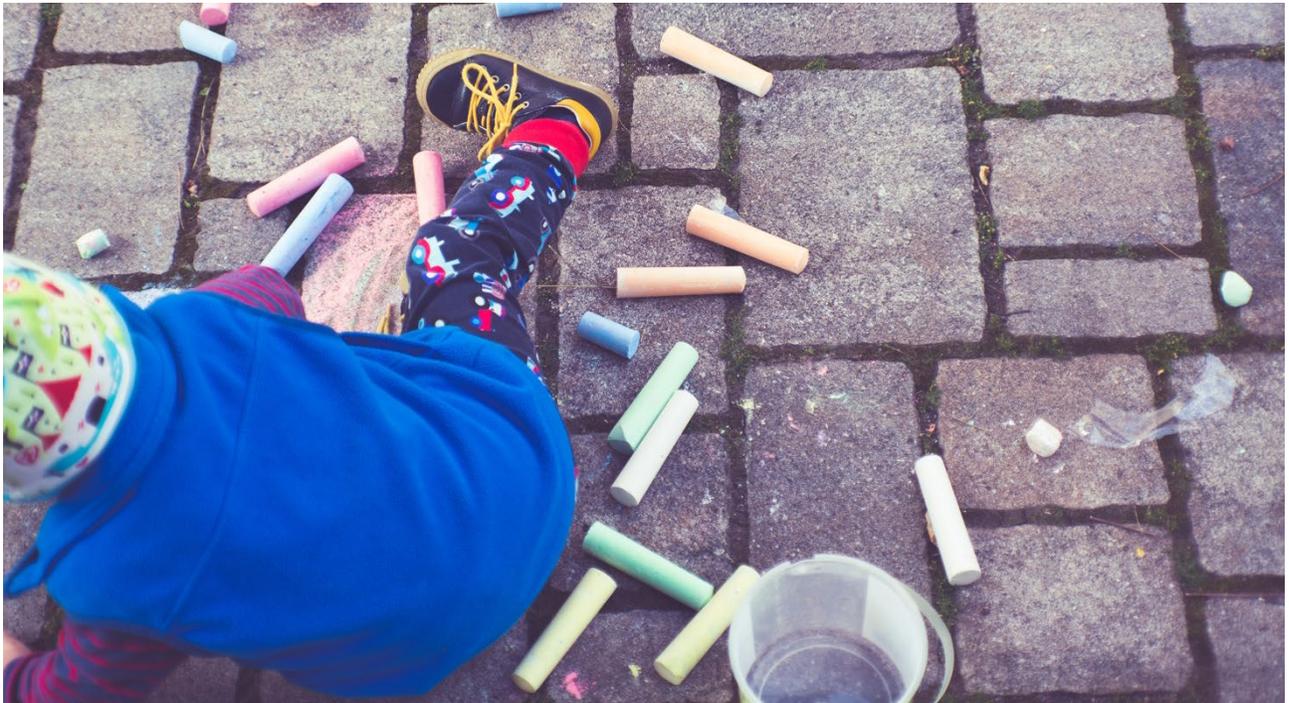

EARLY CHILDHOOD



SCHOOL REOPENING TOOLKIT: EARLY CHILDHOOD

Early childhood is the time for being social, learning through play, making new discoveries, practicing new skills, and becoming kindergarten ready. Attending preschool enhances these opportunities and helps to ensure a strong academic start for our youngest learners. The current COVID-19 pandemic may alter the way we design learning environments and implement daily structures and routines when school re-opens, but it will not change our commitment to meeting children's needs when re-imagining high-quality, play-based instruction in this new learning environment. This early childhood reopening school toolkit provides developmentally appropriate guidance to assist programs in their planning for safe reopening of early childhood programs. We recognize that each program will have to make many decisions that are unique to their student population, staff, and resources.

All information in the document is non-regulatory guidance issued for general informational purposes only. This document is not intended to constitute legal advice. Because local school board policy and unique facts make dramatic differences in analyzing any situation, the Tennessee Department of Education advises each school district to consult with the local school board attorney for specific legal advice regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school operations.

