



## Storyoga Inc. Covid19 Health and Wellness Policy

Storyoga Inc. is licensed and regulated by the Ministry of Health and Vancouver Island Health Authority. Storyoga Inc. may be directed by the Ministry or by a childcare Licensing Officer to close operations during a pandemic or other communicable disease outbreak.

Storyoga Inc. will follow all directives provided by the Ministry of Health. The legal authority to close a childcare program for public health reasons falls under the purview of the local Medical Health Officer and the Provincial Health Officer, and their decision overrides any decision to stay open.

Based on the current epidemiology of COVID-19 in B.C., and the fact that children are at a much lower risk of developing COVID-19, childcare providers are encouraged to remain open or re-open, while supporting the health and safety of children and adults. Dr. Bonnie Henry maintains that childcare centres can safely care for children if they are following the prescribed health protocols as outlined below.

**Before arrival, staff and parents are required to refer to the daily health check provided and to follow its guidelines.**

<b>Symptom</b>	<b>May Return to Childcare</b>
Temperature of 100.4 F / 37.8 C or higher (orally) or 99 F / 37.2 C or higher (under the arm)	After 48 hours or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Cough or worsening of chronic cough	After 48 hours or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Runny nose (clear runny nose with no other symptoms is exempt)	After 48 hours or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Difficulty breathing or wheezing	After 48 hours or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Unexplained fatigue, aches, or cold/flu like symptoms	After 48 hours or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Children who have, or children living in the same home who have just returned from international travel	After self-isolating for 10 days and being symptom free
Children who have, or children with others living in the same home who have been identified as at risk of potential Covid-19 exposure	After self-isolating for 10 days and being symptom free

**In addition, children may not attend childcare if they have any of the following symptoms:**

- Eye infections
- Unexplained rashes or any rash that is not confirmed by a doctor to be non-contagious
- Known or suspected communicable diseases (ie. measles, chicken pox, pink eye, hand food and mouth, pertussis, etc.)
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea in the last 48 hours

If your child develops the above symptoms while in our care, they will be guided to a separate supervised area, and you will be notified to pick up your child immediately. If your child has ANY of the symptoms listed above, they are not permitted to return to Storyoga Inc. for 48 hours from the cessation of symptoms.

**If A Child or Staff Begins to Experience Symptoms of COVID-19 While In Our Care:**

- Symptomatic children will immediately be separated from others in a supervised area until they can go home. In addition, where possible, anyone who is providing care to the child will maintain a distance of 2 metres. Symptomatic staff will be sent home.
- If a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained from the symptomatic child, we are obligated to follow recommendations from the local public health unit in order to prevent/limit virus transmission to those providing care. The recommendations continue to develop but may include the supervising staff member utilizing PPE.
- Environmental cleaning and sanitizing of any space the symptomatic child was in will be conducted as soon as possible; and the separate supervised space will be cleaned and sanitized upon pick up of the symptomatic child.
- Those with symptoms are required to continue to isolate until symptoms resolve. If symptoms worsen, please contact your health care provider or call 8-1-1.

- Children and/or staff who are sent home are encouraged to seek out testing via the local health unit (Saanich Peninsula Hospital is our closest testing site).
- Children or staff with a diagnosis of COVID-19 are required to remain at home for 10 days or until a health care provider clears them to return and a negative test is received.
- Children or staff that have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 or symptomatic person(s), will be asked to remain home for 10 days unless tested and a negative test is received.
- Children or staff may return to Storyoga Inc. once they are assessed by their family physician or nurse practitioner and it is determined that they do NOT have COVID-19, and their symptoms have resolved.

**If A Child or Staff Tests Positive For COVID-19:**

Public health will determine the need to exclude any children or staff, or to temporarily close the childcare setting in the event a case of COVID-19 is identified at Storyoga. Parent fees will not be reimbursed in the event a closure is required.

