



OFFICES IN BOZEMAN AND HELENA
1143 Stoneridge Dr, Bozeman, MT 59718
901 N Benton Ave, Helena, MT 59601
(406) 587-7786 or (800) 962-0418

PROMOTING QUALITY CHILD CARE

CCCMONTANA.ORG

UPDATE: March 26th, 2020

To slow the spread of COVID-19 on [March 26th, 2020, Montana Governor Bullock issued a Shelter-in-Place directive](#) for all Montana citizens, effective 12:01 am March 28th. **Due to this directive, the below guidance that was provided to you earlier in the week is now a mandate.**

Shelter-in-place requires that all citizens who are not providing [essential services as defined by federal and state government](#), are to stay at home. Under this directive, [Montanans may leave their homes for essential activities, including health and safety, necessary supplies and services, outdoor activity, certain types of work, and to take care of others.](#) Businesses with questions can contact Child Care Connections or the 24/7 dedicated State-hotline at 1-800-755-6672.

To honor this directive, the Child Care Connections offices will no longer be staffed starting March 28th, 2020, until further notice. Our staff will continue to provide essential services remotely. We will respond to all phone calls, voicemails, and emails in a timely manner to the best of our abilities. Contact information for Best Beginnings Caseworkers and all staff can be found at cccmontana.org/AboutUs.

We are eager to provide Child Care Providers and Families with support during this uncertain time. We will continue to offer additional resources on financial support, directives, and educational tool as we are contacted and at cccmontana.org/COVID-19.

Thank you for your time and attention. Together we can prevent the spread of COVID-19 while still providing care to children of the [essential workers](#) who are keeping our communities safe and healthy.

Best wishes,

Jane Arntzen Schumacher

Jane Arntzen Schumacher, M.Ed.
Executive Director- Child Care Connections

P.S. If you are interested in providing child care to children of essential workers, please contact us at office@cccmontana.org or (406) 587-7786.



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To our Community's Parents,

Child Care Connections is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit advocating for the well-being and quality care of children in Gallatin, Lewis & Clark, Park, Meagher, Broadwater, and Jefferson counties. As a community leader in child care we are a member of local emergency response teams and working to provide support to our communities during this uncertain time. There are currently no formal directives placed on child care in Montana. However, we offer the following guidance for parents.

Guidance for Parents

Child care and early learning serve a vitally important function in allowing parents to continue working, which has essential public health, economic, and social impacts. We support parents in making decisions about whether and for how long to have their children in care during this time. At this time, we strongly urge parents to follow national guidelines from [Child Care Aware of America](#) and recommend child care providers consider closure to limit the spread of COVID-19 with the exception of serving families with essential workers.

In his latest [public address, Governor Bullock](#) stated, "Montanans have an obligation to slow the spread of this virus [COVID-19]. Our fellow Montanans can all continue to set a good example for each other in adhering to social distancing directives – and know that it will save lives." With this in mind, we recognize that social distancing is a key concept to stopping disease transmission and is extremely challenging for young children and those who care for them. This makes it even more critical to undertake prevention efforts like keeping children- sick or not- at home, cleaning regularly, and practicing good hygiene.

To guide parents on these decisions, we recommend checking that your providers:

- Always adhere to [Montana Child Care Licensing ratio standards](#). Whenever possible, there should be no more than 24 children in any one child care facility at a time for social distancing.
- Take proactive steps including sending sick staff and children home, have staff over 60 or with a compromised immune system stay home, checking children for fever upon arrival, and recommend that families who show [symptoms of COVID-19](#) not return to the facility for 14 days.
- Have a daily cleaning planning in place following the [CDC prevention guidelines](#) including regular hand washing, using soap and water to clean, and a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer as needed.
- Offer outdoor play in staggered shifts. Avoid use of play structures. Always wash hands and any items used (i.e. balls) immediately after outdoor play time.
- Has adapted to a drop-off/pick-up process that encourages social distancing.

To further guide parents on these decisions, we recommend that parents consider:

- Whenever possible, keeping children home, unless parents or caregivers work in an essential occupation such as health care, first responders, grocery store, public service workers, and other child care functions, etc.
- [Directive from Governor Bullock](#) that states, “Parents should, avoid, if possible, placing children for care with grandparents, family members, friends, or providers over the age of 60 or immunocompromised persons.”
- Families who have been traveling outside of Montana do not bring their child into the child care setting for 14 days after the family last traveled.
- Practice [CDC prevention guidelines](#) when at home. Talk with children about COVID-19 using age appropriate resources like the FREE e-book, [“Helping Children Understand COVID-19.”](#)
- Engage in [healthy mental health activities](#) for yourself during this uncertain time.
- Currently, we have no additional information on Best Beginnings payments to providers if the provider closes and continues to charge a tuition fee. We will continue to follow-up with officials and look forward to providing more information as soon as possible.
- Please contact your Caseworker with any questions or to [report changes such as job loss or provider.](#)

Further guidance may be found at the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) website.](#)

We will be supporting families and providers during this pandemic.

Thank you for your time and attention during this critical time. Please help yourself and community stay safe and healthy by following recommendations from the Governor and [CDC](#) on washing your hands regularly, staying home if you are sick, and practicing social distancing.

Best wishes,

Jane Arntzen Schumacher

Kami Ryles

Jane Arntzen Schumacher, M.Ed.
Executive Director- Child Care Connections

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Assistant Director- Child Care Connections

P.S. For updates, resources, and kids friendly activities please check our COVID-19 page at cccmontana.org/covid-19.