



December 31st, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Happy New Year! We hope that you are having a safe and healthy holiday season.

As announced yesterday, December 30th 2021 by Kieran Moore, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, there are significant changes coming to child care starting **January 1st, 2022**. Please see the outlined changes below, as more information is shared by the Ministry of Education, we will continue to update you.

Delayed Return to School: To allow for schools to prepare and implement changes, schools that were planning to return to classes on Monday January 3rd 2022 have been delayed until Wednesday January 5th, 2022. During this period there will be no child care available for your School Aged Children and you will be credited for these days. Early Learning Child Care Programs (infant, toddler, preschool) will continue to operate as per usual.

Screening: Child Care children and staff continue to be required to be actively screened each day prior to entering the program. An updated more sensitive COVID-19 symptom list is being reinstated to help stop the spread of Omicron. The updated screening questions will be able to be found [here](#) and shortly your individual sites screening link will be updated to match.

Testing: As per the government's announcement on December 30, 2021, testing and case contact management is focused on the highest risk settings, which excludes child care programs. At this time Child Care children and staff that do not pass screening are not eligible for a PCR test as an option to return to child care and must follow the isolation requirements below.

Isolation: Anyone who has symptoms suggestive of COVID19 (as outlined on the Ontario Schools and Child Care Screening Tool) or is a confirmed positive case must self-isolate, regardless of vaccination status.

If a child or educator is experiencing at least one symptom most commonly associated with COVID-19 or two or more symptoms less commonly associated with COVID-19 they must isolate as per public health guidelines below.

If a child/educator is experiencing one symptom most commonly associated with COVID-19, their isolation requirements depends on their vaccination status:

- **If you are fully vaccinated or aged 11 or younger:** stay home for 5 days and until your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours. The 5 days start from the date symptoms began.
- **If you are partially vaccinated, unvaccinated, or immunocompromised:** stay home for 10 days. The 10 days start from the date symptoms began.
- In both cases, all your household members (regardless of vaccination status) will need to stay home for the duration of this isolation period.

If a child/educator is experiencing only one symptom less commonly associated with COVID-19 they must stay home until their symptom(s) has been improving for 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea). The Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health is also requiring that household members, including siblings, stay home until the household member experiencing symptom(s) is cleared from their isolation.

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario will continue to credit your account for any days your child is not able to attend their program due to COVID-19 symptoms and/or isolation requirements.

Additional Health Measures:

- The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario will continue to follow all of our enhanced health and safety guidelines practices as outlined in our COVID-19 Procedure including but not limited to, proper hand hygiene, additional cleaning, promoting physical distancing where possible and cohorting groups.
- The Ministry of Education will be providing 3-ply cloth masks for children should parents so wish to access. Once we have received the masks your site supervisor will provide you with more details.
- An additional 5000 HEPA filters will be provided to the child care sector as per the direction of the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health.
- The Ontario Government continues to provide access to 1st, 2nd and 3rd doses for all eligible individuals. Vaccination continues to represent our most effective strategy to reduce COVID-19 transmission

Please know that the health, safety and well-being of your child and our staff is our top priority. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate these continuously changing times.

If you have any questions or concerns about this or any other matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Barb Landriault

Barb Landriault
Manager, Child Youth and Family Development
YMCA of Northeastern Ontario