



PARENT INFANT CENTER

COVID-19 FAMILY HANDBOOK



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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
A. Purpose of this Handbook	2
B. Important Notice	2
C. Family Responsibility	2
2. COVID-19 General Information	3
3. COVID-19 Monitoring, Reporting, Symptoms and Exposure.....	4
A. Screening, Monitoring and Reporting	4
B. Guidelines for Sick or Symptomatic Staff, Families and Children.....	5
C. Quarantine Guidelines for Travel & Indoor Gatherings	5
D. Guidelines for Those with COVID-like Symptoms	6
E. Staff, Family, or Child with Exposure to a Person who Tested Positive	6
F. Guidelines for Staff, Family or Child who Tests Positive for COVID-19	7
G. Siblings and COVID-19 Exposure	8
H. Possible PIC Center Closure Due to COVID-19	8
4. Before Coming to PIC	8
5. Child Drop-off and Pick Up at PIC	9
A. Carpools	9
B. Drop-off	9
C. Pick-up	9
D. Infants, Young Toddlers, and Twos	10
E. Preschool	10
F. Screening Process at Drop-off	11
6. Items from Home	11
7. Classroom Life at PIC During COVID-19	12
A. Group Size	12
B. Mask Wearing	13
C. Handwashing and Personal Sanitation	13
D. Physical Distancing Guidelines	13
E. Emotional Needs & Communication with Children & Families	14
F. Sharing and Cleaning of Toys	15
G. Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting	15
H. Meal Times	15
I. Cribs and Cots / Naptime	15
J. Outdoor Play	15
K. Outdoor Walks	16
8. Helping Your Newly Enrolled Child Adjust to PIC	16
9. Payment During Self-Quarantine	16
10 Resources for Families	17
Addendum 1: FAQ's of the Early Learning Program	18

Addendum 2: School-day Support Program Information 21

1. Introduction

A. Purpose of this Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the Parent Infant Center’s new policies and procedures during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, including during the “yellow phase” of Pennsylvania’s reopening plan. The handbook relies on the guidance and requirements outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics, Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), as well as the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Health Departments. The policies and procedures outlined in the handbook are intended to help reduce the risk of exposure to and spread of COVID-19 at PIC and to provide the safest possible environment for our children, families, staff members and community.

We recognize that the new policies and procedures represent a significant departure from PIC’s standard operating procedure with which many families have grown accustomed and comfortable. The goal of these new practices is to prioritize the health and safety of our community while staying true to PIC’s mission and values and maintaining a developmentally appropriate program for your child.

The information in this handbook outlines the procedures and protocols operational at the time of this writing. We expect this handbook to be a living document and as more is learned about COVID-19 and different guidance or recommendations are issued, we will continue to update and modify the information in this handbook. Please continue to check PIC’s website for the most up-to-date version.

B. Important Notice

It is important to understand that when your child is present at PIC, they will necessarily be in contact with staff members and other children (and by extension, their families) who are at risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the community. No amount of restrictions, guidelines or policies will eliminate all risk of exposure to COVID-19, as the virus can be transmitted by persons who are not symptomatic and/or prior to showing signs of infection.

C. Family Responsibility

Each family plays a *critical* role in reducing the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread at PIC by following the practices and procedures outlined in this handbook. ***The importance of open and honest communication between parents/guardians and PIC staff and teachers cannot be overstated during this time.*** We expect that all families will read and follow the directives in this handbook in order to help ensure the health and safety of our children, staff and community.

2. COVID-19 General Information

COVID-19 General Information

COVID-19 is a disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus that was newly identified in December 2019. The virus causes primarily a respiratory illness, like a cold or flu. It is mostly spread from person to person through respiratory droplets (i.e., droplets produced by talking, sneezing, spitting, coughing, or blowing your nose). The virus may also spread to one's hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose/mouth/eyes, causing infection. This makes personal and environmental cleaning of the utmost importance.

The typical symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, body aches, cough, and shortness of breath. Children may develop a runny nose, loss of taste or smell, new food aversions, or discoloration of their toes. Some people with COVID-19 have a sore throat, body aches, an upset stomach, or and diarrhea as their primary symptoms; loss of taste and/or smell; or discoloration of their toes. Some people with COVID-19 do not have any symptoms at all. A minority of people with COVID-19 develop breathing difficulties and pneumonia that requires hospitalization. In children, the Risk factors for severe COVID-19 (i.e., pneumonia that requires hospitalization) include: age <1 year old, asthma, diabetes, obesity, immunosuppression, or heart disease since birth. In adults, risk factors include: older age (65 and older), residence in a nursing home/long-term facility, lung disease/asthma, heart conditions, immunocompromising conditions, severe obesity, diabetes, chronic kidney disease requiring dialysis, and liver disease. Children often have very mild symptoms such as runny nose and mild cough.

The best way to prevent spread of COVID-19 is through (1) social distancing (staying at home as much as possible, and keeping yourself at least 6 feet away from others when outside the home); (2) wearing a cloth face covering when outside the home or when indoors with people who are not in your household; (2) frequent hand washing (with soap/water or a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol); (3) wearing a cloth face covering when outside the home (or when inside the home if feeling unwell); and (4) cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects (such as door knobs, countertops, and shared electronics).

There are currently two authorized treatments for COVID-19: (1), an anti-virus medication called remdesivir; and (2) corticosteroids. These are typically used just in patients who require hospitalization for COVID-19. , though there are many ongoing studies evaluating other treatments. There are currently two COVID-19A new vaccines that have been approved by the FDA. These vaccines are currently approved for anyone over the age of 16 years, including pregnant and lactating individuals. You cannot catch COVID-19 infection from the vaccine, and these mRNA vaccines do not affect your DNA. The beginning of distribution has started.

Vaccines

As of this handbook update, there are currently two COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved by the FDA, and others that are awaiting approval. These vaccines are currently approved for anyone over the age of 16 years, including pregnant and lactating individuals. You cannot catch COVID-19 infection from the vaccine, and these mRNA vaccines do not affect your DNA.

