



COVID-19 RESPONSE HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

Updated: August 2021



Safety First

Our first priority at The Owl's Nest Childcare Center is to make sure that the children, families and staff are safe and safeguarded, to the best of our ability.

We are implementing CDC recommendations for childcare centers as well as the Guidance for New Jersey Child Care Facilities established by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families.

We are diligent to maintain the strictest of precautions. Among the most precautions are:

- ✓ Request that all employees, parents, and children stay home if they have a fever of 100.4 degrees or more, have any of the symptoms listed consistent with COVID-19, or have potentially been exposed to COVID-19.
- ✓ Restrict access to anyone who falls into any of the above categories.
- ✓ Restrict access to the classrooms to children and staff only.
- ✓ Maintain social distancing practices throughout the center as much as practicable.
- ✓ Provide access to PPE for staff, children, and families.
- ✓ Perform routine, thorough cleaning of the entire facility, including toys, furniture, equipment, and doorknobs.

The following pages will detail all procedures that we, at The Owl's Nest, enforce along with all protocols for our families.

Note: Please understand that this is a rapidly changing situation and the protocols, procedures and guidelines in this document may change with time as the current state of the pandemic evolves.

Protocols and Procedures

General Procedures:

Drop-off and Pick-up:

- Parents are to check their children in and out using the Brightwheel app on their phones and scanning the QR code located at the entrance upon arrival and departure.
- During check-in, parents must complete the COVID-19 health questionnaire in its entirety.
- If the person dropping the child off does not have access to Brightwheel, they must fill out the paper version of the health questionnaire found in the vestibule.
- Parents may drop off and pick up children at the classroom doorway. Only staff and children will be permitted inside the classrooms.
- If a family member drops off that does not have access to the biometrically locked door to the center, they should ring the doorbell and a staff member will come to escort the child to their classroom in the morning or escort the child from the classroom to the vestibule in the afternoon.
- To maintain social distancing, only one family should be at the classroom door at one time. If you arrive and another family is picking up or dropping off at the same classroom as your child, please wait at a distance of at least 6 feet in the hallway or vestibule.

Screening and Admittance:

- Parents are asked to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.
- Children and staff are routinely checked for temperature and other COVID-19 symptoms throughout the day. Should a child or staff member present a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher or exhibit other symptoms during a routine check, the child or staff member must go home. Parents will be notified, and the child must be picked up within 30 minutes.

Implement Social Distancing Strategies:

Though complete social distancing is impossible to achieve in a childcare environment, we implement strategies to minimize chances of viral transmission. These strategies include but are not limited to:

- Eliminate large group activities: No assemblies, large meetings, performances, presentations.
- Reduced group sizes: Children remain with their classmates throughout the day and are not grouped with children from other classrooms in the mornings, the afternoons or during outside play times.
- Bathroom times for each classroom are staggered to ensure safe social distancing.

Face Coverings and Masks:

- Staff are required to wear cloth masks while working unless doing so will inhibit the individual's health.
- Children aged 2 and over are encouraged to wear face coverings within the facility periodically throughout the day. Cloth face coverings should NOT be put on children under age two because of the danger of suffocation. Masks are not worn by children while napping.
- Please make sure the children arrive at the center wearing their masks. Should you forget a mask for your child, the center will provide one for the child and may choose to pass the cost along to the parents.
- All adults entering the center are required to wear face masks while inside the building. Should you forget a mask for yourself, the center will provide one and may choose to pass the cost along.

Activities:

- Sharing of supplies, food, toys, and other high touch items is limited. Children have their own pencil box with art supplies that are labeled and not shared with other children.
- Activities that are likely to bring children into close contact are modified. For example, games and sports involving direct physical contact are replaced with no contact activities or sports.
- External entertainers are not permitted access to the center.

Items from home:

- We provide water, milk, snacks, and lunch and respectfully request that you refrain from bringing food/drinks from home unless absolutely necessary due to dietary restrictions.
- Toys from home are not permitted in the center unless it is an item for a designated show and tell day. Those items need to remain in the child's bag until show and tell time and will be promptly returned afterwards.
- Stuffed animals and/or security blankets that children need for comfort must remain in their bags during the day and may only be used during nap time.
- Children's belongings will be kept separate in their individual bags and sent home each day for washing.

Visitors:

- Visitors to the center are strictly limited. Emergency or law enforcement personnel in their official capacity, Department of Children and Families personnel for child protection or childcare licensing purposes, and persons providing emergency repair services within the center that cannot be reasonably delayed will be granted access but will maintain social distancing as much as practicable. We make all efforts to limit non-emergency maintenance or repair services, prospective customers, and prospective employee visits to very short

periods of time and at no time will these visitors be granted close contact with the children.