II. Early Childhood Education Re-Opening Considerations

Build trusting family relationships and partnerships to support learning

Early childhood programs are exceptionally good at building and maintaining positive relationships with families and creating welcoming spaces for community interactions. While these program elements are critically important, many of these family engagement practices may be unsafe during the COVID-19 environment. It will be important to limit visitors inside the building to reduce the potential spread of the Coronavirus. The following guiding questions will assist programs in planning for safer ways to engage with and involve families while practicing safe social distancing.

How do I prepare families for program reopening?

Families of young children typically need more reassurances that their children will be safe, loved, and well-cared for by those with whom they place their children's care and education. Like their families, young children need to feel secure with their new surroundings and have trust in their caregiver who is also their teacher. For new and returning children, a program leader should consider early and frequent communication with families to provide time for children to bond with new teachers and for families and teachers to build positive relationships. These can be conducted via virtual meeting or through safe distancing in-person meetings. This kind of early and frequent outreach will help assure families that their children will receive the best care while they are in your program. This is especially important to communicate within the COVID-19 context. Programs may consider conducting virtual family visitations to talk with families directly about the safety precautions and procedures in place and to provide an opportunity to address any other concerns families may have. Consider adding updates to parent handbooks that provide health and safety protocols followed during pandemic situations. Importantly, reinforce that children must stay home if they are sick.

How do I help families prepare their children for program reopening?

Consider ways to help families talk to their children about the importance of covering their mouths and noses with their arm when they need to cough or sneeze so that they will help others not to get sick. Encourage families to practice handwashing with their children so older toddler to preschool children are able to independently wash their hands. Consider providing families with sample conversation starters or "social stories" that use a story to teach how to practice stay farther back from people, not getting too close, when talking or playing together. Include examples of adults and children wearing face masks when six feet of distance cannot be maintained between people, such

as at arrival and dismissal. These types of activities will help reduce anxiety felt by children new or returning to school.

How do I provide support for children who may have separation from parent difficulty?

Young children frequently have separation anxiety; health and safety protocols limiting families from entering the facility with them may increase this fear. A program leader should consider providing a staggered arrival and shortened day for children who have difficulty separating from their parent or family that would allow the family to come in with the child when there are less people in the hallways. Consider working with the families to provide an adapted schedule that includes gradual increased increments of time the child is at school (separated from family).

How do I apply health and safety guidelines during mealtimes?

A program should consider eating in the classroom with children seated six feet apart. To achieve this safe distancing between students, a program may want to stagger times children eat as is appropriate and possible. Children should wash their hands with soap and water before and after meals.

How do I support families in their preparation of lunches for program reopening?

For programs in which children bring lunches from home instead of eating meals provided by the facility, program leaders might consider encouraging families to pack “field trip” type of disposable lunches and individual water bottles, instead of using drinking fountains, to reduce the possibility of “germs” remaining on surfaces and potentially increasing the spread of “germs”. Program leaders might also encourage families to pack non-toxic hand wipes for children to wipe their hands immediately after eating and while waiting their turn to more thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water at the sink. Early childhood programs that usually dine in a cafeteria or feeding hall are recommended to eat in the classroom to avoid large gatherings, and packing more disposable meals would be easier for both the child and the teacher.

Redesign physical learning environment

Early childhood education programs are especially known for the wonderful uses of carpets pillows, stuffed animals, puppets, and such are used to create warm, welcoming, cozy environments for children to engage in learning or to retreat to for a time of calm and alone time. While these elements of a classroom have helped to create positive and nurturing spaces, many of these may be challenging to keep clean in the COVID-19 environment. These types of materials and spaces are shared between many children or could hold “germs” for several days. Early childhood spaces are usually designed to promote group sharing of materials and spaces. Many that are created may not be not safe social distance friendly. Program leaders will need to thoughtfully consider designing

spaces that encourage safe distance interactions with limited sharing of materials. The following guiding questions will help programs redesign physical learning environments to be welcoming, safe, and easy to clean spaces.