It is **highly recommended** that family members and staff members receive the vaccine when it is available.

Recently, Penn Medicine approved that PIC teachers can be vaccinated through Penn and many staff members have already received the 1st vaccine.

Definitions

Close contact: Closer than 6 feet apart AND more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.

Exposure: Close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID starting 48 hours before the onset of their symptoms / Close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID starting 48 hours before the test, if the person who tests positive is asymptomatic.

Household: A household consists of people who live in a shared space for an extended period of time.

Gathering: Being in close contact with someone who is outside of your household.

Isolation: Fully separates (not sharing bathroom, kitchen or bedroom) people who have tested positive for COVID-19 from others in the household.

Quarantine: Separates and restricts people to stay in their household if they may have been exposed to COVID-19.

3. COVID-19 MONITORING, REPORTING, SYMPTOMS AND EXPOSURE

A. COVID-19 SCREENING, MONITORING AND REPORTING

Daily Screening:

- a. All families and staff members will complete a daily COVID screening questionnaire via text message or email and show the results during drop off. Families, children, and staff members must pass the screening (get a “green screen”) to enter.
- b. All children and staff members will have their temperature checked upon arrival at PIC, and will be quickly assessed for signs of COVID-19 symptoms. Any COVID-19 symptoms will be documented in a COVID-19 Instances tracker and that child/staff member will be sent home.
- c. Staff members performing the screening will wear a face mask, eye covering, and gloves. Gloves should be changed between each child if contact is made with the child. Alcohol swabs will be used to clean thermometers between each child.
- d. Only family members of children in the twos and infant/ toddlers classrooms may enter PIC. No adults aside from staff members may enter a classroom at any time.

Monitoring:

- e. Families are requested to check and record temperatures of their child(ren) at least once a day while at home. Staff members are also requested to check and record their own temperatures at least once a day while at home.
- f. PIC administration will develop and maintain an active electronic log of all children and staff members for the purpose of tracking COVID-19 symptoms, exposures, and infections. This data will be reviewed weekly to help guide decisions about operations. Decisions to close the center are made by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health or in accordance with city, state or federal directives.

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Reporting:

- g. **If you, your child, or a close contact is diagnosed with COVID-19, has contact with someone waiting for test results= for symptoms, or is experiencing COVID-like symptoms contact Executive Director Deb Green at dgreen@parentinfantcenter.org. Please copy Assistant Director Jessica Carter at jcarter@parentinfantcenter.org so that we can perform proper contact tracing and mitigation within our facilities. This information will be kept confidential.**
- h. It is important that families refrain from disseminating information about potential or confirmed COVID-19 cases with anyone outside of their classroom. This should be considered very confidential information. PIC administrators will coordinate the communication of this information.

B. GUIDELINES FOR SICK OR SYMPTOMATIC STAFF MEMBERS, FAMILIES, AND CHILDREN

Confidentiality of all health information, including symptoms and COVID-19 testing/diagnosis, must be maintained for all PIC children, staff and family members.

PIC will not allow children, staff members, family members on site if they:

1. Are showing signs of "COVID-19 like symptoms." Based on the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, "COVID-19 like symptoms" are defined by:
 - a. **At least one** of the following symptoms: fever (>100.0), new or persistent cough, new shortness of breath/difficulty breathing (above the child's baseline, if for example they intermittently have shortness of breath or coughing from asthma), new loss of taste or smell (usually noticed as aversion to food in young children) **OR**
 - b. **At least two** of the following symptoms: Chills, rigors, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, nausea/ vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion/ runny nose.
2. Have been in close contact with someone outside of PIC who has a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the past 14 days.
3. Have been in close contact with someone outside of PIC who is currently undergoing testing for possible COVID-19 infection and results are pending.

C. QUARANTINE GUIDELINES FOR TRAVEL AND INDOOR GATHERINGS

PIC will continue to follow Philadelphia's Safer at Home order that went into effect in November 2020 until further notice.

- A. **Indoor Gatherings:** If you gather with anyone who is not in your current household, you must **quarantine for 14 days**. (See definitions, page 4)
- B. **Travel:** Families and Staff Members who travel outside of Pennsylvania must place themselves in **quarantine for 14 days** beginning on the date of return.

The City of Philadelphia issued the following general recommendations:

- a. Avoid all unnecessary travel.
- b. Do not travel if you are sick or if someone in your household is sick.
- c. If you must travel for an urgent matter:
- d. Stay six feet apart from anyone not in your household.
- e. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer frequently.

- f. Wear a mask whenever you are around others.
- g. Do not travel with someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 and is in the quarantine period. recommended below.

We understand that there may be specific and/or extenuating circumstances regarding your family's home or work situations as they pertain to indoor gatherings or travel. Please contact me at dgreen@parentinfantcenter.org to review the situation.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THOSE WITH COVID-LIKE SYMPTOMS

- A. Children or staff members who have have COVID-19 symptoms (See 4A) can return to PIC if:**
- a. Initial COVID-19 testing is negative and the individual meets the center's normal criteria for return after an illness (i.e., no fever for at least 24 hours); OR
 - b. A medical care provider has evaluated the child/staff member and documented an alternative diagnosis which does not require the child/staff member to remain home, and the individual meets the center's normal criteria for return after an illness (i.e., no fever for at least 24 hours); OR
 - c. All of the following are true:
 - i. At least 10 days have passed since
 - 1. the onset of symptoms OR
 - 2. a positive test if there are no symptoms ; AND
 - ii. The individual has been fever-free without use of any fever-reducing medications (e.g., acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil)) for 24 hours; AND
 - iii. Other symptoms (e.g., cough, runny nose) are improving.

Note that repeat COVID-19 testing is not required to return to the center.

- B. COVID-like Symptoms during the School day:**
- a. If a staff member discovers that a child has "COVID-19 like symptoms" during the school day, the child will be taken immediately to the Family Resource room, which is the designated sick area or waiting outside if weather permits.
 - b. Any staff member who develops COVID-19 like symptoms will go home immediately.
 - c. PIC administrators will inform the families in the sick child's or teacher's classroom via email if a child or staff member is sent home for a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms.
 - d. Administrators will follow up with families per our protocol in section 7.

