

# COVID-19: GUIDANCE FOR DAY CAMPS

The provincial government is permitting [certain summer day camps](#) to operate during the months of July and August 2020. Overnight camps are prohibited. The following recommendations are intended to help organizers and staff working at day camps to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As every day camp program will be different, it is ultimately the responsibility of day camp organizers and operators to review their own policies, procedures and site-specific circumstances, and assess their ability to deliver programs and activities while ensuring that the appropriate infection prevention and control measures are implemented and maintained. York Region Public Health has also developed a [Summer Camp Self-Auditing Checklist](#) to help guide camp operators through these recommendations and apply them.

More information about COVID-19 can be found at [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19).

## PROMOTE HEALTHY BEHAVIOUR

### Stay home when you're sick

- Visit our webpage to learn about the [symptoms](#) associated with COVID-19
- Remind staff, participants and their families to stay at home and not attend the day camp if they are sick

### Practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette

- [Wash your hands](#) thoroughly with soap and water or use an [alcohol-based hand sanitizer](#) (60-90% alcohol) provided hands are not visibly soiled
- Remind staff and participants to avoid touching their face, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- [Cover your cough or sneeze](#) with a tissue. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve
- Ensure that participants have the ability to practice hand hygiene often, and when needed:
  - Incorporate hand hygiene into breaks and timeouts between program activities and before and after snacks and lunchtime/meals
  - Supervise/assist participants with hand hygiene if necessary
  - Provide additional hand sanitizer stations in supervised areas (e.g. hand sanitizer dispensers near entrances and inside activity rooms), if possible
  - Monitor supplies to ensure adequate amounts of liquid soap, paper towel, (air dryer if paper towels are not available), hand sanitizer, tissues and waste receptacles with lined plastic bags

### Practice physical distancing

- [Physical distancing](#) means keeping a distance of two meters (six feet) from others
- Maintain physical distancing by limiting the number of participants in each organized group attending the day camp and restrict the mixing of participants between groups, if possible

- Remind participants to greet each other using non-physical gestures (e.g. wave or nod), not to share items, including food, toys, arts and crafts, costumes, hats, hair combs, make-up etc., and encourage everyone to keep their distance as best as possible during activities
- Physical distancing must not compromise supervision or the camp participant's safety

### **Consider using face masks or coverings**

- [Face masks or coverings](#) should be used when physical distancing cannot be maintained between cohorts
- Train staff on the proper use of masks and how to safely [put on and take off a mask](#)
- Masks do not replace the need for physical distancing, hand washing, and staying home when sick
- Face coverings should be changed if visibly soiled, damp, or damaged
- Face coverings may not be tolerated by everyone. Underlying health, behaviour issues or beliefs should be considered to avoid physical and psychological injuries that may result as an unintended consequence of wearing a mask

### **Increase public health awareness**

- Download, print and post signs in visible locations to raise awareness about COVID-19 and to encourage healthy behaviours:
  - [COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#) (poster for entrances)
  - [Sanitize Your Hands](#) (poster for entrances)
  - [Correct Hand Washing](#)
  - [Correct Hand Sanitizing](#)
  - [Hooray for Hand Washing](#) (kids)
  - [Physical Distancing](#)
  - [Cover Your Cough and Sneeze](#)
  - [Lower Your Risk of COVID-19](#)

## **MAINTAIN A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT**

### **Provide education**

- Provide education to parents/guardians and staff about COVID-19, its [symptoms](#), how the virus can spread and when to stay home
- Parents/guardians can check their child's temperature daily at home, however, fever is not the only symptom of COVID-19
  - For more information about [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 refer to [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19)

### **Screen participants and staff for COVID-19 symptoms prior to drop off**

- All individuals, including camp participants, parents/guardians, staff and visitors must be screened each day at home prior to arrival or upon arrival
  - Screening can include daily temperature checks (at home or at the screening station)
  - Children participating in day camp programs are to be accompanied by a parent/guardian at the time of drop-off/arrival
  - A parent/guardian must be available to respond to the screening questions at the time of drop-off/arrival
- Designate an area outside, near the main entrance as a screening station

