

Personnel Protection Equipment Policy

Promised Future, Inc., is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families and employees. Promised Future, Inc., will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within our centre.

Purpose

In order to help reduce the risk of respiratory infections (including COVID-19), all employees are required to follow recommended procedures with regard to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when performing specific tasks as outlined in Public Health guidance . The type of PPE that is required is dependent on the specific tasks the employee is taking part in.

All employees, students and any other persons that enter the premise and engage in the programs must adhere to the following procedures. The adherence to wearing PPE when required will ensure the safety and well-being of staff, children and families.

Policy

All adults in a child care setting are required medical masks and eye protection (face shields) while inside the centre.

All employees who are working in our program are required to follow required guidance and regulation from York Region Public Health and Ministry of Education regarding the use of PPE for certain tasks. Employees are required to wear PPE when screening the children at the front door, when escorting the children to their classroom and when cleaning the environment. Any visitor who enters the location, including any authorized visitors such as Public Health, and Ministry of Education must wear full PPE when visiting the program.

Promised Future, Inc., will provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for use by staff when necessary. When possible, we will maintain a two-week supply of PPE at all times.

Staff must wear a surgical mask and eye protection (e.g. goggles, face shield):

- *In the screening area, when screening or escorting children to the child care area*
- *When cleaning and disinfecting blood or bodily fluid spills if there is a risk of splashing or droplets*
- *When caring for a sick child or a child showing symptoms of illness*

Masks are recommended when social distancing is not possible. Children attending the program are not required to wear masks, however may do so if they feel comfortable. Proper procedures to put on and take off the mask should be shared with the child as well as how to store the mask if it needs to come off temporarily not to contaminate the surroundings, Single use masks should be discarded after use.

Promised Future, Inc., staff are not required to wear masks all day unless they are screening, cleaning, preparing food or dealing with an ill child or at any other time a staff cannot socially distance. Disposable masks will be required when screening, caring for a symptomatic ill child or when preparing food. If an employee chooses to use a reusable mask, it must be of medical grade when a mask is required. An employee using a reusable must ensure that the mask is washed daily.

Employees wearing a mask when required or when choosing to put on a mask, must do so following the proper steps. All employees will be trained how to put on and how to take off masks as well as full PPE. Single use PPE should be discarded after use and not saved for re-use. Use of PPE is required when:

- Employees conducting the screening and escorting the children into the program must be wearing full Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) including disposable gowns, gloves, masks and shields.
- Employees who are sanitizing the high touch points & washrooms will also be wearing full PPE.
- Kitchen staff preparing food will wear a mask. Gloves will be worn when required, but are not necessary as proper handwashing can be performed
- Employees who are preparing the disinfectant solution are required to wear appropriate PPE including gloves and goggles.
- Employees that come in contact with blood or body fluids
- Employees will try to avoid getting close to a child's face. It is recommended that employees wear masks where social distancing is not possible.

Gloves must be worn when it is anticipated that hands will be exposed to mucous membranes, broken skin,

tissue, blood, bodily fluids, secretions, excretions, contaminated equipment, or environmental surfaces.

To reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, the Centre staff working with the younger children will change their clothing to indoor clothes upon arrival into the childcare centre and before entering their assigned 'cohort'. If the staff member chooses to leave the facility during a break, they must change back into their clothing prior to leaving the building and then back into their scrubs prior to returning to their 'cohort'. Hands must be washed when entering the childcare. All staff while in the childcare require Indoor/outdoor shoes.

Strategies for Educators wearing Facemasks

Language, speech, and social development are so dependent on face-to-face interaction between adults and children. When wearing a facemask, facial expressions become more difficult to read, it is more difficult for an adult to show their interest in what a child is doing or saying and speech may be muffled.

During times when it may be required for educators in our program to wear a mask, these strategies can be used:

- Speak loudly and clearly to circumvent the muffling effect of a face mask
- Lower yourself to the child's physical level even though you may be distanced
- Exaggerate your intonation in the absence of being able to use facial expression to augment and clarify your message
- Exaggerate your gestures which will help get a child's attention and provide visual cues in the absence of the child being able to fully see your facial expression
- Consider wearing a badge or photo of yourself, or having photos in the classroom of educators and children with and without facemasks. This is a great opportunity to make a 'homemade' book involving the children in the process.
- Use gestures to encourage a child to take another turn in an interaction or conversation e.g. hold out your arm, lean your body toward the child
- Aim to convey your message with your eyes as much as possible such as using wide eyes when surprised, smiling eyes when happy, etc.
- Make explicit comments to draw children's attention to your feelings, e.g., 'Look how happy my eyes look! "Look how surprised I am. My eyes are so wide!"
- Encourage parents to play with masks with their children so children become more comfortable when seeing masks at childcare. Play at putting them on and taking them off so children understand that the person wearing them is the same friendly person they have always known even if part of their face is hidden. Mask play can turn into a game where educators reveal a smile, frown, surprised look, etc. make comments such as "Even though you couldn't see my mouth, I was smiling and happy to see you!"