E. GUIDELINES FOR A STAFF MEMBER, FAMILY MEMBER, OR CHILD WITH EXPOSURE TO A PERSON WHO TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

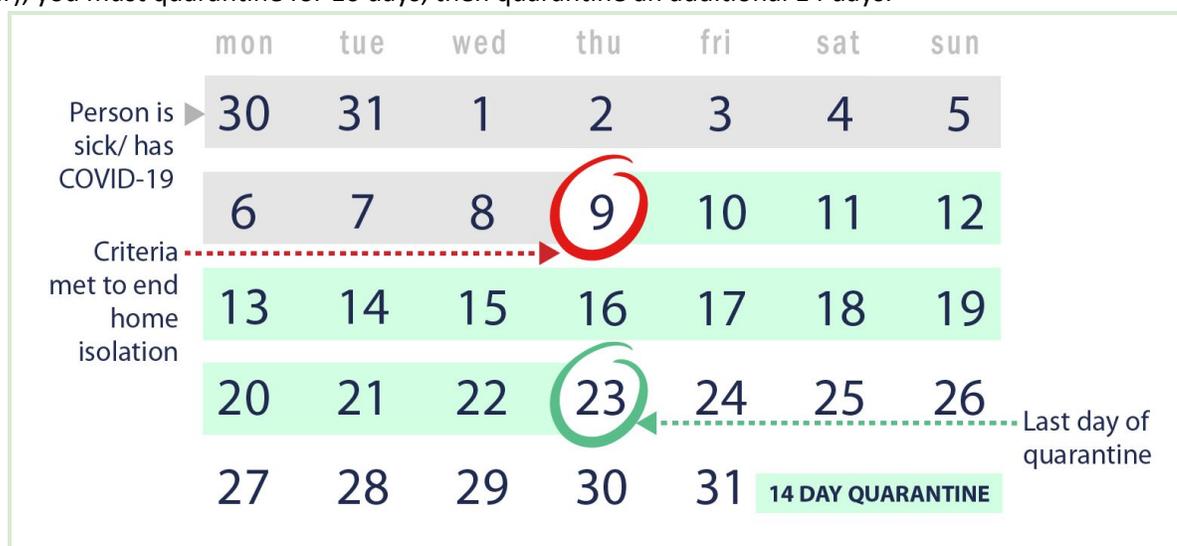
- A. If a staff or family member believes that he/she has had an exposure to a person who tested positive for COVID-19 outside of PIC defined as:**
- Within 6 feet or less for MORE than 15 minutes over a 24 hour period to a person confirmed to have COVID-19,
 - **within 48 hours** from onset of symptoms OR or 48 hours before test (if person who is COVID positive is asymptomatic)

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The individual should **notify** Deb Green (dgreen@parentinfantcenter.org) and Jessica Carter (jcarter@parentinfantcenter.org) and:

- B. Self-quarantine and not go to work, child care, school, or public places for 14 days after the last day they were exposed (7A) to the COVID-19 infected person.
- C. Self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (see 4A) for 14 days after the last day they were in close contact with the COVID-19 infected person.
- D. Upon receiving information about this potential exposure, PIC administration will notify any contacts of this possible exposure through an email to staff members and families in the same classroom. The impact of this information on PIC operations will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Note: If you are NOT able to isolate from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 (ex. Family member), you must quarantine for 10 days, then quarantine an additional 14 days.



CDC.gov

F. GUIDELINES FOR A STAFF MEMBER, FAMILY MEMBER, OR CHILD WHO TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

- A. PIC administrators will report all children and staff members with positive COVID tests to the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) and will follow their instructions about contact tracing and need for closure.
- B. All children and staff in the same classroom or who have had exposure to the individual who tested positive (see 7a) will quarantine at home for 14 days from the day of last exposure. Anyone who develops symptoms during that time should contact their healthcare provider to request testing.
- C. In accordance with PDPH guidance, the COVID-19 positive individual should remain home until all of the following are true:
 - At least 10 days have passed since:
 1. the onset of symptoms OR

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2. a positive test if there are no symptoms ; **AND**
 - The individual has been fever-free without use of any fever-reducing medications (e.g., acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil)) for 24 hours; **AND**
 - Other symptoms (e.g., cough, runny nose) are improving.

Note: At this time, the COVID-19 positive individual does NOT need a repeat COVID-19 test or a doctor's note in order to return to the Center.

G. SIBLINGS AND COVID EXPOSURE

- A. **If a child has a sibling who has tested positive** for COVID, the child must stay home and quarantine for at least 14 days. If the child is not able to isolate from their sibling, they must stay home for a total of 24 days (see pg. 7).
- B. **If a child's classroom has a teacher or a child who has tested positive**, the sibling may come to PIC, provided they or their sibling does not have symptoms. If the sibling or child have symptoms, PIC strongly encourages families to get a COVID test (see page 6).
- C. **If a child has COVID-like symptoms and is awaiting testing**, the sibling must stay home until the negative test result is received.

H. POSSIBLE CENTER CLOSURE OF PIC DUE TO COVID

PIC will work with the Philadelphia Department of Health to decide if/when closure of the Center is appropriate or required.

4. BEFORE COMING TO PIC

- **All children will need to have (1) an updated Health Appraisal Form (within 6 months for children under one year of age and within 1 year for children one and older) and (2) an updated Emergency Contact Form (within 6 months) before coming to PIC.** All vaccine information must be entered on the Health Appraisal Form, and the form needs to be signed and dated by your medical provider. No child may come to PIC without these updated forms. The forms are available on PIC's website.
- **The importance of open and honest communication between parents/guardians and PIC cannot be overstated during this time.** For the health and safety of our full community, we ask that you notify PIC if your child, or family member is diagnosed with COVID-19 so that we can perform proper contact tracing and mitigation of our facilities if necessary. This information will also allow us to keep track of any potential trends in COVID-19 infection that impact PIC. Please contact Deb Green at dgreen@parentinfantcenter.org and Jessica Carter at jcarter@parentinfantcenter.org.

