

LAUNCH

Guidelines for COVID-19

LAUNCH Program Guidelines for COVID-19 are aligned with all provincial and local Public Health guidance and follow the most current recommendations provided by the Ministry of Health.

LAUNCH has trained all staff to implement the following measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious illness within our programs. These guidelines are subject to change as per the direction of the appropriate regulatory bodies including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and local Public Health units.

Programs

LAUNCH in-person programs have been modified to observe physical distancing. Examples include:

- Teams will meet in cohorts and will not mix with other cohort groups
- Same staff will be assigned to one group of children as much as possible
- Toys or equipment that are difficult to clean and disinfect (e.g. plush toys, dress-up clothes, puppets, books, board games) will be stored, or use will be monitored to ensure children wash their hands before and after using.
- Craft materials will be provided in individual kits/baskets for each child
- Sensory materials, like playdough or goop, will be provided in individual containers and discarded after each child's use
- Staff will incorporate fun learning activities that teach children about physical distancing and personal hygiene

Daily Screening Process

How You as a Parent/Guardian Can Help

Screen your child for illness every morning, including taking their temperature and using the **Ministry of Health COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children in School and Child Care**.

Please follow the screening tool guidance and keep your child home if:

- the child is currently experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 that are new/worsening, and not related to other known causes or conditions they already have
- the child is waiting for COVID-19 test results
- the child lives with someone currently experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms (if the individual experiencing symptoms received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, the child does not need to stay home)
- in the last 14 days, the child has travelled outside of Canada AND:
 - been advised to quarantine as per the federal quarantine requirements, AND/OR

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- the child is under the age of 12 and not fully vaccinated
- in the last 10 days, the child has been identified as a “close contact” of someone who currently has COVID-19 (If public health has advised you that you do not need to self-isolate, the child does not need to stay home)
- in the last 10 days, the child received a COVID Alert exposure notification on their cell phone (if the child already went for a test and received a negative result, the child does not need to stay home)
- a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told the child they should currently be isolating at home
- in the last 10 days, the child tested positive on a rapid antigen test or a home-based self-testing kit. (if the child has since tested negative on a lab-based PCR test, the child does not need to stay home).

If your child does not pass all the screening questions, they will not be permitted to participate in the program until all screening questions are passed.

If your child is healthy, and screening is completed, a staff member will meet you at the front entrance and escort your child to their team meeting. Parents will not be permitted to enter the team meeting room.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

LAUNCH has implemented enhanced cleaning and disinfecting measures to help reduce the spread of illness. Staff members are scheduled to clean and disinfect rooms, toys and equipment after each team meeting. High touch areas, including door handles, sinks, toilets, and toys, are cleaned and disinfected more frequently each day. Anytime a child places a toy in their mouth or coughs/sneezes on a toy, it is taken out of rotation until it can be cleaned and disinfected.

Personal Hygiene

Staff and children are encouraged to follow proper hand washing with soap and water.

When running water is not available, children in the program use hand sanitizer. Staff monitor children using hand sanitizer to ensure it is applied safely.

Staff practice how to cough and sneeze into the arm or shoulder with children. Anytime a child uses a tissue, they are taught to discard the tissue in a garbage bin and to wash their hands.

As much as possible, staff will remind children to avoid touching their face, eyes, nose and mouth.

Please ensure all your child’s personal items, including water bottles, are labelled with your child’s name. Personal items will be stored in an individual container for your child.

If a Child Becomes Ill During the Program

In the event a child shows any signs or symptoms of illness that cannot be explained (e.g. seasonal allergies), the parent will be called to immediately pick-up their child. If the parent is not available by phone, their emergency contact will be called. While the child waits to be picked-up, they will be separated from the other children and staff (isolation) and supervised by one staff member. The staff member will wear a mask, eye protection and any other required personal protective equipment.

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If Staff Becomes Ill During the Program

If a staff member becomes ill during the program, they will be separated from children and other staff and sent home immediately.

Reporting Suspected Cases of COVID-19 & Testing

LAUNCH is required to report any positive cases of COVID-19 to Public Health. Public Health will advise the program Supervisor and parent of any requirements for testing and/or self-isolation. Public Health will conduct contact tracing to determine who the individual came in close contact with during the program and will determine the requirements based on their findings. All parents will be informed if there is a positive case of COVID-19 in the LAUNCH program and reminded to monitor their child for symptoms of COVID-19 if a child in their team is sent for testing.

Masks

All staff are required to wear a medical mask while indoors. The use of face masks and shields is not required when eating or if physical distancing of 2 meters can be maintained between individuals.

Children in Grades 1 to 12 are required by the Ministry of Education to wear a non-medical mask or face covering while inside a childcare setting, including in hallways. They must also wear a mask outdoors when a distance of two metres cannot be maintained.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing their child with a mask.

Drop off and Pick Up

Parents are asked to arrive no more than 15 minutes prior to the start of their LAUNCH program. Programs in Waterloo Region take place at Catalyst Commons, 137 Glasgow Street, Kitchener.

A LAUNCH staff member will greet parents at the entrance to Catalyst Commons, review the screening questionnaire and escort your child to the team meeting room. Parents are not permitted in the team meeting room.

Parents are asked to pick up their child at the entrance to Catalyst Commons at the end of their child's schedule team meeting. A late fee will be applied for pick up later than 15 minutes past the scheduled team meeting time.

Positive Case of COVID-19

If, during the program, your child has been confirmed as having COVID-19 (positive) by Public Health or has been identified as a close contact of someone who is confirmed as having COVID-19 (positive) by Public Health, LAUNCH will make efforts to provide weekly programming available at-home via LAUNCH kits and program materials.

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Closure Due to Positive Case of COVID-19

If your child's LAUNCH program is ordered to close by Public Health due to close contact with a positive case of COVID-19, a portion of fees (pro-rated up to 2 weeks) will be credited toward future programs. LAUNCH will credit fees only for the days of closure. If your enrolled child develops symptoms of COVID-19 and they are waiting for test results, LAUNCH will credit up to an additional pro-rated fees of 1 week beyond the credit for the closure ordered by Public Health while the child waits for test results.

Fees will be credited toward future payments for the period of exclusion up to 14 consecutive days, determined by Public Health, for absences due to isolation related to a LAUNCH program closure due to close contact with a positive case of COVID-19.

Fees will not be credited for the following circumstances:

- If your child has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days or has come in close contact with someone who has travelled outside Canada in the past 14 days (e.g. anyone living in the household who has travelled outside Canada in the past 14 days, or your household has hosted visitors from outside of Canada in the past 14 days).
- If a health care provider or Public Health recommend your child be tested for COVID-19, and you opt out of having your child tested, then your child must isolate for 14 days before they can return to a LAUNCH program. Note: Fees will be credited for the first 5 days of the isolation period.
- If a parent provides inaccurate information during the process, including the completion of the online screening form.
- If a parent/guardian chooses to continue isolation, even though Public Health has authorized reopening of the LAUNCH program or active screening be credited only for the days Public Health ordered closure.
- During a closure, if a parent/guardian chooses to keep a sibling not effected by the closed program home, fees will only be credited for the child in the closed program.
- Providing inaccurate information during the active daily screening process, including the completion of the online screening form.

Withdrawal Notification

If you choose to withdraw your child from a LAUNCH program, 10 days' notice prior to the start of the program is required. Notices received within this period will receive a full refund.