



March 17, 2020

Dear Childcare Facility Staff,

Lewis and Clark Public Health is working overtime to curb the spread of COVID-19 in our community. At this time, guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, and Lewis and Clark Public Health is to avoid group gatherings of over 10 people and practice social distancing, which is defined as avoiding mass gatherings and keeping at least 6 feet between individuals. These aggressive efforts will help to limit the spread of the disease.

Because of these national and state guidelines, Lewis and Clark Public Health recommends that childcare facilities consider closing. If your facility decides to stay open, we expect you to follow the guidance below. These guidelines are subject to change based on the COVID-19 status in our community, state, and nation.

- Screen children and staff for illness daily and promptly send home anyone with COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath), even if they are mild.
- Allow no more than 10 children and staff total to gather in the same room or other confined space.
- Practice social distancing. Maintain a distance of 6 feet between everyone on the premises.
- Sanitize multiple times a day, especially hard surfaces that many hands touch.
- Ensure staff and children use good hand hygiene throughout the day. They should wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Anyone over age 65 is considered at higher risk of serious illness and death from COVID-19. This population should not be volunteering or working in your facility at this time.

The situation is changing rapidly, and these directions are subject to change. We appreciate your partnership in keeping our community safe and healthy from this novel coronavirus.

Please refer to the CDC website for more information about what childcare facilities can do:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Drenda Niemann".

Drenda Niemann, MPA, CPH
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Our mission is to improve and protect the health of all Lewis and Clark County residents