Spacing

In accordance with Chapter 0520-12-01, [Standards for School-administered Childcare](#), the amount of space needed for children is 30 square feet per child. For the context of social distancing, consider expanding this to 36 square feet per child. If possible, at nap time, ensure that children's naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Consider placing children head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.

Outdoor Spaces

Whenever possible, outdoor space should be explored as an option for extending the physical learning space of classrooms and to provide children with opportunities for movement. For example, painting easels can be taken outside and placed 6 feet apart. A program leader should consider ways to mark off areas of play that allow children to play at a social distance. For example, a pair of children six feet apart could enjoy kicking a soccer ball to one another. Since it is especially difficult to maintain 6 feet social distancing between children during recess, programs may consider having preschool and kindergarten children wear cloth masks during this time. It is important to make sure that all children and staff wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds using soap and water after returning from the playground to prevent any spread of germs. Guidelines for appropriate hand washing can be found [here](#). A program leader should also consider creating a cleaning schedule for playground equipment to be cleaned and sanitized between uses by groups of children.

Circle time

Because rugs are shared between many children, hold "germs" for longer periods of time and tend to be difficult to clean, programs should consider removing carpets during this COVID-19 context. Because young children are always on the move and are especially wiggly in whole-group circle time, programs might consider having small story group times with fewer children instead of having whole group story time for all children at the same time. For example, a teacher could create a smaller taped off "shape space" such as a hexagon with six feet sides to gather and seat a group of 5 children with the teacher for story time or small group lessons.

Materials

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) provides guidelines for cleaning early childhood classrooms, with considerations to both hard and soft surfaces. These guidelines can be accessed [here](#).

When selecting materials for use in the classroom, a program may want to apply the "less is more" concept to optimize use of essential learning materials while minimizing time spent on

cleaning multiple materials. In addition to the “less is more” concept, a program may also want to discourage group sharing of materials. A program should consider what type of materials are easily sanitized vs. those that require more cleaning effort and attention, including but not limited to area rugs, pillows, stuffed toy animals, and puppets. Programs are encouraged to replace soft covered, porous materials with easy-to-clean surfaces.

Examples of materials and toys that are easily sanitized are:

- Legos
- Plastic Manipulatives
- Plastic Blocks
- Toy Cars
- Plastic Action Figures
- Markers
- K'nex
- Light Table

Materials and toys that if used by more than one child at a time are not as sanitary and require more attention when cleaning:

- Play-Dough
- Kinetic Sand
- Board Games that are paper
- Soft Surface Blocks
- Cloth Toys
- Crayons
- Books

Learning Centers

Early childhood classroom environments are typically designed with many learning centers to be used by small groups of children. While these spaces provide wonderful opportunities for children to learn, play, and interact with one another, program leaders should thoughtfully consider ways to enlarge the spaces and limit the number of children within in these spaces. Program leaders should also consider different approaches for ensuring children experience each learning center. This may be accomplished by having the same cohort of children stay together in an area of the room and center materials are brought to them rather than the children rotating around to each learning center.

Pathways and Entryways

Consider marking the entrance and hallways with directional arrows and footprints facing the direction children’s feet would be pointed when walking in the correct direction to indicate one way

in and one way out. Additionally, six feet markings taped on the floor help children understand distance while standing in line and/or waiting their turn. Consider using child-friendly and easily understood icons such as a stop sign shape with feet so children interpret it as “stop and stand here.” For entryways, signage should indicate where families can stand or sit to be at a safe distance from one another. Consider providing benches in the hallways or lobby areas marked with sign inviting families to be seated and wait for someone to come take them to the office or classroom.

Establish consistent daily structures, schedules, routines, group sizes, and ratios

Young children need and benefit from consistent daily structures, schedules, and routines. Teachers and staff may want to consider building in extra time to practice routines, especially for newly added health and safety related procedures and routines. Building in role-play or game-like activities to practice routines not only helps children learn what they are expected to do, but also making the learning fun!

