Tools to Evolve Your COVID-19 Child Care Strategy: Seminar Summary

OVERVIEW

On June 2, 2020, the CDC Foundation, in collaboration with Leavitt Partners, All Our Kin, Child Care Aware of America, the Council for Professional Recognition, and the National Association for Family Child Care, hosted an online seminar for child care leaders to support them in making decisions that will mitigate the risks of COVID-19 for their staff and the families they serve. The seminar began with presentations from public health leaders, who provided timely insights into existing resources and tools and presented a risk analysis framework that businesses can use to inform operational decisions. Then, child care leaders illustrated how to apply the framework by sharing examples of risk mitigation in their child care facilities. The framework and instructions for using it are now available for download on CDC Foundation's website.

SPEAKERS

- Dr. Judy Monroe, CDC Foundation President and CEO
- Governor Mike Leavitt, former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services
- Dr. Georgina Peacock, Director of the Division of Human Development and Disability, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Bo Nemelka, Principal, Leavitt Partners
- Norma Stennett, Owner of Scholastic Renaissance
- Lauren Koontz, President and CEO of YMCA of Metro Atlanta
- Jamie Mack, Chief of Health Systems Protection at the Delaware Division of Public Health

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- We must adapt how we do business in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides guidance on how to limit the spread of COVID-19. Individual child care providers will have to determine how to implement this guidance in their situation.
- A framework[1] developed by Leavitt Partners can be applied with guidance to assess child care-specific settings and limit the exposure of the virus for children, staff, and parents.

Overview of COVID-19 and Available CDC Tools – Dr. Georgina Peacock, CDC

Dr. Peacock, Director of the Division of Human Disability at the CDC, stated that the virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person

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[1] Poelman, J., Doxey, P., Hanson, A., & Heins, Z. (2020). *Understanding the coronavirus and situational characteristics: A framework for individuals and businesses for mitigating risk* [White paper]. Leavitt Partners.

coughs or sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Ways to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 include use of personal protective measures (e.g., handwashing, cough etiquette, and face coverings) at home and social distancing while in community settings.

CDC Tools and Resources
- Interim Guidance: Strategies and recommendations for administrators of public and private child care programs responding to COVID-19, including those seeking to resume normal or phased business operations.
- Workplace Decision Tool: Offers a tool to help schools decide if they are ready to open.
- Workers at High Risk: Approaches for workers at high risk.
- CDC Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President's Plan for Opening America Up Again
- Supplemental Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open
- Talking with Children about COVID-19
- Cleaning and Disinfection: CDC and EPA guidance on cleaning and disinfection to get workplaces safe and ready for return.
- Communications resources: Print and social media images and videos that can be shared with children and families
- FAQ for children with special health care needs

Situational Characteristics to Consider and How They Apply to Different Settings

The framework consists of seven "situational characteristics," which are elements of environments or situations that may be categorized as higher or lower risk: movement, duration, proximity, respiratory output, group size, touch, and congestion. Child care administrators and staff can apply the framework to solve practical problems when guidance is not available. Please see the Appendix for a more detailed description of the framework.

Child Care Industry Scenario Planning and Panel Discussion

1. **Drop Off**
   a. *High-Risk Considerations*: Using the situational framework above, "higher risk" factors that need to be mitigated are movement, touch, and congestion.
   b. *Mitigation*: Child care facilities can mitigate some high-risk factors by directing movement during drop off; using gloves; and staying six feet apart while doing health checks.
2. **Consoling Infants and Toddlers**
   a. *High-Risk Considerations*: Using the situational framework above, "higher risk" factors that need to be mitigated are movement, duration, proximity, and touch.
   b. *Mitigation*: Child care workers can mitigate some high-risk factors by wearing masks; using burp cloths; changing clothes or smocks; and practicing frequent hand washing.
3. **Mealtime**

    a. *High-Risk Considerations*: Using the situational framework, "higher risk" factors that need to be mitigated are duration, proximity, respiratory output, and touch.
    b. *Mitigation*: Child care facilities can mitigate some high-risk factors by limiting duration of mealtimes; handwashing before and after meals; serving food in individual packaging; and practicing social distancing during mealtime.

Collaboration with Public Health

Collaboration with local public health officials is important for the child care industry and may include consultation and relationships with local departments of health. Two-way communication helps to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep children and staff healthy. For a listing of state and territorial public health websites, please click here.

CDC Foundation Tools

The CDC Foundation acknowledges that guidance is not a one-size-fits-all approach. A structured approach, such as applying the seven situational characteristics to one's unique setting, will support child care administrators in assessing the risk profile of their own setting and making plans to mitigate risk.

To download tools and apply the framework to one's own settings, visit:

https://www.cdcfoundation.org/covid-19-seminars

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APPENDIX

Situational Characteristic	Lower Risk Characteristic		Higher Risk Characteristic	
Movement How do people move around in the space?	Directed	Movement is restrained or highly controlled, people are confined to a specific area, little intermingling.	Undirected	Movement is unrestrained or uncontrolled, people can wander in the space, frequent intermingling.
Duration How long are people in this space?	Less than 15 minutes	Less than 15 minutes is typically spent in the space.	Greater than 15 minutes	More than 15 minutes is typically spent in the place.
Proximity How close are people in this space?	Greater than 6 feet	It is possible, either naturally or with minimal interventions, to maintain a 6-foot distance.	Less than 6 feet	It is not possible to maintain a 6-foot distance; the activity cannot be done if distance is maintained.
Group Size How many people are in the space?	Less than recommended limit	A small group of people, mostly part of the same social circle.	Greater than recommended limit	A large group of people from different households and social circles.
Respiratory Output How are people breathing in the space?	Normal	People are breathing normally, low respiratory output.	Increased	People are breathing heavily, from exercising, laughing, cheering, singing, etc.
Touch How do people engage with objects or fixtures in the space?	Low	People do not interact much with each other or with objects in the space.	High	People frequently interact with each other or touch objects in the space.
Congestion Are there points of high congestion?	Low	The design of the space and activity do not result in congregations of people (e.g. entry points, lines, security, etc.)	High	Because of the design of the space or the nature of the activity, people must gather closely together at times.

These situational characteristics help categorize the "risk" level of a space and can be used as a prompt to think through what mitigation strategies can be employed to offset risk.

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