

COVID-19 and Daycare: Some Things to Consider



Many working parents must find daycare arrangements for their young children, which can be made more difficult during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Parents in need of daycare should keep in mind the following when exploring their available options.

1. Different states or cities already have in place regulations, guidelines or suggestions concerning daycare facilities. It can be helpful to check with your state or local officials to determine if this is the case where you live.
2. Daycare programs should have in place a preparedness plan to provide protection against spread of COVID-19. It's a good idea to verify that your daycare options have in place such a plan and to ask to review it.
3. In general, during the pandemic, smaller groups of children are a safer option. Talk with the daycare providers you are considering to find out the maximum number of children that they are allowing, both in the individual class in which your child might be enrolled and in the facility as a whole. Ask whether there are times (such as during outdoor play) when more than one class is likely to be utilizing any given space (inside or outside).



4. All daycare facilities should screen teachers, staff and students every day for symptoms of COVID-19. Individuals (teachers, staff or children) who arrive at the facility with symptoms should return home; those who become symptomatic during the course of the day should be separated from other individuals until such time as they can return home.
5. The daycare providers under consideration should require that all teachers and staff wear masks. The CDC states that children under age two should not wear masks; however, it is recommended that older children do wear masks.
6. The daycare provider should require regular hand washing by students, teachers and staff, and all spaces should also be regularly cleaned.
7. Ask what modifications the daycare provider has taken in terms of dropping children off (and picking them up) in order to reduce risk of transmission. Some typical modifications, depending upon the layout and size of the space and the number of children, might include hand sanitizing stations upon entrance; staggered drop-off and pick-up times; and designated individuals to receive students outside of the school entrance (to cut down on direct parental contact with the physical facility and students.)
8. Individuals with thalassemia are considered to be at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 infection than the general population. If you are the parent of a child with thalassemia, discuss with your healthcare provider any concerns you or they might have about your child being placed in daycare. Also be sure that your daycare provider knows about your child's need to receive transfusions and discuss any impact that may have on your child's participation.

The CDC website has more information about daycare facilities and COVID-19 at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>.

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www.thalassemia.org