Daily Structures

Consider the developmental needs of children when structuring the day to optimize learning while maintaining safe social distancing. The day should be structured to include a balance of teacher directed and child-directed learning. To reduce risks of germ sharing and spread of virus, consider providing individual baskets of materials labeled with the child’s photo and name to indicate what material options the child can choose from. For example, in a learning center, place a shelf unit with four shelves. The first shelf is designated for Child A and has 4 baskets of choices for individual use that the child can choose from. The second shelf is designated for Child B and has 4 baskets of choices for an individual use that the child can choose from and so forth. The day should also be structured to balance times of instruction with time for free play and movement.

Schedules

An early childhood leader should consider schedules that will work best for young children and families who are new and/or returning to school. For little ones, full days normally can seem especially long. Providing half-day schedules for the first weeks of school will help children better acclimate to a forthcoming full-day schedule. Providing a phase-in schedule where cohorts of children attend certain days or for morning or afternoon sessions will help children acclimate to school as well as provide a solution for maintaining safe social distancing (examples: M/W, T/TH, or 8-11am and 1:00-3:00 pm). When implementing half-day schedules with half the class at a time, it is important that all children are taught the curriculum. If following your curriculum guide, all suggested instructional times can usually be reduced in half. For the scenario where only half the children attend in the morning and the other half attends in the afternoon, times for instruction can also be reduced in half. For example, the teaching of foundational early literacy skills (sounds and phonological awareness) may be taught for 10-15 minutes during a half-day schedule instead of two

separate instructional times of 15 minutes for a total of 30 minutes for a full instructional day. Examples of schedules are included in the [Sample Schedules](#) section of this reopening toolkit.

Routines

At the start of the year, a great deal of time is spent on teaching and practicing routines. Whenever programs re-open after an extended school closure, the first two weeks of school should focus on the teaching and practicing of routines. Children learn best through repeated opportunities for practice. This will be especially important when teaching all children new safe distancing routines and procedures. Children respond well to role playing. Demonstrating expected routines through role play is a fun way for children to practice routines. To prepare children and families for added health and safety routine practices, consider creating video demonstrations of routines and sharing them with families before school starts. Posting picture sequences of steps of routines near spaces where routines need to be followed are also helpful.

Ratios and Group sizes

For classroom ages 12 months and above, consider group sizes in accordance with social distancing guidelines to represent no more than 10 individuals in a room (this can be 9 children and 1 adult). For classrooms ages six weeks to 12 months, the ratio and group size will remain the same at 2:8.

Apply personal health, safety, and wellness practices from arrival to dismissal for young children

How do I apply health and safety practices during arrival?

The [Center for Disease Control](#) recommends that early childhood programs should consider screening children's temperatures upon arrival. Persons (including staff, parents, children, and visitors) who have a fever of 100.4° (38.0°C) or above or other signs of illness should not be admitted to the facility. Encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick or showing signs of illness. Screen children's temperature with the use of digital, laser thermometer. There are several methods that facilities can use to protect their workers while conducting temperature screenings. The most protective methods incorporate social distancing (maintaining 6 feet from others) or the use of physical barriers to eliminate or minimize exposures due to close contact to a child or adult who exhibits symptoms during the screening process.

Health and safety practices should also be applied during parent drop-off and pick-up. Hand hygiene stations should be set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands before they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol next to parent sign-in sheets. Keep hand sanitizer out of children's reach and supervise use. If possible, place sign-in stations outside, and provide sanitary wipes for cleaning pens between each

use. Consider staggering arrival and drop off times and limiting direct contact with parents as much as possible. Some ideas for limited direct contact are:

- Have childcare program staff greet children outside as they arrive.
- Designate a parent to be the drop off/pick up volunteer to walk all children to their classroom, and at the end of the day, walk all children back to their cars.
- Transport infants buckled in their car seats. Store car seat out of children's reach until parent pick-up.
- Suggest that the same parent or designated person 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](#).

How do I increase cleaning and sanitization of materials?

