Policy Title: COVID-19

References:
- Grab, Adapt and Grow – COVID-19 Resources for Child Care Programs
- CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open
- Montana DPHHS Checklist for All Child Care Facilities- COVID-19 (undated)

Procedure/practice:
In order to keep families, staff, university students, and our community safe and comply with current ECSB recommendations the Learning and Belonging (LAB) Preschool has chosen to adopt the following changes to its health and safety policies, including illness exclusion. These changes are in effect until the LAB provides you with written notice that it is withdrawn.

This document is intended to follow current Montana childcare guidance as periodically updated by ECSB and/or public health officials. It also draws from the best practices published by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and aligns with policies and protocol at the University of Montana. This is an evolving situation. The LAB will endeavor to continue to stay apprised of best practices and update its policies and procedures in accordance with current recommendations. As circumstances change, the LAB will review this document periodically and update with new information.

Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever – 100.4 degrees
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

The above list is not all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported. Refer to the CDC Self-Checker for more information.

COVID-19 Policy
Adapted: August, 2020
Revised: August, 2021
In the event a child, family member, staff, university student, or close contacts are diagnosed with COVID-19, the LAB will follow current CDC and the Missoula City/County Health Department guidelines on when it is safe for those affected to return. The CDC guidelines can be found [here](#).

### Illness Exclusion Policy Updates—COVID-19

The following policies are in addition to the LAB’s general illness exclusion policy. If terms are in conflict, this Policy controls our illness exclusion protocol. These polices apply to families, providers, staff, and university students.

- If your child or any member of the household has been in close contact with any person diagnosed with COVID-19, please keep your child home for at least 10 days.
- If you are a student working in the preschool and you have been in close contact with any person diagnosed with COVID-19, please stay home for at least 10 days.
- If in doubt about symptoms, please call before coming to the facility. This will reduce the risk of transmission.
- Temperatures of children, staff and university students will be taken and recorded at arrival and throughout the day as warranted. If any person’s temperature is 100.4 or higher, they will be sent home immediately.
- If staff, university students or the child exhibit other signs of illness, including those listed above, and any others included in the general illness exclusion policy, they will be sent home immediately.
- In the case of an ill child, the child will be isolated from other children, and the parents contacted to pick them up immediately.
- Symptomatic staff, university students and children should not return to the facility until 7 days after symptom onset or 72 hours after their fever is gone and the initial symptoms have improved, whichever is longer. Unless diagnosed with COVID-19.
- It is imperative that the staff, university students, or parents stay in contact with the LAB and keep them apprised of any diagnosis or changing symptoms so that we may continue to provide a safe environment for all families, staff, and university students. Information provided will be kept confidential but used to make decisions about control measures necessary.

### Check In and Pick-up

- Before arriving at the program, when possible, please check the temperature of your child(ren)’s prior to arrival at the LAB. If their temperature exceeds 100.4 or if new or worsened cough is present, please isolate your child at home.
- Families will be greeted in the foyer by a staff member. This is to help us maintain social distancing and limit direct contact. The staff member will be wearing a mask. Staff will check your temperature and your child(ren)’s temperature. The staff member will also ask if the child or anyone at home has any of the symptoms listed above or have been around anyone with COVID-19. If the family answers yes to any of these questions or the adult or child has a temperature exceeding 100.4, the LAB will ask that you leave the program pending assessment by a medical provider or local public health official.
- Sign in/out will be adapted as follows:
  - The following recommendations of MAC for Phase 1 have been implemented:
    - Please bring your own pen if possible.
Two pen jars labeled “Clean” and “Used” will be at each sign-in station.

Preschool teachers and field-experience students entering the building will wear a mask, wash hands and use hand sanitizer upon arrival. They will move immediately to their assigned classroom or work area.

Parents will wear a mask and maintain social (physical) distancing between other families as they arrive and depart and will exit quickly at drop-off and pick up times.