**Ratios and Hours of Operation**

Childcare ratios are required during operation, regardless of a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak. Unforeseen circumstances could have an impact on both the ratios and operating hours. In the event that some employees are unable to come in to work or are in quarantine, any or all the following could happen:

- The centre may be closed indefinitely. This would be determined by input from our local health authority.
- Ratios may be lowered to meet expectations from the health authority, or if there is not enough staff available to maintain regular ratios.
- Hours and days of operation may be adjusted to ensure that the programs are able to meet all licensing expectations regarding ratios, while ensuring that the programs are

able to meet all protocol expectations.

- If ratios are lowered, Storyoga Inc. will follow the guidelines set out by the Provincial Government or other governing bodies regarding priority placement of children in available spaces.
- During a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak, any parent that is at home due to any type of leave from work or is now working from home due to the outbreak, will be expected to keep their childr at home. This will allow the programs to operate at lower ratios while providing care to parents deemed as essential service.

**Drop-off and Pick-up Procedure:** (specific to our Deep Cove Full Day Program)

- Drop-off will take place inside the upper level of the building. Parents are required to wear a mask upon entering the building. Please be mindful of one another in the cubby and classroom area and be respectful of each other's space.
- Storyoga staff will sign children in and out at the beginning and end of the day. Parents, children, and caregivers are required to use hand sanitizer provided at the front entrance
- Pick-up will take place at the back playground outside. Parents are to enter through the front upper doors and to go through the set of doors by the exit sign. Parents are to proceed through the wooden gate and to meet their child outside. Parents and children can come back through the building to collect belongings from the cubby area inside. Storyoga staff will sign your child out at the top gate.

**Additional Health and Cleaning Measures in Place:**

- Staff and children will follow stringent health protocols. Staff will wash or sanitize hands upon entering the building and will practise frequent and thorough hand washing throughout the day.
- We will be limiting the number of toys and materials available indoors and sanitizing each item at the end of each day.
- All high touch surfaces (door handles, light switches, washrooms, sinks, etc.) will be cleaned 2 - 3 times per day.

- We will be ensuring adequate ventilation and opening windows to encourage extra fresh air flow throughout the day. A Hepa Air filter will be used in the classroom.

### **Masks and Social Distancing:**

- Children are NOT required to social distance from each other. Children are social beings and adhering to standard social distancing guidelines will not be possible at all times throughout the day.
- Children and staff are not required to wear a mask during their daily interactions. Children may wear a mask based on personal or family choice.

*As taken from the BC Centre of Disease Control dated February 12, 2021, "Masks may only provide limited protective value for adult-child interactions in child care settings, as there are multiple effective infection prevention and exposure control measures in place and young children are less likely to be infected. Child care staff and other adults may choose to wear a mask indoors when engaging in prolonged, close interaction with children. Careful consideration should be given to the potential impact of mask wearing on visual cueing and non-verbal communication with children, as these interactions play an important role in learning and development."*

**Fees During a Pandemic/Communicable Disease Outbreak:** (also outlined in parent handbook)

**Refunds will not be given** in the event your child is required to stay home for 10 days or more. Our 30-day policy will remain in effect and is required to withdraw your child.

In the event of a short-term closure due to a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak (less than 30 days), fees are due and payable as per usual operations. Fees payable during closures exceeding 30 days will be reevaluated based on information received from the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

In the event of a closure of 30 days or more, Storyoga Inc. may be unable to hold spaces at no charge while families are in isolation and nominal charges may need to be imposed to cover ongoing operating costs. As each outbreak or pandemic is different, the guidelines around these situations would be different as well. Each situation will be decided based on information provided by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The ACCB, (Affordable Child Care Benefit), formerly known as subsidy, is provided through MCFD and may or may not be provided during a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak closure. Parents/Guardians may directly contact the MCFD office at 1-888-338-6622 to discuss MCFD's policy regarding the ACCB payments. This decision is outside of Storyoga Inc.'s authority. If MCFD will not cover the fees, then parents will be responsible for the full monthly fee for their childcare if a closure under 30 days occurs.