Consider implementing a cleaning and sanitization schedule to build in more times for materials and surfaces to be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day in addition to the regular deep cleaning that occurs at the beginning and end of the day. The following considerations will help a program with scheduling increased intervals material cleaning and sanitizing:

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used (examples: stuffed animals, finger paints, clay).
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry. You may also clean in a mechanical dishwasher. Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.
- Machine washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time or should not be used at all. These toys should be [laundered](#) before being used by another child.
- Do not share toys with other groups of infants or toddlers, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a dish pan with soapy water or put in a separate container marked for "soiled toys." Keep dish pan and water out of reach from children to prevent risk of drowning. Washing with soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning. Try to have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

A sample cleaning and sanitization of materials schedule recommended by the [CDC](#) is included in the best practice section of this toolkit. The link to the schedule is found under the resource section of this toolkit.

How do I provide care for children who become symptomatic during school day?

Consider having a designated, supervised space in the building for isolating and caring for children who become symptomatic during the school day until their parents are able to come and pick them up from school. Any school in any community might need to implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread **if an infected person has been in a school building**. If this happens, the following procedures regardless of the level of community spread:

- Contact your local health department as stated in Standards for School-administered Child Care.
- Contact your TDOE program evaluator to inform the department of the outbreak.
- Consider requesting staff and families in the affected classroom quarantine for 14 days and/or get tested for COVID-19.
- Alert each family in your program to communicate the precautions that are taking place and the advice from your local health department.
- Clean and disinfect the affected classroom according to the CDC guidelines (also stated within this document).

How do I increase the frequency of handwashing throughout the day?

All children, staff, and volunteers should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- Before and after diapering
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid such as coughing, sneezing, vomiting, and those related to diapering and toileting
- After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
- After playing outdoors or in sand
- After handling garbage

Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.

- Supervise children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion
- Assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone
- After assisting children with handwashing, and
- Staff members should also wash their hand.

Focus on essential learning for children

How do I ensure teachers are focused on essential learning for children following extended program closure?

A program leader should carefully review the Tennessee Developmental Learning Standards for Birth to 48 Months and for Four-Year-Old children enrolled in preschool to determine which skills are essential for the next age or grade band of learning success. Looking back on the previous year will be helpful in determining what essential skills may not have been taught or learned during a prior year of program closure. Looking ahead a year in the standards will provide a sense of what skills are essential in the current year to ensure children are ready for the upcoming age or grade band. In addition to a review of the learning standards, a program leader is encouraged to look through the scope and sequence of the curriculum implemented by their program. Highlighting the essential skills where they occur in the curriculum will help teachers prioritize these get taught and practiced.

How is essential learning best taught and supported?

Children learn best through play-based or inquiry-based learning. Essential learning should incorporate play and be taught in an explicit, systematic way. Through play, children re-enact stories read to them, practice counting and sorting skills, engage in problem solving, and make new discoveries through sensory investigations. Children learn from one another and through interactions. Even with social distancing practices, it is important that children still have opportunities to connect and interact with one another.

All children do not learn in the same way or at the same time. It is important to provide varied ways for children to learn and practice skills. Children need increased time to practice skills especially following an extended school closure.

The early years are critical for oral language development and early literacy. A program leader should consider early language and early literacy skill development essential. As such, teachers are encouraged to include 20-30 minutes of foundational literacy skill instruction that use a “sounds-first” approach. This learning lays a solid foundation for kindergarten readiness and later third grade reading success. The department will soon release a free, open source Pre-K Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement that is curriculum agnostic and can be used in tandem with other preschool comprehensive curricula in use. The link to that resource will be shared in the resource section of this toolkit in the coming weeks.

Teachers may need extra help, training, and ongoing support in developing units and lesson plans to ensure essential learning for children are a focus. Continue to look for training supports and best examples of practices to be included in updates to this early childhood education school reopening toolkit.

Provide ongoing training and support for teachers, program staff, and families of young children

Early childhood educators are often the first to acknowledge and value families as children's first teachers. They also recognize that families continue to play a vital role in their children's learning success from the early years through college. During the COVID-19 environment, families were on the front line supporting their children's learning when schools and programs closed. They did this without much training or preparation. Likewise, teachers stepped up and into new roles as they had to learn how to teach young children virtually with limited to no training in how to conduct effective distant learning for young children. The following guiding questions will assist programs in forward planning for ongoing training and support for teachers, program staff, and families.

