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## Navigating during a Pandemic Parent Guidelines

As Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHS) provided specific guidelines to childcare facilities and preschools in response to COVID-19, Upbring Schools will operate based on best practices that are consistent with the requirements in accordance with state licensing laws, state disaster declarations, and federal guidelines which continue to evolve. The health, happiness and safety of our staff and students is of the utmost importance.

### Building Access

1. School hours are currently Monday to Friday - 7:00AM – 6:00PM. This time frame allows us opportunity to sanitize the building as well as minimize interactions between class groups and staff. We kindly ask that you arrive by 9:30 so our staff can completely turn their attention to the students after that time.
2. Access to campus is limited – only children in care and their direct staff are permitted in the interior of our school building. Volunteers and non-essential visitors are not currently permitted. This restriction allows us to limit exposure to the virus as much as possible. Please note that this includes parents who are only allowed curb side or front door drop off/pick up at this time. Essential visitors are limited to less than 15 minute interactions. This would include required repair and licensing personnel.
3. At drop off you can expect: **(Please see page 3 for specific campus drop off/pick up instructions)**
  - a. To be greeted by a masked member of the Upbring team and asked a series of questions with the intent of ensuring that:
    - i. All members of the child’s immediate household have not traveled to high risk areas (countries or states) 14 days prior to attendance. **Because of the increased COVID-19 case rate at this time, please know that any travel outside of Texas will require at least a 10-day quarantine period upon return to Texas. Rest stops, restaurants, and gas stations are among high risk places currently. Please communicate your travel plans with the Campus Administrator.**
    - ii. Your child does not currently have signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection (cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and low-grade fever), GI symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting) or a rash.
    - iii. Your child has been in contact with anyone who has signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as a (cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and low-grade fever) or GI symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting) in the last 72 hours.
    - iv. No person in your child’s immediate household has had a fever or been in contact with someone who has a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis, is being tested for COVID-19 in the previous 14 days
  - b. Your child will have their temperature taken to screen out a fever over 100.4 degrees. Please note your child’s temperature will be take mid-day as well.
  - c. The staff will help your child with their lunch and other belongings and escort them to their classroom.
  - d. Children will wash their hands upon entering the classroom and throughout the day. Children who do not tend to put their fingers in their mouth may use hand sanitizer at times when soap and water is not readily available (i.e. on the playground).
4. As access to the campus is limited at this time and we are limiting classroom crossover, extra-curricular activities such as dance, soccer, and gymnastics have been put on hold. We are working with our vendors to resume extra-curricular activities as soon as we feel confident that it is safe to do so.

## Social Distancing and Limit of Cross Contamination

1. To the extent that it is possible, staff will practice social distancing and wear facial protection when in close proximity to students and other staff members both in and outside of the classroom.
2. To limit the number of items coming into the building, each child will be given a labeled washable tote bag. We ask that families use these bags to transport their child's belongings and wash them at least once a week. You may keep a change (or two) of clothes to be left at school in a zip lock bag. Lunches, water bottles, and nap time gear can be sent in their labeled tote.
3. **To help limit germs brought in from shoe debris, please designate a pair of shoes only to be used for school.**
4. To help limit exposure to groups of children, some modifications and reductions have been made.
  - a. Groups have limited sharing of spaces, sharing of teachers, and merging with other classrooms
  - b. Group sizes have been modified to allow for social distancing within classrooms. Modified ratios have been put into place for children ages 2 and younger with each teacher providing care to a specific group of children.
  - c. Children are encouraged to limit hugging, hand holding, sharing items – this can present challenges with young children, so we do our best to create these boundaries in fun, engaging ways.
  - d. Children's nap mats are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6ft apart and arranged head to toe.
  - e. We have currently discontinued large group gatherings where children are near other classes.
  - f. We have ceased using group sensory tables (individual only)
  - g. To the extent possible, students are spaced further apart for eating, table activities, and circle time.
  - h. Weather permitting, additional outdoor play is scheduled (times are staggered)
  - i. Children over the age of 2 may wear masks and face coverings provided by parents
  - j. We are only allowing store-bought food to be brought in to share with friends for birthdays or other celebrations at this time.