5. CHILD DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

A. Carpools

Recommendations taken directly from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health:

- a. For staff and children who must use carpools, we encourage all riders other than children over 2 years to wear masks if the car will include individuals who do not live together.
- b. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol before and after entering the vehicle.
- c. Limit the number of passengers in the vehicle to only those necessary. If possible, passengers should sit as far as possible from the driver, such as in the rear seat diagonally across from the driver.
- d. Improve ventilation by opening the windows or setting the air ventilation/air conditioning on non-recirculation mode.
- e. Store all children's personal car seats or strollers out of children's reach since these surfaces may be contaminated. Strollers used by the school for walks should be wiped down with disinfectant between use.

B. Drop-off

- a. Drop-off will take place between set hours each day for Early Learning (between 8:30 and 5:30.) Families will be notified of these times. There will be no early drop-offs; this precaution will minimize handoffs, minimize the daily staff required, and adequately separate children according to classes.
- b. Children will be signed in electronically by teachers on Tadpoles. A sign in sheet will not be filled out at this time by family members.
- c. Infants/Toddlers and Twos families will be screened and may enter the buildings, but not the classrooms.
- d. We ask that family members limit direct contact with teachers as much as possible.
- e. Preschool classrooms will drop off children on the blacktop. Teachers will meet children at their designated drop off location and escort children to the classroom.
- f. Families will be notified about their drop off and pick up procedures before their first day.

C. Pick-up

- a. Pick-up will take place between set hours each day and families will be notified of these times. Plans for early pick-up should be communicated to the child's teacher at least 24 hours in advance whenever possible.
- b. The family member will meet the child in the designated pick-up location where sign-out will occur. Children will be signed out electronically by teachers on Tadpoles. A sign out sheet will not be filled out by parents.
- c. We ask that family members limit direct contact with teachers as much as possible. Teachers have been asked to keep a 6 foot distance from family members at drop-off and pick-up times.
- d. Teachers will communicate with families via emails, Tadpoles, or phone updates.

D. Infants, Young Toddlers, and Twos

Children and their family members will have their temperature checked upon drop off. Family members will also have to show their phone screen ("Green Screen") indicating

you have successfully cleared our COVID-19 screening questions. We encourage all families to have the same family member drop off and pick up if possible.

Bumblebees, Caterpillars, Wild Things, Rainbows, and Sunshines will enter through the rear entrance of the Spruce building (across from Penn Alexander School). Rainbows and Sunshines families will go up the first set of stairs to the second floor of the Spruce building, and continue to follow the arrows leading to the stairwell that leads to an exit out of the tot lot.

Moonbeams and Doodlebugs will enter through the main entrance of the Sweet building. We will allow one family per classroom to enter and exit at a time.

Teachers of the infants, young toddlers and twos will come to the classroom doors to welcome children. Some children will walk in themselves, and others will be handed into the arms of a teacher.

Parents will NOT be allowed in any classroom.

E. Preschool

The check in process for preschool families is on the blacktop. There will be two- three lines for check in based on your child's classroom.

Butterflies, Hummingbirds, and Fireflies will follow the pink lines for check in. Bluejays, Chipmunks, and Leapfrogs will follow the yellow line for check in. Grasshoppers and Roadrunners will follow the orange line for check in at front of the Sweet building.

Children will have their temperature checked upon drop off. You will also have to show your phone screen indicating you have successfully cleared our COVID-19 screening questions.

All children will wait in a designated area after screening with their teacher. Once your child has made contact with their teacher, you are able to leave. If their teacher is not present, please wait in the designated wait areas.

For the drop-off of siblings, the drop-off designee should go to the drop-off station for the youngest child.

Family members should not congregate anywhere on the PIC campus at drop-off or any other time.

F. Screening Process at Drop-Off

1. When arriving at the drop-off location, we ask that families use the hand sanitizer that will be available on each check-in table.

2. A staff member will perform a temperature check on each child using a non-contact thermometer and will record the temperature of the child.
 - Any child with a temperature of 100.0 or greater at drop-off or at anytime during the day will need to return home.
 - Staff members performing the screening will wear a face mask, eye covering and gloves.
 - Alcohol swabs will be used to clean the thermometer between each child.

3. A health screening questionnaire survey will be sent to each family via text each morning. Questions will include an assessment for “COVID-19 like illness” (such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle aches) and possible exposures to COVID-19. Questions will be updated based upon the most recent local and federal guidelines.

Families will need to show the “green screen” in order to move on to having their child's temperature taken. Without the green screen, the child will need to return home.

4. For children in the Early Learning Program, after going through the screening station, parents will wait with their child for their child’s teacher in the large taped off WAIT areas on the blacktop. Once the teacher arrives, children will have the opportunity to say good-bye to their family member and a classroom teacher will escort the child to their classroom. **Families of children will not be allowed inside the PIC buildings.**

5. Children will be signed in electronically via teachers on Tadpoles (our electronic communications and classroom management tool). Family members will not fill out a sign-in sheet.

All children who have been admitted into PIC classrooms will be fever free (<100.0) and will have screened negative for other COVID-19 symptoms or potential exposures.

6. ITEMS FROM HOME

- Strollers and car seats will not be able to be stored indoors or outdoors on the PIC campus.
- Bikes and scooters may not come past the gate that is next to the blacktop area.
- Bikes may be stored on the bike rack outside of the blacktop gate along the main entrance walkway.
- Children should not bring toys from home. If a child needs to bring a transition item from home to PIC, we encourage a family photo or a labeled book placed in the child’s backpack. A child **may** bring a **soft** transition/rest time , but it must go in their backpack as they enter PIC and can only be taken out during rest time.

- Please send in a backpack or drawstring bag (preferably washable) with your child. The bag should hold the following items (see School-age Addendum for separate list of items that campers should bring):
 - a sheet for crib or cot
 - light blanket for rest time
 - A towel for sitting on when having a snack outside
 - several changes of clothes that will be kept at PIC
 - toddler cup or preschool/school age water bottle
 - bottle bags for children using bottles
 - If >2 years old: Two face masks
- Certain items will be sent home daily including:
 - bottle bags
 - soiled clothing
 - toddler cups
 - water bottles will be sent home daily for washing and should return each day
- Nap items will be sent home weekly (on Fridays) for laundering.