How do I provide ongoing training and support families in preparation of program reopening?

A program leader should consider leveraging the same virtual communications they used during program closures to offer training and support for families for program reopening and supporting children's learning in the new learning context. Consider using virtual platforms and apps to provide families with training to support children's learning at home when schools are open and/or closed. There are suggested apps included in the resource section of this toolkit that provide family-friendly, high-quality teachable moments training opportunities for parents. Consider the use of weekly newsletters that provide health and safety updates as well as information on what the children have learned. The inclusion of a Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) section will not only keep families informed but will also help reduce questions programs receive from families. Consider updating all related information to new health and safety protocols in the parent handbook with hyperlinks for easy navigation. In addition, consider providing additional training to discuss any changes in policies and procedures related to the COVID-19 context. These trainings could also be integrated during virtual home visits and/or orientation sessions.

How do I support teachers in their preparation of program reopening?

Teachers may need training and support to assist them the re-design of classroom space, structures, routines, and instructional material selection and use to ensure the health and safety of children while at school. Program leaders may want to consider the use of virtual training sessions to assist teachers in their planning. Consider involving a group of teachers and staff in the planning process. Together, they can develop guidelines and examples of best practice. This planning group could also conduct walk-throughs of classrooms and other spaces throughout the building to ensure all spaces are ready for a safe reopening.

To be prepared for continuing learning for future occurrences of extended school closures, program leaders may want to provide teachers with training on how to support virtual or distant learning for young children.

Additionally, teachers may need training on how to use screeners to assess children’s learning at the opening of school and on the use of formative assessments to measure and track learning progress made throughout the year. Teachers will need guidance from program leadership based on learning impact data findings. Consider providing teachers with models, sample tools, and increased coaching supports to accompany in-person and virtual training.

Pre-K Academic Considerations

Many children are just beginning your program and may not have experienced interruption of learning or learning loss in the same ways as older students attending school did this past year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Others in your program who attended preschool will have likely experienced a degree of learning loss. This section of the reopening checklist will help programs assess the potential learning loss experienced by children and effectively plan for instructional supports for all preschool children.

III. Best Practices

Community Building in Early Childhood

Building positive community for the First Two Weeks of School

Building positive relationships between teachers and young children and their families during the COVID-19 environment can be tricky when not all children attend school at the same time or on the same days. While families may be limited from entering the building or coming in as classroom guests, families can still connect and engaged with the children using virtual platforms and videos to share their talents, read a book, or teach about a cultural tradition. The best part is that you can get a jump start on creating videos before the school year even starts!

Helping children learn how to be and work together as a community of learners

Classroom community is established when all children feel supported and welcomed. Children feel supported when they are familiar with expectations and procedures. Whenever there are changes to children’s learning routines and procedures, a program leader should encourage teachers to help children adjust to the changes by providing extra and repeated times for learning and practicing classroom routines. This is especially important given the evolving COVID-19 context. Modeling expectations through role play and “social stories” help children remember steps while having fun at the same time. Until children have routines down, it’s best to build in extra time for routines to be successfully mastered whenever there has been extended school closure or there has been a need to change routines. For example, simple routines such as washing hands or unpacking a backpack can take triple time in the beginning days of school or when returning to school after a prolonged

closure. Allowing children, the gift of time to settle in and learn routines is an important part of community building. Community building involves learning how to be and work together in a shared space.

Who is behind that mask? Help children get to know school or program staff members

Another important part of building community involves helping children and families get to know school or program staff. Most teachers accomplish this by taking school tours and introducing the children to various staff—custodians, secretaries, directors, principals, teachers, cafeteria ladies, etc. In the COVID-19 environment, teachers may not be able to walk the children about the building, but they can take photos of staff ahead of time with and without wearing protective masks. Then the photos can be incorporated into a class made book. During story time, the children can enjoy guessing who is behind the mask and learning what that person does at the school or program. Staff members could also create 2-3-minute video clips that can be played during class that tells about their special role at the school. Beth Bacon and Kary Lee wrote a great children’s book describing how young children can be a COVID-19 helper. Their book entitled, “COVID-19 Helper” can be accessed free by clicking this [link](#).

