://contentmanager.med.uvm.edu/docs/vchip-aap-uvch-vdh_covidpediatric_flowchart_08_27_21/vchip-documents/vchip-aap-uvch-vdh_covidpediatric_flowchart_08_27_21.pdf?sfvrsn=b6f00e0e_2

IF THEY HAVE



THEN YOU SHOULD



THEY CAN RETURN WHEN



ANY of the symptoms listed for <24 hours: fever <100.4, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, loss of taste/smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle aches, or headache.

They should **stay home** from school and **notify the program office team** of their symptom and confirm next steps.



If their symptoms resolve <24 hours, they may return >24 hours after symptoms resolve or significantly improve.

IF THEY HAVE



THEN YOU SHOULD



THEY CAN RETURN WHEN



ANY of the symptoms listed >24 hours:

fever >100.4, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, loss of taste/smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle aches, or headache.

They should **stay home** from school, **notify the program** of their symptoms and **consult their primary care physician** to arrange a COVID **test** regardless of vaccination status.



If the test is negative, the student can return to school when their symptoms have significantly improved >24 hours and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. **Test results will be sent to Julie Brigante @ juliebrigante@yahoo.com. Julie will confirm the child's return date with the family before the child returns to school.**



If the test is positive, please notify Julie and the program immediately. The student can return to school after 10 days have passed since the symptoms first appeared, symptoms are significantly improved and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

WHAT IF...

continued

IF THEY HAVE



THEN YOU SHOULD



THEY CAN RETURN WHEN

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ANY of the symptoms listed >24 hours:

Fever >100.4, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, loss of taste/smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle aches, or headache.

They should stay home from school, notify the program office team of their symptoms and consult their primary care physician to arrange a COVID test regardless of vaccination status.



If it is decided **not to test and an alternative diagnosis is made** (i.g. strep throat), they can return to school when their symptoms have significantly improved or resolved and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.



If it is decided **not to test and no alternative diagnosis is made**, they can return to school when their symptoms have significantly improved or resolved, it has been at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. Testing is encouraged. The sooner you test, the sooner the child can return to school.



If your child is a close contact of a known Covid-19 person, please refer to page 1 of the algorithm for guidance. The child can not attend school. Immediately contact Julie @ juliebrigante@yahoo.com for guidance and next steps. The guidance is constantly changing so it is important to contact Early Years as soon as possible so we can connect with VDOH to see what our next steps as a program need to be.

HEALTH & SAFETY

① ② ③ Mask-wearing



Masks are required inside of the program for all adults, children 3 years and older. Children 2 years of age when developmentally appropriate based on CDC guidance will be encouraged to wear a mask. The Agency of Education (AOE), Vermont Department of Health (VDH), the CDD and the VT Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics have recommended that schools continue to require masking. We will continue to assess public health conditions statewide and in our community. Our program will provide families with notification if any changes are made to the current masking requirement.

① ② ③ Regular testing & quarantine

With COVID-19 testing, people who test positive can get care earlier. Contacts of the positive individual can be traced and self-isolation or quarantine started sooner to help **stop the spread of the virus**.

Testing is important!

The only way to be sure is to TEST. Anyone can get tested for COVID-19 at locations throughout the state, free of charge. PCR remains the preferred method of testing. While it is always wise to contact your PCP, the VDH has many clinics open for testing for people of all ages including infants. The website indicates an appointment is necessary, but in reality, you can simply walk in to a clinic for a test. There may be a wait, but the wait may be shorter than waiting for an appointment. The website is updated fairly regularly, so we recommend checking often for updates and availability. **If your child is getting tested for COVID-19, your child will need to remain excluded from the program until you can provide a negative test result. Please email to juliebrigante@yahoo.com**

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/testing/where-get-tested>

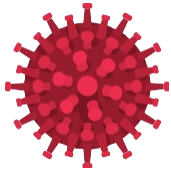


HEALTH & SAFETY

CONTACT TRACING

Early Years will work closely with the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or teacher affiliated with the program. The program will only be notified by VDH if the individual with COVID-19 was in school while infectious. We rely on families to be transparent and honest with the program. Working together we can reduce the spread of the virus. Please notify Julie with any Covid-19 related matters, questions or concerns. Knowledge is power!

If someone tests positive but was not in the program while they were infectious, the program will not have a role in contact tracing or communicating with families.



The infection period is when someone with COVID-19 can spread the virus to others. It starts two days before symptoms begin - or for people who don't have symptoms, two days before they tested positive - and continues until they have recovered.

CLOSE CONTACTS & QUARANTINE

When the program is notified of a positive individual Julie and the EY team will use information including general Tadpoles attendance records, classroom specific attendance, class schedules, activity or co-curricular participation records and staffing records to identify who at the school had close contact with the positive individual.