7. **CLASSROOM LIFE DURING COVID**

A. **Group size**

We will have up to 9 children in our Infant/Young Toddler rooms, 12 children in our 2-year-old rooms, 16 children in our preschool classrooms and 20 children in our school-age groups. Classrooms will be paired together in a buddy system for shared outdoor spaces.

B. **Mask Wearing**

The medical evidence is strong that mask wearing can substantially reduce the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus. The Governor released an order last summer that states that all children over the age of two wear a mask when in public spaces.

Wearing a mask has become a new cultural norm. With this in mind, PIC will treat mask wearing like a developmental skill in our twos and preschool age classrooms (2-5 year olds), much in the same way that we approach toilet learning. We will practice putting masks on and taking them off while at PIC. With any new skill, the more we practice, the easier it will become. We have already found that children are doing better with mask wearing than we ever expected.

- **Masks for Adults**
 - All **adults and children over 2 must wear a mask** that covers their nose and mouth when on PIC grounds.
- **Masks for Children**
 - All individuals who drop off or pick up a child must wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth.

- Upon entering PIC grounds, children must wear masks if they are over 2-years-old for the check-in process.
- Masks ARE REQUIRED **indoors and outdoors** for children over 2 years of age at PIC. Families are requested to provide at least 2 cloth face masks for their children over age 2.
- Teaching mask wearing will always be educational, never punitive.
- Teachers will work to help children both build the skills to put on and take off their masks as independently as possible and understand why it's important to wear masks at school using social stories, songs, art, group games, conversations at morning meeting and in small groups, as well as develop systems to help keep track of and keep masks clean and sanitized.
- Children who have trouble breathing should not wear a mask.
- Children should not wear masks during naptime for their safety.
- If using a disposable mask, a new mask should be used each day.
- If using a cloth mask, it should be laundered every day.
- Please do not use gators (pull up face coverings) in lieu of a mask or a mask with breathing valves.

Mask wearing is a learning process that will take some time. We encourage families to help their child learn to independently put on and remove masks. *It may be helpful to watch [Elmo and Dr. Gupta talk about wearing a mask](#) with your child.*

C. Handwashing and Personal Sanitization

- At a minimum, children and staff should wash hands prior to arrival at PIC, upon entering the classroom, before and after meals or snacks, after outside time, after going to the bathroom, after nose blowing or sneezing/coughing, and before leaving to go home.
- If soap and water are not readily available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol will be used. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers will not be used with children ages 2 and under.
- Teachers will change a child's clothes if secretions (e.g., drool/mucous) are on the child's clothes.
- Contaminated clothes will be placed in a plastic bag to be sent home to wash.
- Infants and toddlers should have multiple changes of clothes on hand.
- Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment used for bottle-feeding will be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing in a dishwasher or by washing with a bottlebrush, soap, and water.

D. Physical Distancing Guidelines

We know that it will not be possible to prevent young children from coming in close contact with one another and their teachers. Instead, the goal is to limit the number of people in close contact in order to lower the risk of transmission.

Each classroom will be viewed as a family unit and the following guidelines will be followed:

- Most of our classroom group sizes will be reduced to allow more physical distancing between children. Our infant/young toddlers classrooms will have up to 9 children per room, our two-year-old rooms will have up to 12 children, and our preschool rooms

will have between 14 and 16 children. Our school-age children will have between 15 and 20 children per group.

- Teachers will consistently be with the same group of children each day.
- Groups will remain separate from other groups during the day except when outdoors, at which point a maximum of two classrooms will be joined (“buddy classrooms”).
- Classroom spaces will be arranged as much as possible to encourage children to spread out throughout the room.
- Physical distancing during snack and lunch time will be met by reducing the number of children seated at each table.
- The 6 foot distancing limit will not be applicable within individual classrooms, except during rest time. Cots will be placed head to toe and spaced out as much as possible.
- Nonessential visitors and volunteers will be restricted.

E. Emotional Needs + Communication with Children and Families

1. We fully expect that some children may have difficulty with outside drop-off and with parents not coming into their child's classroom. Some parents may be leaving their child in tears at the drop-off location. Often a family photo tucked into the pocket of a child's backpack can make a big difference. As always, it is best to give your child a warning that you will be leaving and then quickly leave when that time comes. Please be assured that our teachers are prepared to help children with all the new routines they will encounter when returning to PIC.

2. Teachers WILL be able to hold, touch and comfort children and be in close proximity to them. Most children will NEED hugs and our teachers will be there for them.

3. We fully expect that the younger children will be in close contact with other children in their class and “buddy classroom” and will touch one another. They are young children and we will not stop what is completely developmentally appropriate behavior. Again, our goal is to have classrooms that are individual cohorts or pdos, and not to prevent children from playing with one another in their own classrooms.

4. Teachers will engage in conversations with our older children (4 years of age and up) about physical distancing and why it is important. We have resources available that are developmentally appropriate stories and explanations about physical distancing. We will offer guidance on ways to show affection and kindness without touching one another. However, we fully expect touching to happen, as it is the nature of being a child.

5. Teachers will develop and coordinate methods for giving families electronic communication and/or phone updates about their children.

F. Sharing and Cleaning of Toys

- Sharing toys and other classroom items is another developmentally appropriate

action of all young children. We have reduced the amount of toys and activities in each classroom and rotate toys frequently. Toys have been removed from the classroom that cannot be sanitized and easily washed.

- Toys will be cleaned, sanitized and disinfected on a regular basis throughout the day. Toys that cannot be easily cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- Toys that have been put in a child's mouth will immediately be put into bins near the sink for cleaning and disinfecting. Toys that have been used by a small group of children will be rotated out of circulation and cleaned after use.

G. Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting

- Our cleaning company has received instruction to increase the levels of daily cleaning and pay extra attention to cleaning frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, sink handles and bathrooms.
- The cleaning and sanitizing solutions are all on the approved list distributed by the CDC.
- A cleaning and sanitizing chart has been posted in each classroom to guide staff members in the additional needed daily cleaning protocols.

H. Meal Times

- We will continue to contract with Smart Lunches to prepare and deliver lunch Monday through Thursday and will continue to have Pizza Day through Pasqually's Pizza on Fridays. Children will not be eating "family style" until further notice. To reduce the spread of germs, teachers will put food on each child's plate.
- When weather permits, classrooms may choose to have a snack or lunch outdoors. When doing so, hand sanitizer will be used by teachers and children over the age of two prior to eating.
- Distance will be maintained at the tables when children are eating.

I. Cribs and Cots/Naptime

- Cribs and cots will be moved as far away from another as possible, and children will nap on cots head to toe to avoid prolonged exposure to germs through deep breathing.
- Naptime cots will be cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected daily.

J Outdoor Play

- As weather permits, children will go outside daily. For the Early Learning classrooms, we have created schedules for use of the sandbox, the Nature Playground, the blacktop, the A-Z courtyard, and the TotLot that limits shared spaces to buddy classrooms.
- The outdoor climbing equipment will be wiped down with disinfectant after each group leaves the playground.
- The children will be able to use the outdoor trikes and bikes and the bikes will be wiped with disinfectant after each use. Helmets will continue to be used when riding bikes and will be disinfected after each use.
- Children will wash hands before going outside and after they return to their classroom.

K. Outdoor Walks

- Infant/Toddler: Children are permitted to be in strollers on outdoor walks and the strollers will be disinfected after each use.
- Children will hold hands when walking and will wash their hands when re-entering PIC.
- Children over age 2 must wear masks when walking to sites off PIC's campus.
- Teachers will only walk with children to locations where they can maintain distance from others. Children will not play on playground equipment outside of PIC's campus.

8. **HELPING YOUR NEWLY ENROLLED CHILD ADJUST TO PIC**

- Remind your child that the teachers will be wearing masks and why.
- Talk well in advance with your child about what the morning routine will look like. Practice getting back to a morning routine with your child.
- Ensure that your child has a backpack or bag to carry items to and from PIC each day.

9. **PAYMENT DURING SELF-QUARANTINE**

PIC COVID-19 Payment During Self-Quarantine Addition (7/24/20)

We also know that we may face situations where a positive COVID-19 test result from a child or teacher is reported. In the event of a positive test result in a classroom, the teachers and families in that room will be asked to self-quarantine IF the children or the teachers were present during the exposure period of the infected individual. Children and staff members in the adjoining buddy room may also be required to quarantine, dependent upon the exposure.

From the onset of this pandemic, we have worked hard to support our teachers. Through the support of the federal PPP loan and the generous donations of PIC families and friends, we were able to continue the salaries and benefits of our teachers through our closure. We are extremely grateful for the individual support that made that happen.

We will continue to support the teachers in our classrooms by assuring them that if they are required to self-quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19 at PIC, they will be paid during the period of quarantine.

In order to pay our teachers, we need to continue to charge families during any short-term closures and/or if the family is required to self-quarantine for reasons outside of PIC.

Our Finance Committee and Board have updated our Tuition Policy to address a potential longer term closure. This policy is now outlined in our 2020-21 Family Agreement.

10. **RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES**

We have a wealth of excellent resources for families PIC's website. The link to the resources page of our website is: <https://parentinfantcenter.org/covid-19-supports-for-families>

We continue to all be in this together!

Updated: February 2021

Addendum 1

COVID-19 Related FAQ's for Early Learning Program

When will the hours of operation change from 8am-6pm?

PIC will continue with our hours of **8:30 am-5:30 pm** at least through the winter months. We will again reevaluate our hours once the daylight is longer.

Explain the staggered drop-off and pick-up schedule.

Each family is given a specific drop-off and pick-up time. These times allow us to have the appropriate child:staff ratio in each classroom until all the teachers arrive for the day and all the teachers depart at the end of the day. We are working hard to allow for each family to have 8 hours of care each day. Thus, if you are scheduled for an early drop-off time (ie. 8:30 am) you will also be scheduled for an early pick-up time (ie 4:30 pm) and vice-versa. It is very important to stick to your drop-off and pick-up schedule to the best of your ability. **If you arrive earlier than your drop-off time, we do not have enough teachers to add your child to the group the teacher is assigned to.**

If you arrive at PIC and our morning screening staff are no longer outside, please call us at our main number (215-222-5480) and an administrator will come out to take your child's temperature and bring them to the classroom as soon as possible.

Some families have a child in the Early Learning division of PIC that will begin at 8:30 am and another child in the school day program that will begin at 8 a.m. We ask that children arrive in the school day program by 8:30 am, so it will make sense to drop-off your school-ager first and then drop-off your younger child. We can try to schedule your Early Learning drop-off as close to 8:30 am as possible.

Teachers are not able to pick up children on the blacktop before 8:30 am and parents dropping off younger children to the Early Learning classrooms will not be able to enter the buildings before 8:30 am.

What if I want to pick up my child earlier than my assigned pick-up time?

If you know in advance, please communicate with a teacher at drop-off. If it is unplanned, please call PIC to let us know so someone can bring your child down.

Can my child ride a bike or scooter to PIC in the morning?

Of course, but children must get off the bike or scooter before entering the black top area. No bikes or scooters are allowed on the blacktop area.

Where can I keep my child's bike or scooter during the day?

If you would like to keep your child's bikes / scooters, they can be left outside of the fence that is located down the driveway (42nd & Locust Streets) before you enter the PIC blacktop. We encourage you to lock anything you leave to the bike rack provided.

Where can I keep my child's stroller or car seat?

Right now strollers and/or carseat are not permitted to be stored inside the building. They need to be taken home each day.

What kind of mask should my child wear?

Children may wear disposable masks or reusable cloth masks. The most important thing is that the mask fits comfortably over the child's nose and mouth. Based on current safety recommendations, we do not allow reusable masks with the vent sewn into the front. Children will be given a disposable mask if they come to school with a vented mask.