Inclusive practices for the First Few Weeks of School and beyond

Another important part of building community is establishing a culture and climate of acceptance and belonging. Children in early childhood programs learn at different rates and are still learning how to focus on a task, regulate their emotions, use their words to express needs, wait patiently for their turn, and to invite others into play. Teachers play a critical role in modeling acceptance for differences and for ways to be inclusive during play. Classroom spaces should be designed for all children to be able to participate in all activities. When designing a designated space for children to be safe social distances, add a bit more space to accommodate wheelchairs or other apparatus needed by children with exceptionalities. Help children celebrate one another’s uniqueness and strengths by creating “I am special because...” stories that can be read at story time. Consider creating digital versions of these to be shared and enjoyed by families.

Instructional Planning

Fun and Simple Oral Language Exploration Activities for First Weeks of School reopening

Oral language sound exploration games require no preparation, can be played anytime, take little time to play, and are a fun way to get a jump start on learning essential foundational literacy skills in the first few weeks of school. For example, Children delight in hearing silly things said. Enjoy some silly learning fun by helping children make new words by taking away the first or end sound of each word.

For example, taking away /b/ from bean becomes “ean” while taking away /n/ from bean becomes “bea.” For added fun, help children discover that some words can be divided into smaller sound bites called syllables. Begin with their names, say name, clap for each sound bit heard, say name again. Give it a try with other family members’ names as well as with words from books read. Keep children’s interest by substituting clapping for jumping, hopping, bending, or twisting.

IV. Recommended Schedules and Procedures

Program leaders will want to consider flexible scheduling that supports the needs of children birth to five. It’s important to maintain consistency of schedules, routines, and procedures for young children. For programs considering providing half day sessions, you will want to be sure that curriculum content is covered in shorter bursts of time. Below is an example of a possible flexible schedule that accommodates for safe social distancing. As additional early childhood education program leaders share their flexible schedules, the department will increase examples in this section.

Sample of Modified Half Day Pre-K Schedule Morning/Afternoon Sessions

Half Class attends in morning session; other half attends in afternoon (Repeat scheduled activities for both sessions)

*Note: Groups of 3-4 children stay in 6’x6’ designated area of room with spacing marked to maintain social distancing; adults come to them with needed materials if not in space already

*Note: Children do not rotate around classroom or between centers. Instead, learning centers are shelved with baskets for individualized use and choices for that cohort of children.

**Small Group instruction can occur in Learning Center space or in an outdoor space on nice days

Group 1 (3-4 children)	Group 2 (3-4 children)	Group 3 (3-4 children)
25-30 minutes (Teacher) 5-7 minutes Story Time 10 minutes Foundational Skills Activity 5-10 minutes Routine Modeling with movement with teacher	25-30 minutes (Teacher Asst.) 5-10 minutes Rhyming Practice with teacher assistant 15-20 minutes Story Time/ Math Experience	25-30 minutes (children only) 25-30 minutes Learning Center choices
25-30 minutes (children only) 25-30 minutes Learning Center choices	25-30 minutes (Teacher) 5-7 min Story Time 10 min Foundational Skills Activity 5-10 minutes Routine Modeling with movement with teacher	25-30 minutes (Teacher Asst.) 5-10 minutes Rhyming Practice with teacher assistant 15-20 minutes Story Time/ Math Experience
10-15 minutes Picnic Style Snack in designated classroom learning space	10-15 minutes Picnic Style Snack in designated classroom learning space	10-15 minutes Picnic Style Snack in designated classroom learning space
25-30 minutes (Teacher Asst.) 5-10 minutes Rhyming Practice with teacher assistant 15-20 minutes Story Time/ Math Experience	25-30 minutes (children only) 25-30 minutes Learning Center choices	25-30 minutes (Teacher) 5-7 min Story Time 10 minutes Foundational Skills Activity 5-10 minutes Routine Modeling with movement with teacher
30 minutes Outdoor time with teacher assistant	15 minutes Small Group with teacher 15 minutes independent art activity	30 minutes Outdoor time with teacher assistant
15 minutes independent art activity 15 minutes Small Group with teacher	30 minutes Outdoor time with teacher assistant	15 minutes Small Group with teacher 15 minutes independent art activity
7-10 minutes Closing Activity	7-10 minutes Closing Activity	7-10 minutes Closing Activity

