

What is the Role of the Child Care Facility and School?

Overall Role

It is the role of a child care facility or school to minimize the risk of exposure to (and therefore the spread of) germs. Child care facilities and schools are responsible for

- developing and implementing policies and procedures for the application of infection prevention and control measures, if needed
- providing education and training on *Routine Practices: Guide to Creating a Healthy Environment and Preventing Infections within Child Care Facilities and Schools*
- developing engineering controls to reduce the risk of exposure
- providing adequate resources to develop, implement, and maintain a source control program for the management of potentially ill persons that would include the following:
 - signage throughout the child care facility or school (e.g., entrances, classrooms, reception areas, areas where there may be a number of individuals gathering)
 - physical distancing, if needed or required
 - respiratory hygiene (if needed, masks, tissues, hand hygiene products, and handwashing sinks)
 - strategies to reduce production of aerosols during certain inclusion support procedures
- ensuring PPE is appropriate for the child care or school setting and is available, sufficient, and located in convenient and accessible areas
- promoting the application of the PCRAs
- promoting and facilitating proper hand hygiene procedures
- providing information to parents on how to monitor their child adequately for signs and symptoms of communicable diseases
- promoting adherence to aseptic technique when children, students, or staff require first aid or health care interventions outlined in a health care plan

- developing and implementing policies and procedures for routine scheduled cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched items (e.g., toys, manipulatives)
- developing and implementing policies and procedures for scheduled cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces
- developing education and training for those responsible for cleaning of frequently touched items and environmental cleaning, and ensuring this training is occurring on an ongoing basis
- using detergent disinfectants with a Drug Identification Number (DIN) that are effective against the pathogens most likely to contaminate the child care facility or school environment (More information on DIN can be found on Health Canada’s website at <https://health-products.canada.ca/dpd-bdpp/>.)
- following food safety guidance, as outlined in this document
- ensuring that new construction of a child care facility or renovations of an existing licensed centre meet public health requirements
- following and adhering to The Workplace Safety and Health Act (see https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/_pdf.php?cap=w210)

For schools:

- As defined in The Public Schools Act (Act 96(1)(e) (see https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/_pdf.php?cap=p250), every school has the responsibility to notify the appropriate local health authority of the area in which the school is situated or, where there is no local health authority, the school division or school district that they have reason to believe that a pupil attending the school has been exposed to or is suffering from a communicable disease as defined in The Public Health Act (see https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=37/2009).

For child care facilities:

- As defined in the Child Care Regulation (62/86) at https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=62/86:
 - 35.11 (1) When a licence holder is aware that a child attending the licence holder’s facility has contracted a communicable disease, the licence holder must promptly notify (a) the child’s parent, guardian, or physician; (b) the health authority in accordance with guidelines provided by the health authority or, in the absence of such guidelines, as required by the provincial director; and (c) ensure that any recommendations or instructions from the health authority are followed.
 - 35.11(2) A licence holder must not permit a child suffering from a communicable disease or acute illness to attend the licence holder’s facility during (a) the period prescribed by the health authority for non-attendance; or (b) if no period has been prescribed, the period determined by the provincial director.

Risk Assessment

An organizational risk assessment (ORA) can provide child care facilities and schools with information to reduce exposure to and the spread of infectious germs. An ORA should be conducted on a regular and ongoing basis to ensure consistency and compliance with current applicable regulations that will be outlined in the child care facility, school, or division policies, procedures, and programs, as well as current public health requirements.

To conduct the risk assessment, staff will need to

- determine the impact of transmission of germs (e.g., infected children/ students, staff) on individuals that work or visit the child care facility or school
- assess available control measures (e.g., Routine Practices, additional infection prevention and control measures, engineering, administrative, PPE) to reduce or prevent exposure to or transmission of germs in the child care or school setting
- conduct a regular review and maintenance of the building's ventilation system
- conduct a regular review of the policies and procedures that are intended to prevent exposure to and transmission of germs

After the ORA is complete, policies, procedures, and programs should be developed and implemented to achieve the reduction of exposure to communicable diseases. They should be consistent across the organization and in compliance with current health regulations and best practices for infection prevention and control.