- The area must allow a minimum of two metres (six feet) distance between staff conducting screening and the individual being screened
  - Ensure participants and parents/guardians maintain two metres from others when waiting to be screened
- Alternatively, a protective barrier (e.g. plexiglass) can be equipped around the screening station
- If physical distancing or a barrier is not possible, staff conducting the screening must wear a surgical/procedural mask and eye protection
  - Eye protection may also be worn when it is anticipated that there may be exposure to body fluids (e.g. child being dropped-off who is upset and crying)
- Post signage in visible areas clearly explaining the screening process and the conditions for entry
- Actively screen parents/guardians, children and staff daily at the time of drop-off or prior to the start of a shift by completing the following screening form on paper or electronically. See York Region Public Health's [sample screening form](#) that can be used to guide screening questions
- Thermometers must not be used between camp participants/staff without single-use protective covers or disinfecting between use
- Ensure a supply of alcohol-based hand sanitizer is available for use at the screening station. Remind everyone being screened to use the hand sanitizer
- Individuals who answer YES to any of the screening questions should not be permitted to attend the day camp. Direct these individuals to visit [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19) to learn about [assessment centres and testing](#)

### **Implement an attendance reporting policy for staff and participants**

- Programs must keep and maintain daily records of anyone entering the program setting (record: name, contact information, time of arrival/departure, screening completion, etc.)
- Attendance records should be updated when a participant/staff is absent
- Day camp organizers should follow-up with participants and staff to determine the reason for any unplanned absences
- Determine if a staff person's absence is due to illness and note any symptoms (e.g. fever, sore throat, feeling unwell). Refer to the Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms](#)
- Advise staff to call York Region Public Health at 1-800-361-5653 or their primary care provider to determine if further follow up is required. COVID-19 testing is readily available at [assessment centres](#)
- Monitor attendance records for patterns or trends (e.g., participants/staff in the same group absent at the same time or over the course of a few days)
- Day camp organizers should contact York Region Public Health if there is an increase in absenteeism or they suspect that noted symptoms may be related to COVID-19

### **Isolate staff and participants that become ill with symptoms of COVID-19 while attending camp**

- Staff and/or participants who become ill while at the camp should be sent home immediately and asked to seek assessment at a [COVID-19 Assessment Centre](#)
- Staff and camp participants awaiting test results who are symptomatic and have been advised to self-isolate are not permitted to attend camp
- Place participants with symptoms in a separate, designated room, and supervise the area until they are picked up or are able to go home

- Notify parents/guardians or emergency contacts to pick up sick children as soon as possible
- The designated room should have a handwashing sink supplied with hot and cold running water, liquid soap and single-use paper towels or alcohol-based hand sanitizer available
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area if possible
- Staff should remind ill participants to practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette while waiting to be picked-up
  - Tissues should be provided to the participant to support proper respiratory etiquette
- Ill participants should be asked to wear a mask (if tolerated). Staff should remind the participant to avoid touching the mask while wearing it
- If physical distancing cannot be maintained during supervision of ill individuals in isolation, day camp staff should wear a mask and eye protection (goggles or a face shield), if not already wearing PPE
- Clean and disinfect the area after the individual with symptoms has been sent home
- Staff and participants who have been in contact with a **symptomatic individual** (i.e., suspected COVID-19 case) should be monitored for symptoms and grouped together (i.e., cohorted)
- Staff and participants exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be excluded from the day camp program for 14 days
  - These individuals should [self-isolate](#) and monitor for symptoms for the next 14 days. They should be advised to avoid contact with vulnerable persons or settings where vulnerable persons reside (e.g., long-term care homes)
- Staff and parents/guardians of a participant with symptoms of COVID-19 should call York Region Public Health at 1-800-361-5653, their health care provider or a [COVID-19 Assessment Centre](#) to determine if they need testing
  - Symptomatic individuals who test negative for COVID-19 must be excluded from the program until 24 hours after symptoms have stopped
- Staff/participants who are being managed by York Region Public Health (i.e., confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) must be excluded from the program for 14 days after the onset of symptoms and clearance has been received from public health
- Staff should also report to their Occupational Health and Safety Department prior to return to work
- Summer day camps requiring licensing under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, have a duty to report suspected or confirmed cases COVID-19: the camp should contact York Region Public Health 1-800-361-5653 to report if a staff member or camper is a suspected case; York Region Public Health will provide specific advice on what control measures should be implemented to prevent the potential spread and how to monitor for other possible infected staff members and camp participants

### **Enhance environmental cleaning and disinfection**

- Implement enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfection policies and procedures and increase the frequency (minimum twice a day)
  - Review Public Health Ontario's [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#) fact sheet
  - Refer to Health Canada's [lists of hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) for information on disinfectants
  - Post and maintain a log to track cleaning and disinfecting activities
- Clean and disinfect individual items such as electronic devices, toys, sporting equipment and mats after each use