Sample Routine Schedule for Cleaning and Sanitizing

It is important to establish a schedule for cleaning and sanitizing furnishings and spaces that children will occupy to prevent germs. Below is a sample schedule you can create to help maintain your routine:

Area	Before each use	After each use	At the end of each day	Weekly	Monthly	Comments
Food Areas						
Food prep surfaces	Clean and sanitize	Clean and sanitize				
Tables/ high chairs	Clean and sanitize	Clean and sanitize	Clean and sanitize			
Classroom						
Toys		Clean	Clean and sanitize			
Rug			Clean			
Floor			Clean			
cabinets			Clean and sanitize			
Diapering area		Clean and sanitize	Clean and sanitize			
Crib sheets				Clean		One child per crib
Blanket				Clean		Send home at end of each week

Additionally, the Center for Disease Control suggests that when you are cleaning you should:

- Wear disposable gloves while cleaning surfaces
- Clean using soap and water first and then use bleach solution or other sanitizer with 70% alcohol
- To make a bleach solution, mix: 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of room temperature water OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of room temperature water.

V. Resource List

Center for Disease Control (CDC)

Link

The Center for Disease Control has issued guidance for childcare programs operating during the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance covers hand washing, social distancing, cleaning of toys and hard surfaces, etc. The CDC provides health promotion materials for hand washing free of charge that can be found here.

ReadyRosie

Link

ReadyRosie is an online education tool providing at-home instructional videos parents can do with their children. Through a partnership between the department and the Governor's Early Literacy Foundation, Tennessee families can register for free through June 30. Register here. All families enrolled prior to June 30 will continue to have access. Access a How To Use Guide here.

PBS Teaching Tennessee

Link

Through a continued partnership with the state's PBS stations, Tennessee students will have access to daily educational content all summer through the *Summer Learning Series*. All six Tennessee PBS stations will offer high quality educational programming for grades K-3, weekdays from 10 a.m. –12 p.m. CT, through June and July. Each of these programs also have teacher, family, and student resources available online. Teaching Tennessee classroom lessons for 1st-8th grade students can be found on the department's YouTube page. All 320 lessons have companion teacher lesson plans and student packets that can be found here.

School Closure toolkits

Link

Tennessee Department of Education has released a set of school-closure toolkits to provide programs with guidance on closure due to natural disaster and/or pandemic.

Tennessee Early learning Developmental Standards (TN-ELDS)

Link

Tennessee Department of Education, in partnership with other early childhood agencies, developed a set of early learning developmental standards for birth-48 months as well as pre-K.

Chapter 0520-12-01, Standards for School-administered Child Care

[Link](#)

In accordance with T.C.A. 49-1-1101-1108, the state board of education approves a set of rules that governs all school-administered childcare.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

[Link](#)

NAEYC has provided resources for early childhood educators on coping with COVID-19. This organization has also provided a free virtual training institute for all early childhood educators this summer.

Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)

[Link](#)

ECLKC provides regular updates on Head Start's response to COVID-19.

Tennessee School Meal Finder

[Link](#)

Through a partnership between the department and Hoonuit, Tennessee families now have access to this school meal site finder to find the closest meal pick up program available to them.

STE(A)M Resource Hub

[Link](#)

The department and the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network (TSIN) released a STE(A)M Resource Hub for educators and families to use with students during COVID-19 related school closures. The STE(A)M Resource Hub includes three weekly challenges around design activities, critical thinking, and career exploration that can all be done in the home.

References

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