- Unless precluded by emergency circumstances, visitors to the facility will be subject to the same screening procedures as children and staff and will be denied admission on the same basis unless the center is legally precluded from denying access (ex: a law enforcement agent with an appropriate warrant).
- To the greatest extent feasible, unless the purpose of the authorized outside visitor is to observe the care provided to children (ex: a DCF licensing inspector), all reasonable efforts should be made to minimize visitor contact with children and staff.
- Visitors will be required to wear face masks while visiting the center unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health. If a visitor refuses to wear a cloth face covering for non-medical reasons and if such covering cannot be provided to the individual by the center at the point of entry, the center will decline to allow them to enter.

Promoting Healthy Hygiene Practices:

- The center teaches and reinforces washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among children and staff.
- The center teaches and reinforces use of face coverings among children, where appropriate, and staff. Face coverings are most essential at times when social distancing is not possible. Staff and children are frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.
- The center has adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), and tissues.
- Children and staff practice frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and are required to wash their hands upon arriving at the center, when entering the classroom, before meals or snacks, after outside time, after going to the bathroom, and prior to leaving for home. Children will be monitored to ensure proper technique.

Enhanced Cleaning and Sanitation Procedures:

- The center has increased the frequency of cleaning toys, equipment, and surfaces, especially doorknobs, light switches, tabletops, and restrooms. The center cleans, sanitizes, and disinfects frequently touched surfaces (ex: light switches, door handles, sink handles) multiple times per day and shared objects between use. Cleaning is in accordance with the CDC's Guidance for Cleaning & Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools and Homes, a summary poster of which is posted on the bulletin board in the vestibule.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or are contaminated by body secretion or excretion are set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves.

- The center cleans and then disinfects surfaces and objects that are touched often on a daily basis. This includes restrooms, water coolers, tabletops, doorknobs, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, and toys.
- The center utilizes a disinfecting fogger machine throughout the entire center each evening. The disinfectant solution used is Nu-Foamicide 300048 which is registered under EPA #10324-166-40672 and is listed with the EPA to be used against human coronavirus. Additional details can be found on EPA's site under: List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2.

Response Procedures for COVID-19 Symptoms or Exposure:

Any confirmed or suspected exposure to COVID-19 occurring at The Owl's Nest will immediately be reported to both the Warren County Department of Health and the DCF Office of Licensing.

Children or staff members who develop symptoms of COVID-19 while at the facility:

- If a child or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at the facility (ex: fever of 100.4 or higher, cough, shortness of breath), they will immediately be separated from the well people until the ill person can leave the facility. If the child has symptoms of COVID-19, the caregiver waiting with the child will remain as far away as safely possible from the child (preferably, 6 feet).
- Employees or the child's parent/caregiver must inform the center immediately if the person is diagnosed with COVID-19.

Children or staff members who test positive for COVID-19:

- Should we become aware of a COVID-19 positive case at our facility, we will contact the Warren County Department of Health for guidance.
- Health officials will provide direction on whether the center should cease operations following the identification of a positive case in the facility. The duration may be dependent on staffing levels, outbreak levels in the community and severity of illness in the infected individual. Symptom free children and staff should not attend or work at another facility during the closure.
- All rooms and equipment used by the infected person, and persons potentially exposed to that person, will be cleaned, and disinfected in accordance with CDC guidance referenced above.

Returning to Child Care After COVID-19 Diagnosis or Exposure:

If a staff member or child contracts or is exposed to COVID-19, they cannot be admitted to the center again until the criteria for lifting transmission-based precautions and home isolation have been met (see document titled: COVID-19 SEND AND STAY HOME & RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES).

Attestation:

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families, our center's licensing agency, has asked that I, as owner of The Owl's Nest, attest to the following statement. I include this attestation to show you the commitment and responsibility that we have taken on at The Owl's Nest Childcare Center.

I attest that I am the responsible owner, operator or representative for the childcare center specified below, that I have received and read the Guidance for New Jersey Child Care Facilities on COVID-19 Related Health and Safety Requirements, and that I and all other owners, operators and staff of my center are prepared and able to implement and abide by these rules.

I understand that these are requirements mandated by law, and of critical importance to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of children entrusted to the care of my center.

I further acknowledge and understand that failure to abide by these rules may result in my center being prohibited from operating for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency, and may also result in the suspension or revocation of my childcare center license.