Should I notify PIC of travel plans?

Families and Staff who travel to a state with increasing cases of COVID-19 should self-quarantine for a 14-day period. The quarantine period begins the date of return to Philadelphia or surrounding areas. For the health and safety of our full community, we ask that you notify Deb Green at dgreen@parentinfantcenter.org or Jessica Carter at jcarter@parentinfantcenter.org of your travel plans so that we can plan staffing based on enrollment numbers.

What measures are teachers taking in the classroom to keep kids safe?

Teachers and children wear masks. The classrooms, equipment and materials are frequently disinfected throughout the day. Children are closely supervised during handwashing. Children only stay with their cohort when inside and with one "buddy" classroom when outside. Teachers limit the number of children at tables and in learning centers at one time.

What's the best way to communicate with my child's teachers?

Email is the best way for you to keep in touch with your teachers daily. You can also use the Parent Tadpoles app to send notes to teachers before your child comes to school or after 7 pm each day. We understand that face-to-face time with teachers has become limited due to safety protocols we have put in place to keep everyone healthy. Thank you for understanding.

What about food?

Monday through Thursday we will continue offering a warm lunch that is delivered daily by our food vendor Smart Lunches. We have verified that Smart Lunches is following all health and safety protocols in the preparation and the delivery of the lunches.

On Fridays we will continue with the hands-down PIC favorite Pizza Day.

Can I bring in cupcakes for my child's birthday?

Families should only bring in birthday "treats" that are prepackaged and unopened. Home baked items should not be brought in during this time.

Can my child bring toys from home to PIC?

We do not encourage children to bring toys from home. If a child needs to bring a transition item from home to PIC, we encourage a family photo or a labeled book placed in the child's backpack. Books may be shared in the classroom. A child may carry a soft transition object during drop off, but it must go in their backpack as they enter PIC and can only be taken out during naptime.

How often will my child go outside during the day?

As weather permits, children will go outside daily. For all of the classrooms, we have created schedules for use of the sandbox, the Nature Playground, the blacktop, and the TotLot so that children use these spaces in groups of no more than 20.

Will classrooms go on neighborhood walks ?

Children will be able to continue to go on outdoor excursions with the classrooms. All children over the age of two will wear masks anytime that they leave PIC's property.

- Our youngest children will travel in our PIC strollers that will be disinfected after each use.
- Older children will walk with their classroom and will be able to hold hands (again, only with the children they are with all day). They will wash their hands before and after going on walks.

Will the children be able to use the new playground at Penn Alexander School?

Not at this time. We still limit our children to only use the play equipment that we have at PIC. We are assured that each morning and after each class use throughout the day the entire climber is thoroughly disinfected. We do not have that kind of oversight of any equipment beyond our property.



School-day Support Program Information

The School-day Support Program was created for the 2020-21 school year in response to requests by families for school-time assistance while their children are enrolled in school districts that are opening with remote-only learning. PIC offers a safe and supportive learning environment, and teachers who will offer “live” attention to each child as they navigate the on-line experience. Each day, children will have as much time as possible to engage in developmentally appropriate, hands-on play and learning, both inside and out of doors.

THE BASICS:

- **What are the dates of the program?**

The Program began on Tuesday, September 8th, 2020.

The Program will end when the children return to in-person classes at their schools. If the schools move to a hybrid model, PIC will consider extending the program.

- **What are the hours of the program?**

Our hours are 8 am - 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Most of the schools expect the children to be online by 8:30 am, so we expect children to arrive in time to get settled in their rooms and be ready to learn by 8:30 am.

- **What ages will the program take?**

At this time we are enrolling Kindergarten, first and second grade children. We are very aware that all elementary-age children would benefit from such a program, but we believe we need to focus at this time on the youngest school-age children.

- **How many children will be enrolled. Where will they be?**

We will have a maximum of 25 kindergarten children per day working in two groups in the Stucco Building on PIC's campus, and 25 first and second graders per day in the Aviary building located on the corner of 43rd and Spruce Streets.

- **Tuition and fees**

These are the rates for the *School-day Support Program*

5 day: \$1350 per month

3-day-: \$850 per month

2-day: \$540 per month

- **Are there additional fees charged?**

While there is an additional Health and Safety fee and an additional Facilities fee charged for the Early Learning Program, these fees have been included in the monthly tuition for the School-day Support Program.

- **What if we cannot afford the full tuition cost?**

In keeping with PIC's mission to expand social-economic diversity, we will make sure that families of all income levels have the opportunity to enroll. We are doing the following to assure this:

- PIC accepts the Child Care Works (CCW) state subsidy. See more information and check your family's eligibility at this link.
<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Children/Pages/Child-Care-Works-Program.aspx>
- Families who do not qualify for CCW subsidy, can [apply for financial support](#) through PIC's Tuition Assistance Fund. Families have the option of 2-day, 3-day, and 5-day enrollment. Enrolling for less days is a significantly lower cost.

- **Will there be space for everyone who wants to enroll?**

Unfortunately, we already know that we will not have the capacity for everyone who wants to enroll. We are bound by our space capacity and staffing. Priority will be given to families already enrolled at PIC and to families who are required to work outside the home.

- **I want to enroll for three days, but my schedule may change each week. Am I able to switch my child's days on a weekly basis?**

Unfortunately no. While we have always had significant flexibility in our enrollment scheduling, part of our safety plan is to keep the same children in the spaces each day. Thus, 2-day children will only be scheduled for Tuesday & Thursday and 3-day children will only be scheduled for Monday, Wednesday & Friday.

- **Is space currently available?**

Dependent upon what happens with the children returning to the hybrid model. We may have space available for our 5-day program. Please contact School Age Program Director Anjali Gallup-Diaz at agallupdiaz@parentinfantcenter.org for additional information.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS:

Our foremost goal is to keep everyone healthy and safe. In order to limit any possibility that PIC must close partially or completely because of an outbreak, we must work together and strictly adhere to all protocols. Families must truthfully answer the screening questions each day and keep kids home, even with what might seem to be minor symptoms. The community will stay healthy and open ONLY if everyone works together.

