

# Introduction

The following infection prevention and control guidelines have been developed to assist licensed early learning and child care facilities and schools in keeping children, students, and staff safe in situations where germs can spread. Although public health measures can significantly reduce the risk of spreading communicable diseases in child care facilities and schools, the risk is never zero. The best way to control the spread of disease is by continuing to follow applicable health and safety guidelines, including the implementation of Routine Practices and other infection prevention and control measures, to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of children, students, and staff.

Routine Practices have been in place in health care since 1999 and are the fundamental infection prevention and control practices that must be followed to prevent transmission of infection. This document uses the basic principles of Routine Practices that have been adapted for child care facilities and schools.

Child care facilities and schools are encouraged to have processes in place to prevent the transmission of infection. The following guidelines outline the measures that need to be followed and implemented to reduce the risk of transmission.

These guidelines have been established as province-wide best practices for child care facilities and schools. They are based on current best practices for infection prevention and control, as well as public health legislation, child care licensing legislation, and evidence-based health protection standards and practices.

The main purpose of this document is to serve as a standard reference for staff of child care facilities, schools, and school divisions, as well as boards of directors, public health inspectors, and child care coordinators, to help protect the health, safety, and well-being of children, students, and staff.

This document does not include advice on specific communicable diseases. In situations of communicable diseases reportable to public health officials, child care facilities, schools, and school divisions should follow public health advice.

Before implementation, it is recommended this content be reviewed by the Workplace Safety and Health Committee of the child care facility or school, the school division, and the board of directors (or owner/operator) of the child care facility.

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning appreciates the support of a team coordinated by the Public Health Infection Prevention and Control Team and Environmental Health Team of Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care in the development of the content for this document.