COVID-19 In-Home Childcare Safety Suggestions
For Parents and Childcare Providers

April 4, 2020

This handout has two sections. One section is for Parents looking for short-term in-home childcare providers who may not be regulated by the state. The other section is for in-home Childcare Providers like babysitters, nannies, students, neighbors, friends, family members, and volunteers.

Parents and Childcare Providers may review the sections together or individually.

We know that finding emergency care for children aged 0 to 5 and school-aged children is extremely important at this time. We also know that parents who already have in-home childcare may be looking for ways to make their home safer during COVID-19.

In this handout, when we use the term "childcare provider" we are talking about babysitters, nannies, students, neighbors, friends, family members, and volunteers.

For Parents

THINK ABOUT YOUR HOUSEHOLD

What are your childcare needs?

☐ Determine how often you need a childcare provider (every day, only on T/Th, etc.) and times you will regularly need childcare (shifts). Your scheduling needs may change but it is helpful to identify the times and shifts needed for your current schedule.

How many high-risk individuals live in your household?

☐ According to the CDC and the NC Department Health and Human Services, high-risk includes anyone who:

- Is 65 years of age or older
- Has a high-risk condition that includes:
  - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - Heart disease with complications
  - Compromised immune system
  - Severe obesity – body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher
  - Other medical conditions, especially if not well controlled, such as diabetes, kidney failure, or liver disease.

STOP: If you live with anyone who is high-risk for COVID-19, you may need additional safety precautions. Please see these CDC resources.

Have plans if anyone starts to have fever, cough, or shortness of breath

☐ Develop childcare plans if your child starts to have symptoms *while the childcare provider is not providing care*, because the child will need to be quarantined.

☐ Develop quarantine plans if your child starts to have symptoms *while the childcare provider is caring for your child*, because the child will need to be quarantined.

☐ Develop childcare plans if you (the parent) start to have symptoms.

☐ Develop childcare plans if the childcare provider starts to have symptoms.

CHECK CHILDCARE PROVIDERS for COVID-19 *RISK*

Ask the following questions.

1. Are you at high-risk for COVID-19? This includes anyone who:
   - Is 65 years of age or older
   - Has a high-risk condition that includes:
     - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
     - Heart disease with complications
     - Compromised immune system
     - Severe obesity – body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher
     - Other underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as diabetes, kidney failure, or liver disease
2. Do you live with anyone who is at high-risk for COVID-19?

STOP: If the answer to questions above is yes, this person is not a good option to provide childcare as they may be at higher risk for getting COVID-19 themselves.

CHECK CHILDCARE PROVIDERS for COVID-19 *EXPOSURE*

Ask the following questions.

1. Have you tested positive for COVID-19?
2. Have you or anyone in your household been tested for COVID-19?
3. Have you been within 6 feet of someone for more than 10 minutes who has tested positive for COVID-19?
4. Do you or anyone in your household think they could have COVID-19?
5. Do you or anyone in your household (including children) have these COVID-19 symptoms OR have been in close contact with anyone with these symptoms?
   - Fever
   - Cough
   - Shortness of breath
6. Have you been to any gatherings of 50 or more people in the last 14 days?
7. Have you travelled outside of the U.S. in the past 14 days?
8. Have you travelled to New York City in the past 14 days?
9. Are you currently providing childcare for any other households?

   NOTE: A person should provide childcare for one household only. This will limit the number of contacts and exposure, and hopefully reduce the spread of COVID-19.

STOP: If the answer to any of questions 1-9 is yes, this person may increase the risk of your child and household getting COVID-19.

These questions are adapted from the door signs NC DHHS have provided for childcare facilities.

Cleanliness/safety instructions for childcare providers to follow in your home

- Have childcare providers remove their shoes and outerwear when they come into your house, especially if they used public transportation or if you have young children who crawl on the floor.
- Ask childcare providers to wash their hands using the 20 second rule when they come into your home, before interacting with children, before preparing food, after coughing or sneezing, and after going to the bathroom or changing diapers.
- Have childcare providers make sure children wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water every time they use the restroom, and before and after eating.
- Have proper cleaning supplies available (e.g. soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, and proper disinfectants). Ask childcare providers to wipe down surfaces that are touched a lot (doorknobs, faucets, table/countertops) every couple of hours using the supplies you provide. (Here is the list of EPA-registered disinfectants that is active against coronaviruses).
- Do not allow the childcare provider to let anyone come into your home who does not live there. This includes friends or family members who do not live in your house.
- If a child is showing fever, cough, or shortness of breath, ask the childcare provider to call you (the parent) and immediately start the quarantine plan.

TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR HOME SAFE FROM COVID-19

Tip 1: **Keep children from the same household together and in the same location each day**. Don't send your child to a friend's house, if you can help it, and do not allow friends or relatives to visit. Practice social distancing to reduce spread of COVID-19. Do this when you have symptoms, and when you do not have symptoms.

Tip 2: **Use the same childcare provider for as long as you need childcare , or for at least 14 days before changing. Make sure the childcare provider is not caring for other children from other households during this time.**

Tip 3: **Sanitize your home** by following CDC guidance the best you can. The CDC does not have cleaning and disinfecting guidelines for the home but we suggest reviewing their cleaning and disinfection guidance for schools, workplaces and community locations.

