

Reopening at Cornerstone Center for Early Learning in the Time of COVID-19

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**CORNERSTONE CENTER
FOR EARLY LEARNING**

OVERVIEW

Cornerstone Center for Early Learning (CCEL) puts the health and safety of children, families and staff first. We continue to stay apprised of the latest information regarding the COVID-19 virus through the St. Louis City Health Department, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). CCEL will use guidelines, recommendations and regulations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and St. Louis City Health Department to establish best practices to remain open during the COVID 19 pandemic. Constant communication between these organizations is required to have the most up-to-date information to make informed decisions around the operation of programming.

This information will be used in conjunction with the CDC's guidance for [programs that remain open](#) and their guidance for administrators of [child care programs and K-12 schools](#). This guidance does not supersede applicable federal, state, and local laws and policies for child care programs.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html#General>

**Cornerstone Center for Early Learning will reopen on
Monday, June 15, 2020 with modified hours of
7:30am-4:30pm Monday-Friday**



Supporting the Emotional and Social Well Being

As we welcomed children back to CCEL during COVID-19, we knew that we must be attuned to the emotional and social well-being of the children. Children were asked to leave CCEL abruptly and returned to a school that operated very differently. Now after a year things continue to evolve. This document is to help families understand current protocols.

Teacher Support

Your classroom teacher is your number one supporter right now. If you have not already done so, please plan to connect with your child's classroom teacher(s). If you need help with that let us know.

Administrative Support

The Administrative Team members are here to support children and families. Families who may have individual concerns or issues should schedule a time to meet virtually or via the phone with Toni Jackson, Center Director. It is our goal to best support you and your family to make as smooth a transition as possible.



What will happen in Phase 2

Quick Snapshot

While the need to provide a quality and a safe place for children will never change, the way that services are provided, as well as interactions between staff, children, and their families will be different. This document goes into more depth on these changes in the following pages. Some of the changes that will be included in our plans are:

- Static groups
- Drop off and pick up occur at playground entrance
- Electronic sign in and out for all families
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - All adults in the facility will be required to wear masks
- Vigilant hygiene
- Daily health checks
- Defined space for ill children and staff

Programs Temporarily Discontinued

During this second phase of re-entry, the following typical classroom procedures must be put on hold:

- Toothbrushing
- Family style dining
- Outside visitors or guests/volunteers
- Visitations to other classrooms or other community spaces in the building

General Preparedness and Planning--Preventing the Spread of COVID-19

Our staff have received training in the proper three-step cleaning and sanitizing process and our classrooms and communal spaces reflect necessary changes in the environment to mitigate the spread of the virus. We ask that all families review proper personal hygiene techniques with their children on a daily basis.

Hand Hygiene and Cleaning Procedures

- [Wash hands](#) often with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
 - Remember to supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent swallowing alcohol.
 - The goal is to increase hand hygiene as much as possible during this pandemic.
 - The Caring for Our Children recommendation below is to use soap and water when possible and when there is visible soiling, but hand sanitizer is permissible if soap and water is not available. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, it is recommended to significantly increase the frequency of hand hygiene. If alcohol-based hand sanitizer is available and will increase the frequency that children and staff do hand hygiene, then use it if necessary. Remember that alcohol-based hand sanitizer is toxic if ingested and must be kept out of reach of small children.
- Nightly deep cleaning and sanitizing will occur
- Playground equipment will be sanitized daily
- Bathrooms and other high contact areas will be sanitized throughout the day
- Toys will be sanitized throughout the day after use

Personal Protective Equipment

Staff at CCEL will be provided with **at least** three reusable/washable cloth face masks. Disposable face masks are on hand in the event they are needed. Staff will continue to wear gloves during cleaning, diapering and preparing food. Hand washing or use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after these procedures is always required, whether or not gloves are used.