See above for guidance on temperature checks

CDC Recommendations implemented include:

- Hand sanitizer stations are set up at the entrance of each classroom adjacent to the sign-in sheets, so that families can sanitize their hands before entering the classrooms.
- The same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children, because they are more at risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

- Children will be required to wash their hands immediately after their temperature check and frequently throughout the day. When children are received for drop off the parent and child should immediately proceed to wash both the parent and child’s hands before doing any other check-in procedures.
- Personal items (such as lovies) will not travel back and forth between the program and home to the extent possible.
- Please provide additional changes of clothing as the CDC recommends that children’s clothing be changed any time there are bodily fluids on a clothing item. Any soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and returned to parents.

**Staff and University Student Health & Wellness**

- Staff and university students will receive additional training on infection control and workplace disinfection.
- Staff will wear a mask and gloves when toileting or changing diapers or wiping noses.
- Staff and university students will wear a mask at all times.
- Staff and university students will not share their phone, devices or meal or utensils with one another or children.
- Staff and university students will check their temperature at the beginning of each shift and notify their supervisor if >100.4 as well as self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and notify their supervisor if any develop (fever or respiratory symptoms).
- Staff and university students will wash their hands immediately upon entering the program and immediately prior to leaving.
- Staff and university students will not be allowed to work if they are feeling ill or experiencing respiratory symptoms.
Healthy Environment

- The classrooms will be designed to allow children to play alone or in smaller groups.
- In addition to the building’s HVAC system, each classroom will run two air purifiers while children are in session.
- Exterior doors may be propped open when weather permits.
- We have received grant support to cover additional hours for student employees to routinely disinfect high-touch surfaces, such as door handles, light switches, faucets, toys and learning materials throughout the day.
- Staff and university students will remove any material that has been placed in a child’s mouth or otherwise been in contact with bodily fluids. These materials will not be returned until they have been disinfected.
- We will perform an enhanced deep cleaning every night in all areas, on all touched surfaces in accordance with local and federal recommendations for child care programs including CDC Clean and Disinfect procedures.
- Staff and university students will have access to anti-bacterial hand sanitizers and disposable gloves and use them as needed.
- Staff and university students will wash/scrub their hands and children’s frequently upon arrival, departure and frequently throughout the day.
- The LAB requests your cooperation in:
  - Masking while indoors (nose and mouth). Wearing masks is **required for all age 2 and above**
  - Minimizing contacts by observing social gathering and distancing rules in effect
  - Minimizing non-essential travel

Meal Preparation & Service

- All surfaces will be disinfected before meal preparation using CDC- or EPA-approved products.
- All staff and university students will wash hands before and after meal preparation.
- Children in the Extended Preschool will bring their own lunch and will not be allowed to share food with one another. We recommend easy-to-open containers the child can use independently to minimize contact during the meal.

Tuition

- As long as we are open, tuition will be due in full. This includes if we are only open for a portion of a month and need to close for the remainder of the month.
- In the event that the program closes for a short time, or indefinitely, due to a diagnosed case of COVID-19 the current month’s tuition will be due but you will not be expected to continue paying on the annual tuition.

Closure/Limitation of the LAB

According to the Governor’s directive dated April 4, 2020, child care is considered an essential service. This program will continue to follow federal, state and local and University of Montana guidance in determining whether it is in its best interest as well as that of community and families...
to remain open or to close. These guidelines are general and may need to be modified depending on the situation. The program may elect to close if the following events/conditions occur:

- State/Federal or local government directs or requests that the program close, reduce enrollment or limit enrollment to the children of essential workers.
- In the event a child, staff member, university student or other person who spent time in the LAB and had close contact with others is diagnosed with COVID-19, contact tracing will ensue and those considered close contacts will be notified. The LAB will follow current Health Department guidelines for quarantine and, therefore, impacted classes may need to close.
- The number of staff illnesses, or quarantines, exceed minimum ratio requirements or make daily operations problematic.
- The University of Montana requests the program close.
- Missoula County Public Schools close.

Due to issues with the supply chain, we are unable to obtain sufficient items for health and safety such as food, personal protective equipment or sanitizing/disinfection solutions.