- Use EPA-registered disinfectants that are active against coronaviruses (from NC DHHS guidance for childcare centers).
- Clean surfaces daily before your childcare provider arrives and after they leave.
- Any soft toys children play with must be machine washable. Wash them often at the warmest temperature recommended on the label and dry thoroughly.
- Keep toys children put in their mouths in their own bin. Keep these toys separate from untouched and clean toys.

Other Childcare Provider Considerations

In addition to protecting against COVID-19, there are other safety issues when looking for childcare. Some questions you can ask potential childcare providers are:

☐ Does the childcare provider have a background check, CPR/First Aid Training, and child development training?

☐ What is the childcare provider's policy on child discipline?

☐ What training does the childcare provider have on injury prevention, like poisoning, water safety, helmet safety, and other household injuries?

FAQS:

Have questions you want us to respond to? Submit a question at ChildcareNC.org.

Question	Highest Safety	Medium Safety	Lower Safety
Can we share a babysitter, nanny, or childcare provider?	1 childcare provider per household 1 household of children per childcare provider	Multiple childcare providers per household if the childcare providers live together 1 household of children per set of childcare providers	Same childcare provider cares for the children of multiple households OR multiple childcare providers for children of the same household
What activities can children safely do at home to decrease risk of spreading COVID-19?	Children in individual or group activities (ex: online instruction, coloring, video games, Simon says) and are more than 6 feet apart, preferably in separate rooms that can still be monitored by the care provider	Children in small group activities where they are not touching each other or shared objects, ex: story time	Children in group activities indoor or outdoor that involve a lot of close contact, ex: tag, building a group fort, sharing Legos, board game, cooking, etc.

For Childcare Providers

WHO SHOULD PROVIDE CARE?

- Do not provide childcare if you are considered high-risk for COVID-19. According to the CDC and the NC Department Health and Human Services, this includes anyone who:
  - o Is 65 years of age or older
  - o Has a high-risk condition that includes:
    - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
    - Heart disease with complications
    - Compromised immune system
    - Severe obesity – body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher
    - Other underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as diabetes, kidney failure, or liver disease
- Do not provide childcare if you have symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, or shortness of breath), test positive for COVID-19, or have had contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Do not provide childcare if you work in any healthcare setting.
- A childcare provider should provide care for only one household at a time. This will limit the number of contacts and exposure, and hopefully reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Step 1: Check Yourself for COVID-19 *EXPOSURE*
Ask yourself the following questions.

1. Have I tested positive for COVID-19?
2. Have I or anyone in my household been tested for COVID-19?
3. Have I had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19? (Close contact means being within 6 feet of someone for more than 10 minutes.)
4. Do I or anyone in my household think they could have COVID-19?
5. Do I or anyone in my household (including children) have these COVID-19 symptoms OR have been in close contact with anyone with these symptoms?
   - Fever
   - Cough
   - Shortness of breath
6. Have I been to any gatherings of 50 or more people in the last 14 days?
7. Have I travelled outside of the U.S. in the past 14 days?
8. Have I travelled to New York City in the past 14 days?
9. Am I currently providing childcare for any other households?
   NOTE: A childcare provider should provide care for only one household at a time. This will limit the number of contacts and exposure, and hopefully reduce spread of COVID-19.

STOP: If you answer yes to any questions above, you should strongly consider NOT providing childcare. Please tell this information to any parents you are talking with about providing childcare.

Step 2: Check Yourself for COVID-19 *RISK*

1. Am I at high-risk for COVID-19? According to the CDC and the NC Department Health and Human Services, this includes anyone who:
    - Is 65 years of age or older
    - Has a high-risk condition that includes:
        - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
        - Heart disease with complications
        - Compromised immune system
        - Severe obesity – body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher
        - Other underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as diabetes, kidney failure, or liver disease
2. Do I live with someone who is a member of a high-risk category for COVID-19? (See above)

STOP: If you answer yes to any questions above, you should strongly consider NOT providing childcare. Please tell this information to any parents you are talking with about providing childcare.

Step 3: Ask Yourself These Questions

1. Do I want to provide childcare for parents who are UNC Health Care employees or others who may be at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19? Am I willing to care for children of healthcare workers who are at any level of risk of being exposed to COVID-19?
2. What information should I share with parents about my own potential exposure level? (ex: results from self-checks above, or other information like your partner is seeing patients at a hospital, you live with other people, etc.)
3. Am I able to provide childcare immediately? What days and hours am I available?
4. Am I able to provide childcare for 14+ days? What days and hours am I available?
5. How flexible is my schedule? (Many healthcare workers' schedules are constantly changing.)
6. How much do I expect to be paid? Consider the number of children, age(s) of children, time of day, and special needs.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS
Check with parents about these things before you agree to provide childcare
- ☐ Daily health checking for self, children, and parents
- ☐ Bathroom personal cleanliness expectations
- ☐ Food preparation, eating, and personal cleanliness
- ☐ In-home quarantine plan if a child shows symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, or shortness of breath) during the day
- ☐ Future childcare options if you, the child, or the parent(s) develops fever, cough, or shortness of breath.
- ☐ Cleaning supplies – what to use and where they are kept (ex: hand soap, disinfectant sprays)
- ☐ Communication plan if parents need to stay late or go early to work

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