- [Current Guidance on Use of Masks](#)



- Adults and children over 2 years should wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth when in the community. Children at CCEL will not be required to wear a mask.
- All adults in the building will be wearing a cloth face covering; children are not required to wear masks. If a parent would like for a child over two years old to wear a mask, that discussion should occur with the center director prior to returning.
- Cloth face coverings will NOT be put on babies and children under age two because of the danger of suffocation.
- A cloth face covering prevents the spread of the virus from the user to another person. It also prevents the user from touching their nose and mouth.
- A mask does not protect the wearer from droplets in the air spread by another person or child.
- Children may not be able to reliably wear, remove, and handle masks.
- Do not wear masks when engaging in vigorous physical activity.

We understand the challenges of wearing face coverings while serving young children. Staff at CCEL will wear cloth masks while in the center. Cloth masks are used to reduce the likelihood of transmission of the virus to other staff members and children.

Procedures for sick children and staff

- If children are sick (uncontrollable cough, runny nose, fever, fatigue), please keep them at home and notify the center of the absence.
- If a staff member is sick, please remain at home and notify the center immediately.
- Anyone who is out sick will be asked the following questions:
 - *Are you exhibiting flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath?
 - *Do you feel fatigue?
 - *Do you have a loss of taste?
 - *Have you recently been exposed to anyone that tested positive for COVID-19?
 - *Have you been tested for COVID-19? If yes, what were the results?
- Staff will continually monitor the health of children throughout the day. If a child shows any symptoms (cough, runny nose, fever, fatigue, changes in behavior), the parent or guardian will be notified and the child will be escorted with a staff member to the designated sick area.
- Children may return to the center after clearance from a physician or a negative COVID 19 test or when symptoms have resolved for 24 hours without medication.
- Sick staff members should not return to work until they have met the [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#) or have a negative COVID 19 test.
- Staff members must notify the center immediately of any pending COVID-19 tests and remain out of work until the negative test result is received.



- Parents must notify the center of any pending COVID-19 tests for any member of their household and will need to remain out from Cornerstone until a negative test result is received.

If someone becomes sick:

- A designated space in the main office is set as the sick space. Any child who becomes sick at the center will stay there (with another adult at all times) until he or she is picked up. The room will then be cleaned and disinfected.
- Families at the center will be notified when any child or adult is positive for COVID-19.
- CCEL will follow CDC guidance on how to [disinfect the building or facility](#) if someone is sick. We have contracted with a cleaning crew that has the proper disinfectants to properly clean our building.

If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member, we will:

- Notify local and county health officials.
- Cornerstone Center will follow the advice of the Health Department on if and when to close the center and for how long.
- Notify all individuals who have come in contact with or in close proximity to the confirmed individual.
- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
- Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning and disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
- If more than 7 days have passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
 - Continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

When can a person who was sick return to the program?

- The minimum criteria is that a person must be symptom free **WITHOUT** the use of medication for 24 hours

Additional readmission factors based on answers to COVID exposure and symptoms



Procedures During Time of COVID-19

Clean and Disinfect

[Caring for Our Children](#) (CFOC) provides national standards for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of educational facilities for children. Toys that can be put in the mouth will be cleaned and sanitized. Other hard surfaces, including diaper changing stations, door knobs, and floors will be disinfected continuously throughout the day by teachers and the cleaning crew.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) provides [guidance on cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces](#). This guidance provides specific information and supplies that are needed to implement a vigorous cleaning and disinfecting schedule.

Here are the procedures that CCEL has in place:

- All toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will be removed from classrooms.
- Each classroom has a dirty and clean toy bin outside of the classroom door. When a toy has been used by a child (for infants and toddlers, if the toy has been placed in the child's mouth, etc), the toy will immediately be placed in the dirty toy bin outside of the classroom door. The administrative staff and kitchen crew will routinely clean and sanitize the toys then return them to the classroom for a new rotation of use.
- All cleaning materials are to be kept secure and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.
- Cot sheets, crib sheets, lovies and blankets are laundered weekly. All soft blankets and lovies must remain at the center and be machine-washable.
- Cots and cribs are sanitized after each use.
- The playground equipment will be sanitized daily.
- 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.