A close contact is someone who was within six feet of the sick person, with or without a mask, for more than 15 minutes or sharing a space for more than four hours. Anyone identified as a close contact will be contacted by the program or / and VDH. Early Years will notify close contacts before notifying the general community. Close contacts will need to quarantine based on guidance from VDH, even if vaccinated depending on the guidance.

If the close contact needs to quarantine, it means staying home and away from others for 14 days. They do have the option to end quarantine early if they do not have symptoms and get tested with a PCR test on or after day seven and get a negative test result. All close contacts will receive information outlining quarantine in more detail including the dates on when they can test and return to school. For more information on close contacts, testing, and quarantine, please visit the VDH website.

YOU ARE MAKING
A DIFFERENCE
EVERY
day.

THE
designer
TEACHER

CURRENT SAFETY MEASURES

Access To Our School

Our building will be open for employees, children and families with limited visitor access. We will continue to conduct initial tours and interviews via Zoom. Deliveries are left outside/or just inside the front door. The only other visitors permitted in the building are people conducting essential maintenance, people providing special services to children in our care or people affiliated with the agencies we do business with.

Masks

Masks are required inside our building until notified otherwise by the program. Masks will be provided by the program for the children in our care if they do not come in with one. Adult masks for teachers including cloth, clear masks, clear shields and surgical masks are all available to teachers should they not wish to use their own personal supply from home. Additional PPE is available to teachers including scrub tops and smocks. Parents should wear a mask upon exiting their car if they are entering the building with their child.

We ask parents to SANITIZE their hands upon entry to the building with the sanitizer provided. When other children are present in the classroom, please remain in the hallway/doorway to talk to a teacher. At the end of the day, your child's teacher will remove school masks for laundering. Hand sanitizer for all departing the program is recommended.

Distancing and Podding

We continue to encourage families to practice physical distancing when inside and outside our program. We ask that families in all classrooms EXCEPT infant classrooms remain at the classroom door to talk with teachers. For the time being, please do not enter the actual classroom when children are present. This is an extra precaution we feel could help to reduce the potential spread of the virus. Continue to limit your time inside the program to the maximum necessary to drop-off or pick-up your child. We recognize this is hard, but we hope to avoid sliding back to the time when families were not allowed in the building at all. Telephone calls, emails, Tadpoles messages and Zoom meetings are all options to enhance family communication. Co-mingling will be reduced as much as we can while still being able to fully staff our program. Drop-off and pick-up are the trickiest times of day where co-mingling is necessary to staff the program and let teachers go home at the end of a long day.

Eating and Drinking

All children will eat in their individual classrooms. Vaccinated teachers may eat with the children, but will be required to take turns and sit 6 feet away when not wearing their mask to eat. Un-vaccinated teachers may not remove their masks while inside the program in the presence of children. When removing masks to eat, they must be a minimum of 6 feet away from any other person at all times.

Cleaning & Hygiene

All buildings will undergo cleaning and disinfection on a daily basis. Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned often. Children and staff will be frequently reminded about the importance of proper hand washing. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the program. We continue to use high quality air purifiers in all classrooms, and opening windows when feasible to increase ventilation. At the end of each night we use our electromagnetic disinfecting sprayer throughout the entire building.

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Vaccination for all Vermonters who are eligible is the key to keeping our school, our families and our communities safe. Vaccines are the surest way to prevent serious illness and death, prevent widespread outbreaks in our school and our communities, and, ultimately, move past the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, anyone 12 years and older is eligible for the vaccine.

The Delta variant of this virus has changed the game, for the country and here in Vermont. Nonetheless, the vaccines are doing what they are designed to do — prevent severe illness, hospitalization and death. The vaccines are estimated to have saved some 279,000 lives and prevented 1.25 million hospitalizations (according to a study led by Yale School of Public Health). That’s pretty amazing to consider. We have learned a great deal about the virus – an almost unprecedented amount – in the more than 18 months of this pandemic. We have a very powerful tool — vaccines that are highly effective at preventing the most serious outcomes of the COVID-19 virus, including against the Delta variant.

We need to work together to keep our program open, operating and safe for children, families and teachers. In order to do this your support is essential. We do not have additional teachers to cover if a teacher is out with quarantine or lengthy sick time. We may need to close a classroom or the program for some time if we can not staff our classrooms. Your help in keeping our school safe from COVID and other viruses is paramount to keeping our school open to serve your family. Please follow this guidance and any new policies that are developed so we can all continue to discover, nurture and care for young children.

Thank you,

Julie and the EY Teaching Team.

