

# Reopening B.C.: Updated guidelines released for childcare centres <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Judd, Amy

**Source:** Global News

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 15 May 2020

## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

More guidelines have now been released for childcare operators in B.C. to continue operation under the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Childcare is considered an essential service in B.C. so many centres have remained open in some capacity during the pandemic.

Childcare should adapt as much as possible to implement public health and infection prevention and control measures, the province said, such as staff and children staying home when ill, practicing physical distancing, minimized physical contact, washing hands, and frequent cleaning and disinfection.

Under the guidelines released Friday, the province said facilities must take children outside often for play and snacks.

Centres must be cleaned at least once a day and frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day. Toys and other items that cannot be easily cleaned must be removed.

Cots and cribs should be cleaned after each use and gloves should be worn when cleaning blood or bodily fluids.

Childcare providers must also establish a policy around sending a child to daycare if they are sick or show any symptoms while at the facility.

One of the biggest issues at daycares is around physical distancing and physical contact, as children often cannot understand those boundaries.

The B.C. government says childcare centres must have sufficient space to support physical distancing between staff without reducing the number of children in care at any one time.

Staff should minimize the frequency of direct physical contact with children and encourage children to minimize physical contact with each other.

The government says younger children should be supported to have minimized direct contact with each other, while older children should be supported to maintain physical distance whenever possible.

New guidelines say close greetings, for example hugs and handshakes, should be avoided and children should be reminded to keep their hands to themselves.

Centres should incorporate more individual activities and stagger snack or meal time to allow spacing between children during meals.

Daycares should also minimize the number of additional adults entering the centre unless necessary.

The B.C. government says personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves, is not needed in the childcare setting beyond those used by staff as part of regular precautions.

There has been some confusion, however, among childcare providers in B.C. as to how they will be able to meet these guidelines and operate at full capacity.

Pamela Wallberg from the Child Care Professionals of B.C., told Global News Friday she is confused by some of the new guidelines.

"Page four says that playgrounds are a safe environment but the press conference today said that schools aren't opening their playgrounds," she said.

"Page five sends you to look at the cleaning and disinfectants for public settings, which says that you need to remove paper and magazines but then page six says that there's no problem with books and paper."

"Page seven tells us twice that we need to conduct daily checks for respiratory illness but page five says that there is no role for screening children or staff for symptoms or checking temperatures.

“But childcare operators have to check temperatures regularly if a child appears that they may have a temperature,” Wallberg added.

“We are required to have thermometers as part of our supplies. So are we now not allowed to take temperatures because we are being told that there’s no role for us to do so and we’re not medical professionals?”

**Related link:**

**Region:** British Columbia <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** health and safety <sup>[4]</sup>

---

**Source URL (modified on 25 May 2020):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/20/05/reopening-bc-updated-guidelines-released-childcare-centres>

**Links**

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/20/05/reopening-bc-updated-guidelines-released-childcare-centres> <sup>[2]</sup>

<https://globalnews.ca/news/6950005/b-c-coronavirus-childcare-plan/> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7860> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/health-and-safety>