- **What will the health & safety screening consist of?**

The most important part of the morning screening is everyone's commitment to take it seriously. We use an electronic health screening tool for families to use before arriving at PIC. You will

immediately know if you have passed the screening by seeing a “green screen.” If you fail the screening you will see a “red screen” and no allowed entry to PIC. (see pages 4-8)

- **Where will I drop-off my child in September?**

Kindergarten children will come to the ramp on the south side of the Stucco building (next to the chapel). Each parent and child will come up the ramp to show the “green screen” on their phone that indicates the health and safety screening has been passed. The child’s temperature will be taken at the top of the ramp before entering the building. *As a way to reduce the risk of exposure, parents are not allowed in any PIC building.*

1st and 2nd grade children will enter via the east facing porch entrance of the Aviary building at 43rd and Spruce Streets. Parents will be asked to show their “green screen” at that entrance and each child will have their temperature taken before entering the building. Again parents are NOT allowed in any PIC building.

- **What about masks?**

Adults will wear masks at all times and children will wear masks inside and outside. Children must wear a mask when they arrive each day and bring another mask in their bag/backpack as an extra. Masks are not worn when children are eating. Masks should be taken home each day to be washed. We will have disposable masks available if anyone forgets them.

- **What kind of mask should my child wear?**

Children may wear disposable masks or reusable cloth masks. The most important thing is that the mask fits comfortably over the child's nose and mouth. Based on current safety recommendations, **we not not allow reusable masks with the vent sewn into the front.** Children will be given a disposable mask if they come to school with a vented mask.

- **How will safety be assured during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

- We will follow all the policies and protocols outlined in our [COVID-19 Family Handbook](#). The COVID-19 Family Handbook is being updated. The latest version will be available soon.
- Families will complete an electronic screening survey each morning and all children will have their temperatures taken before entering.
- Teachers will wear masks at all times and frequently disinfect the room, frequently-touched surfaces, and other materials throughout the day.
- Children are closely supervised during handwashing and are kept distanced from one another to the extent possible. Only four children are at a shared table for school work, activities, lunch, and snacks.
- We will have significantly smaller group sizes than our typical school-age program.

THE SCHOOL DAY:

- **How many teachers will there be?**

There will be four teachers in the kindergarten program and four teachers in the 1st and 2nd grade program. We are delighted that most of our wonderful teachers in our school-age program will be with the children for the Full-day School Support program. All have significant experience working with school-age children.

- **What will my child need to bring to PIC?**

Children are expected to bring their laptop from home each day, either one that they own or one that is distributed by the School District. They should also bring anything that their School District teacher says that they will need.

Children should also come with a water bottle each day (and take it home each night to be washed). A change of clothing is also helpful as playing outside on rainy days is part of what we do! Some kids are more comfortable coming inside to a dry change of clothing.

- **What about the laptops? What if it breaks or gets lost?**

PIC cannot assume responsibility for laptops or other devices that are not ours. Thus, we are not responsible for property that is damaged or lost during the hours that children are at PIC.

- **Please explain the curriculum?**

PIC's school-age teachers will not create the curriculum, but will do all they can to support the curriculum that the children need to follow.

During the school-day, we will be supporting the schedules and the virtual curriculum of the children enrolled in the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) schools. As we currently understand it, attendance will be taken each morning by the SDP classroom teachers.

Every PIC school-age teacher is committed to providing developmentally-appropriate off-line activities and energizing outdoor time for children in each age group throughout the day. PIC teachers will be available to support children with technology as needed, and provide the care and nurturing we know they will need. At the heart of everything we do, regardless if technology is driving our work more than we might hope, is the social-emotional support that we know children will need more than ever before.

Once the school day ends, the program will look very much like our typical after school program. There will be LOTS of opportunities for fun clubs and outdoor time.

- **Can my child ride a bike or scooter to PIC in the morning? Is there a place to keep the bike or scooter during the day?**

Your child may certainly bike or scooter to PIC, but we do not have a storage place at this time to leave the vehicles during the day.

- **Can my child bring toys from home to PIC?**

We do not encourage children to bring toys from home. If a child needs to bring a transition item from home to PIC, we encourage a family photo or a labeled book placed in the child's backpack. Books may be shared in the classroom. A child may carry a soft transition object during drop off, but it must go in their backpack as they enter PIC and can only be taken out during naptime.
- **What about snacks and lunch?**

We will provide a morning and afternoon snack each day, as well as lunch. Friday at PIC is Pizza Day! For the children coming from the Early Learning Program, this will be a nice continuation of a beloved tradition.
- **Can I bring in cupcakes for my child's birthday?**

Families should only bring in birthday "treats" that are prepackaged and unopened. Home baked items should not be brought in during this time.
- **Will the children be able to use the new playground at Penn Alexander School?**

Not at this time. We still limit our children to only use the play equipment that we have at PIC. We are assured that each morning and after each class use throughout the day the entire climber is thoroughly disinfected. We do not have that kind of oversight of any equipment beyond our property.
- **What's the best way to communicate with my child's teachers?**

Email is the best way for you to keep in touch with your teachers daily. We understand that face-to-face time with teachers has become limited due to safety protocols we have put in place to keep everyone healthy. *Thank you for understanding.*
- **Should I notify PIC of travel plans?**

Families and Staff who travel to a state with increasing cases of COVID-19 should self-quarantine for a 14-day period. The quarantine period begins the date of return to Philadelphia or surrounding areas. For the health and safety of our full community, we ask that you notify Deb Green at dgreen@parentinfantcenter.org or Jessica Carter at jcarter@parentinfantcenter.org of your travel plans so that we can plan staffing based on enrollment numbers.
- **Is there anything else that we should know?**

We do not yet know exactly when the School District will follow through with the plans to proceed with the hybrid model. When this does happen, families will need to choose for their child to return to face-to-face learning with the hybrid model, or remain enrolled in the School-day Support Program. If this plan changes, we will inform our enrolled families.

PIC has always been about community and we hope this program goes a step further in serving our community. We know we will all be learning together!