COVID-19:
Support for
Early Childhood Educators

Early childhood educators throughout the United States are feeling the stress of caring for young children and their families at this challenging time as we deal with Coronavirus/COVID-19.

Here is a compilation of a few resources that we hope will provide some valuable and much needed support to early childhood programs and early childhood educators. We hope this information will help to establish some protocols to safeguard the health of the children and families they serve and their own health & safety.

What is a pandemic and its impact on child care?
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) **Synopsis:** This article describes the negative effects and impact of the coronavirus on child care programs, staff, and families throughout the United States and the District of Columbia. A survey conducted nationwide revealed the need for federal and state funding to support child care programs in securing their space, salaries, financial standing, and protecting the health and safety of the children, families, and staff.
Child Care Aware® of America (CCA) **Synopsis**: This article gives the definition of a pandemic and how child care educators can prepare themselves in advance to reduce the spread of a virus on the children, families, and staff at their programs. This includes information about preparedness training, planning, implementation of proper sanitation procedures and processes, and reviewing of protocols.
Center for Disease Control (CDC) **Synopsis:** This article gives the definition of a pandemic and how child care educators can protect the health, safety, and well-being of the staff, families, and children at their early learning programs. A checklist is provided for educators to fill out and assess their preparedness for a pandemic. There are sections including Planning & Coordination, Student Learning and Program Operations, Infection Control Policies and Actions, and Communications Planning.
Save the Children **Synopsis:** This article describes the threats of pandemics and informs educators about the nature (symptoms, incubation period, treatment, duration) of the coronavirus. Links to information, statistics, a list of community resources, and guidance tips for health care professionals and caregivers about the virus are found in this article.

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What protocols could be established during a pandemic by early childhood programs/educators?

Child Trends

Synopsis: This article describes recommendations to educators throughout the United States on how they should respond to pandemics based on their state's statutes and regulations. Some states including Virginia have specific recommendations to early childhood educators including information about communication to the public about current cases in the schools, when they are required to close and reopen, and how to adjust school schedules accordingly.

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

Synopsis: This article discusses how early learning programs should prepare for a pandemic. This includes recommendations for communication, training, preparedness, strategies, disaster preparedness standards, and resources in the community to support their efforts and needs.

Center for Disease Control (CDC)

Synopsis: This article describes the plans, preparedness, and responses of educators to the coronavirus during the interim of this pandemic. It discusses how to work collaboratively with the local health departments to slow down the spread of the virus, protecting vulnerable students, and practices to ensure the health and safety of children and families at their schools and programs. Guidance is offered according to the severity of the coronavirus and the level of transmission that has occurred in a local region and how to respond to and report new cases.

Additional FAQs from CDC.

Child Care Aware of America

Synopsis: This article provides guidelines for effectively cleaning and disinfecting child care programs, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The differences between cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting are discussed and links to additional information and resources are provided.

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Virginia Department of Health

Synopsis: This article provides guidance to educators at early learning programs about returning to work and serve children and families during this time of crisis. How to plan and implement measures to protect their staff, students, families, and overall community. There are sections on what to do prior to detection in the community, responses if cases are detected, and the procedures necessary to implement in the aftermath.

Virginia Department of Social Services

Synopsis: This article provides links to guidance on the most up to date resources for Virginians regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Information provided includes state and federal guidance, health guidance and assistance for providers and individuals.

How to ensure children's emotional well-being during a pandemic?

The Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds

Synopsis: This article describes ways that educators and families can support children and teens through this pandemic. This includes talking with children about the coronavirus, being honest, validating their feelings, empowering them, providing reassurance, not blaming others while taking care of themselves and remaining calm. There are also specific recommendations listed for measures to take with children of different age groups (preschool, school age, adolescents, and young adults).

Child Trends

Synopsis: This article describes how children are the most vulnerable emotionally during natural disasters, including the present coronavirus, and therefore the need for adults in their lives to provide extra support to help them cope with the effects. Recommendations are provided to educators and parents for supporting and protecting the emotional well-being of children during this uncertain time. This includes creating a safe physical and emotional environment through the use of reassurance, routines, and regulation (3 R's).

Psychology Today

Synopsis: This article describes the impact of the coronavirus on young children and the need for families and educators to support them during this stressful and uncertain time. This includes talking with children on their level about the virus, practicing and teaching hygiene, not blaming others for the situation, being flexible with expectations, and establishing routines to maintain normalcy and consistency. Links to additional tips and recommendations are also listed.

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State & local resources

Alliance for Early Success

Synopsis: This article consists of a list of actions pertaining to early learning programs implemented by state governors/ legislators throughout the nation in response to the coronavirus. This includes school closures, services provided to programs, provisions for employees (pay, leave, compensation), and licensing requirements during this time. There are also links to state, local, and national resources addressing the virus.

Office of Head Start

Synopsis: This article provides answers from the Office of Head Start (OHS) to Frequently Asked Questions regarding local decisions about Head Start program operations.

National Association for the Education of Young Children

Synopsis: This article provides and overview of the effects of COVID-19 on child care programs and offers ideas and suggestions for moving toward a more equitable future.