## Hygiene and Cleaning Practices

1. We have always been attentive to sanitizing requirements but have increased our sanitizing frequency at this time. You can trust that we are:
  - a. Sanitizing toys/items that touch a child's mouth or have been handled intensely by another child before other children encounter that toy. Toys will be cleaned with water and detergent, rinsed, sanitized with an EPA-registered disinfectant, and air-dried or cleaned with a mechanical dishwasher.
  - b. Limiting the number of touches children's books and other paper-based materials receive by different children each day and allowing these items to go untouched for 24 hours before using them again. Currently, children's books and other paper-based materials are not considered a high risk for transmission.
  - c. Increasing the supervision and frequency of handwashing for students and staff.
  - d. Sanitizing tables, chairs, counters, shelves, doorknobs, cubbies, beds/cots, sheets, and floors more frequently.
  - e. Removing trash from the classroom several times a day.
  - f. Disinfecting classrooms and areas of shared space every night after closing.
2. All staff and children will engage in proper hand hygiene as recommended by the Center for Disease and Control (CDC) at the following times:
  - a. Arrival to the facility and after breaks
  - b. Before and after preparing food or drinks or feeding children
  - c. Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
  - d. Before and after diapering
  - e. After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
  - f. After contact with bodily fluid
  - g. After playing outdoors or in sand
  - h. After handling garbage

## Drop Off/Pick Up:

**Masks are REQUIRED for adults at drop-off and pick-up.**

### Drop Off

- To limit adult interaction at this time, we ask that one parent only drop off. This does not need to be the same parent each time, but only one at a time please.
- Parents must wear a mask when dropping off their child.
- Entry to the foyer will be given to one family at a time. Please wait by the cones outside until it is your turn.
- Your child's temperature will be taken, and you will be asked a few screening questions about wellness, exposure, and travel.
- Once your child has cleared the screening process, you may say your good-byes. One of our staff will escort your child and help take their belongings to their classroom.
- For infants, please fill out a form at drop off that gives us information about your baby's night, last feeding, and any special instructions for the day.
- Please use the HiMama app if you need to communicate with your child's teacher at all throughout the day. HiMama has proven to be a very helpful tool during these days when parent/teacher interaction is limited.
- PLEASE, if you are not feeling well or suspect you may have been exposed to COVID-19, keep your child at home until you are certain of your illness. Children are often asymptomatic and may not show signs of illness.

### Pick Up

- Parents may pull up under the porte-cochere or park in the lot for pick up. Please pull up as far as possible. **Do not block the crosswalk.**
- In case of inclement weather, feel free to wait in your car until you can pull up to the covered area. We will have your child ready when you reach the covered area so that you can pick up without getting wet.
- Parents must wear a mask when picking up their child.
- Children may be picked up at the main entry doors. Please wait by a cone. Your child's teacher will bring your child out to you shortly. We do a diaper check before your child goes home so that they are not soiled or wet during the ride home. If your child needs to be changed, there may be a delay. We make every effort to be as expedient as possible during pick up so that you and your child can continue with your day.
- Please, please, please be sure to hold your child's hand as you leave the pick-up area. Children get excited to see their friends who are leaving or a friend or relative waiting in the car and run toward those people. Because this is a very active time with moving vehicles, please take your time and have your child watch out for cars. This is a good time to work on this lesson.
- Likewise, drive slowly in this area always and especially during pick up. Keep an eye out for families crossing the crosswalk to get to their vehicle parked in the parking lot or for a child who took off running. Children are very fast and can also be unpredictable at times of excitement.
- **Cell phones are not permitted during pick up.** Please focus on the task at hand. It is a very important one!
- **Please do not pull around another car to exit the pick-up area unless directed by a staff member.** Children can be hard to see if not with an adult. Additionally, a collision with another vehicle would be added stress no one needs at this time.
- As our student body grows, it may become necessary for us to alter the current plan. You will be informed as changes occur.

**Please see the next page for updates to our current Illness Policy in response to COVID-19**

## COVID-19 Updates to our Illness Policy:

The illness policy updates below have been developed in response to the elevated number of COVID-19 cases in Texas at this time.

To prevent the possible spread of COVID-19, please help us by keeping your child home if they (or anyone in the child's household) show any of the symptoms below. Because these symptoms are prominent COVID-19 indicators at this time, a doctor's note will be required for your child to return to care if they exhibit any of the following:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher in the previous 48 hours WITHOUT fever-reducing medication. A child may return after 48 hours fever free without a doctor's note. If you feel your child's fever is related to teething or another childhood illness, your child may return after being fever free for 24 hours so long as you can provide a doctor's note stating that your child is non-contagious.
- Cough or symptoms of a respiratory illness. If you feel the cough is due to allergies or asthma, you must bring a note from your child's physical stating they are non-contagious and can be re-admitted to school.
- Other symptoms include the following:
  - Muscle Pain/Body Aches
  - Rash
  - Headache
  - Loss of Taste or Smell
  - Sore Throat
  - Diarrhea/Vomiting

If a child develops any of the symptoms listed above while at school:

- The child will be isolated away from other students as a precaution.
- It is required that the child be picked up within one hour so their needs can be met in a timely manner and exposure to others at school is minimized.