Healthy Hand Hygiene Behavior

- All children and staff engage in hand hygiene at the following times (not an exhaustive list):
 - 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 coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After playing outdoors or in sand
- Before and after handling sensory material such as playdough
- After handling garbage
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer is available at the entrance to the building where soap and water are not readily available.
- Assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone.
 - After assisting children with handwashing, staff should also wash their hands.

Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- For the most specific information on drop-off and pick-up, please see this [document](#).
- Children will be dropped off at the center at the gate to the playground.
- A portable handwashing station is set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can wash their hands before going to their classroom.
- Parents/guardians will sign in using an electronic sign-in system. More information on how to perform the sign-in will be provided in a separate communication.
- The staff member assisting with drop-off will use a no-touch thermometer to take the child's temperature. Then the child will wash their hands at the portable handwashing station.

Screening and Exclusion Procedures Upon Arrival

Persons who have a fever of 100⁰ or above or other signs of illness (cough, runny nose, fatigue) will not be admitted to the facility. Parents should be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Please call the center if you are keeping your child home due to this reason.

- Individuals who have a fever or other signs of illness will not be admitted into the center.
- Individuals with a history of COVID-19 exposure and those showing signs of illness will not be admitted into the center.
 - Children who are sick, with the typical reasons kids get sick (vomiting, rash, diarrhea, pink eye etc.) should be excluded in accordance with licensing policies.
 - **Individuals should be symptom and fever free for at least 24 hours**, without the use of fever-reducing medications (Tylenol® or Advil®) before returning.



- Current information about when individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 or individuals with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should stay home is available on the [COVID-19 Resource Center](#).

No nonessential people in the center

No nonessential visitors or volunteers will be allowed in the center. Only children and their teachers will be allowed in each classroom.

Outside therapists and counselors will not be allowed in the center at this time. The center will be happy to assist in setting up virtual sessions with therapists or assist in scheduling therapy sessions at home.

Food Preparation and Meal Service

- Breakfast, lunch and snacks will **be prepared by Cornerstone staff**.
- Formula and baby food will continue to be provided.
- All meals will be served to children instead of family-style dining so children are not using the same serving utensils.
- Staff will continue to eat with children at tables

CCEL will follow all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations and [guidance](#) related to safe preparation of food.

Physical Space

- Rugs will be removed, replaced with plastic mats, or steam cleaned on a regular basis.
- To maintain a sense of LOVE, BELONGING and APPROPRIATE POWER for our center, the physical space in each classroom will include family boards/pictures, individual cubbies, job charts, etc. Child artwork will remain on the walls so children may see themselves reflected.
- The fish continue to create a warm and welcoming entry space for all children. CCEL will not stop children from saying hello and good-bye to their friends, the fish, but will disinfect the glass throughout the day and entry and exit process to keep everyone safe and healthy.
- In infant-toddler classrooms, all adults will wear shoe coverings when entering or designated 'classroom shoes' to reduce the risk of outside contaminants being on the floor where children crawl and play.

Use of Playgrounds/Outdoor Space



Spending time outside is an important time of the day to retain. Children of all ages will have an opportunity for daily outdoor play, weather permitting. The following adjustments will be made during this second phase:

- Two classrooms at a time (stable groups) on the playground
- Clean and disinfect equipment daily
- The community garden will be utilized to increase children's access to outdoor time. Classes will have their own designated time slot.

What should we bring to school?

- Children should come to the center with two extra changes of clothes in a ziplock bag with his or her name on it on the first day.
- Families are asked to minimize outside toys brought into the center. Lovies or special naptime blankets or toys may be brought to the center on the first day, but will be washed and kept in the child's cubby throughout the time here.
- CCEL will continue to provide all diapers and wipes.

Communication with Families

Regular communication with families is important. It will be even more difficult now that you cannot physically see your child's teacher. Every Sunday we will send a school-wide electronic newsletter. (Infants and toddlers will continue to receive daily sheets.) Families are also encouraged to call throughout the day to check in on his or her child's progress or well-being. Family members may call the center and be transferred to their child's classroom throughout the day.