# DELIVERING HEALTHY DAY CAMP ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

## Modify day camp programs

- Limit participant group sizes to allow for [physical distancing](#)
- Establish an appropriate staff-to-participant ratio that ensures adequate supervision and maintains [physical distancing](#)
- When supporting camp participants with special needs physical distancing may be more challenging for participants with communication or behavior challenges; consider staffing ratios and staff expertise that may be needed
- Organized groups should have **no more than 10 individuals**, including both staff and camp participants
- Group participants and assigned staff together into small dedicated groups (i.e., cohort) and make sure all members remain with the same group throughout the day camp period (or a minimum of seven days)
  - Do not permit mixing between groups if possible. Dedicated groups or cohorts should have their own room/space
  - Each group should have designated equipment
- Avoid group events, gatherings or meetings
- Incorporate and prioritize individual activities that encourage more space between participants so that physical distancing can be maintained
- Contact/team sports or games that use shared equipment should not be permitted
- Organize activities that only use items that can be easily cleaned and disinfected (i.e. avoid plush toys, playdough etc.) or are single use and disposed of at the end of the day/program (e.g., craft supplies)
- Minimize the sharing and frequency of touching objects, toys, equipment, surfaces and other personal items
- Do not use shared sensory play items (e.g., water play, playdough)
- Provide individualized bins for participant's supplies and items (e.g., craft supplies)
- Keep participants personal belongings to minimum. Personal items such as water bottles and sunscreen should be labelled and stored separately
- Limit non-essential visitors, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible
- Avoid taking field trips. Exceptions to this are walking to the park or going on hikes provided that physical distancing can be maintained and staff are able to safely supervise participants at all times
- Do not plan activities with exposures to animals or pets that involve frequent touching by different camp participants (e.g., petting zoo, animal visitors). Activities with limited or no touching (e.g., horseback riding, wildlife viewing, etc.) should follow all requirements for health and safety as set out in [Recommendations for the Management of Animals in Child Care Settings](#)
- Reinforce “no food sharing” policies:
  - Do not plan activities that involve participants in preparing or self-serving food
  - Ensure participants have their own individually packaged meal or snack
  - Ensure participants and staff perform proper hand hygiene before and after eating
  - Ensure that each camp participant brings their own water bottle and that it is labelled
  - Ensure that multi-use food utensils are cleaned after each use

- Consider virtual activities/learning opportunities, modified job responsibilities and telework options as alternatives for staff and participants who are unable to physically attend the day camp
- Use telephone or video conferencing when possible for meetings between staff and parents/guardians
- The provision of bussing or transportation is not recommended at this time
- Overnight camps are prohibited from operating.

### **Plan layouts and stagger the scheduling of activities and programs**

- Day camp organizers should assess the available space for the camp program. Programs operated both indoor and outdoor should allow for all participants and staff to maintain a two meter (six feet) distance from each other
  - Account for alternative space required in the event of inclement weather (e.g. rain days, heat alerts)
- Space seating and activity stations at least two metres (six feet) apart
- Provide visual guides such as tape on floors or tables, posted signs, pylons and flags to delineate two metres (six feet)
- Avoid using shared spaces in the community such as playgrounds and playground equipment
- Stagger group activities, snack times and lunchtime/meals to avoid mixing
- Stagger washroom breaks
- Stagger scheduling of arrivals/drop-off and departures/pick-up times to limit contact between participants from different groups
- Encourage families to have only one adult parent/guardian drop-off and pick-up participants.
- Drop off and pick-up should be supervised and occur outside the setting in a designated area to avoid congestion unless it is determined that there is a need for the parent/guardian to enter
- Stay up to date with current [Emergency Orders](#) issued by the Province of Ontario and guidance provided by York Region Public Health at [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19)

### **Increase communication with staff, participants and their families**

- Develop and implement communication platforms to provide information about programs, health and safety measures (e.g., screening/health check programs, physical distancing, staying home when you're sick etc.) with staff, participants and their families through the day camp website, email or social media accounts
- Designate a contact person (e.g., coordinator or camp organizer) who will be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns and communicating with York Region Public Health if needed
- Post [signs](#) at all entrances instructing participants and their families not to enter if they are sick

### **Workplace Health and Safety**

- Employers must have written measures and procedures for staff safety, including for infection prevention and control
- The requirement for staff to use face masks or coverings indoors is secondary to stricter PPE measures outlined by worker Health and Safety protocols
- Ontario has general information on [COVID-19 and workplace health and safety](#)
- Learn about an employers' responsibilities and how to protect workers at work
- Workers can get information about [health and safety protections](#) at the workplace

## More Information

Please visit our website at [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19) for updated information or call us at 1-800-361-5653.

## References

Centres for Disease Control (2020). *Coronavirus Disease 2019 Considerations for Youth and Summer Camps Updated May 19 2020*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/summercamps.html>

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