If a child, child's family member, or a teacher tests positive for COVID-19:

- The child, family, or teacher affected will need to be absent from school until they (or their family member) are considered virus free and no longer contagious.
- Parents of the impacted classroom(s) will be notified.
- We will follow the CDC guidelines for returning to school/work.
- We will utilize the CDC guidance on how to clean and disinfect the facility.
- We will follow the guidelines of the local health department and licensing authority regarding classroom closures.

As families of Upbring, we ask you to make a commitment toward campus wellness. We ask the same of our staff.

- Please do your best to limit exposure to yourself and your family by limiting time around other people.
- Practice good health and hygiene by washing your hands frequently and wearing a mask when out in public.
- Avoid crowded places and events.
- Make social distancing a part of your wellness commitment.
- Monitor your health and the health of your child closely.
- Stay home if you are concerned that you have been exposed.
- Stay home and keep your child at home if you feel ill.
- Eat well, get plenty of rest, and relax to relieve stress.
- Seek medical attention if you have any concerns about your wellness.
- Keep us informed if we need to take precautions.

We have done well as a campus to remain virus free. Let's all do our part and keep it that way!

## COVID-19 Pandemic FAQs

### What Upbring communication can our family expect regarding COVID-19 reports and responses?

The whole school can expect to be notified via email when a teacher, student or a student's parent/guardian or another household member tests positive for COVID-19. The classrooms directly affected will be notified individually as well. We are required by Child Care Licensing and our local health department to report any teacher or student who tests positive. They will help determine the required quarantine period. This ranges depending on several factors.

It is important to note that one of the most consistent factors regarding this pandemic is the actuality that it is a very fluid situation. Upbring (as a whole) and the schools receive constant updates to what is being learned about the illness. This information is generally followed by adjustments to protocols that were previously put into place. Therefore, **what is stated as an official protocol one day, may very well be different the next day.** Please understand that this is what leads to different responses to situations as we move through this pandemic together.

Nothing is stagnant – **we appreciate your patience and understanding as we all go through this learning process together.**

### How does Upbring determine next steps for quarantining, closing a classroom, or temporarily closing the school?

Our response to confirmed COVID-19 cases in our school is based on the most recent directives from the CDC, state and local health organizations, and childcare licensing. The decisions made always take into consideration the health and well-being of our students, staff, and families. As we report positive test results to the local health department and child care licensing, they determine, and quite often mandate, the action or quarantine period that is required. The decision ranges depending on several factors including severity of the exposure, the number of cases, and quite honestly, by who answers the phone when the report is made.

### What are some reasons why Upbring would choose to temporarily close a classroom?

Closing a classroom could be in response to several factors. These include:

*-A caregiver who works directly with the students tests positive for COVID 19, is symptomatic or has a test pending*

*-A student tested positive or is presumptively positive because they are showing symptoms and a parent has tested positive.*

We will not be able to disclose which of these reasons cause the closing of the classroom, but we will be able to communicate if a staff or student does test positive.

### What information can Upbring disclose about the staff or student who has a confirmed case or has a test pending?

Staff and campus families frequently have very specific questions when a room is identified as needing to be quarantined. These questions include, but are not limited to:

*-What was the caregiver's schedule? People want to know how long they (or their child) were potentially exposed.*

*-Do any of the individual's family members exhibit symptoms of COVID or have any of them been diagnosed with COVID?*

*-What were the person's symptoms?*

*-When was the person tested?*

**This type of information is considered privileged as PHI (personal health information) and may also be protected under HIPAA laws and unfortunately cannot be provided to the individuals inquiring.**

**We will** be able to tell you- "after a thorough review of the individual's whereabouts prior to diagnosis and in speaking with the individual directly, exposure to your child occurred between x day and x day."

Know that **we are** actively tracking and tracing the individual's steps prior to their diagnosis and will be contacting staff and families directly with a secondary notice if they were exposed. In conjunction with the local health authority, Upbring administration, CDC guidelines, and child care licensing, the next steps will be determined.