

Community Learning Pods COVID-19 Prevention Plan

This document provides guidance on the selection and maintenance of community learning pod sites and considerations for reducing viral spread among students and staff. Each site should contain no more than 8 to 10 children and staff. If there are more, then separating into smaller pods would be ideal.

PLEASE NOTE: It is a ***combination*** of all these strategies combined that will **substantially reduce the risk of transmission**. No single strategy can ever be perfect, but variety of strategies used together will reduce risk.

Selection of Community Learning Pod Sites

Facilities

Sites should be selected based on their ability to provide access to safe learning spaces, proximity to children's homes, and community support. Additionally, the following considerations should be taken for the physical facilities:

- Size of the space and number of children safely accommodated by that space
- Access to outdoor space so students can learn outside as much as possible
- Physical composition of indoor learning space(s) (e.g. moveable chairs, multiple rooms, etc.)
- Ventilation of indoor learning space
- Availability of air filtration systems and other engineering measures designed to reduce viral load in the air
- Rate and efficiency of the ventilation system in the building
- Access to hand-washing stations
- Access to bathrooms with limited use by others

Ventilation and Air Circulation (Morawaska, 2020)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7250761/>

Excerpts from report produced by over experts from more than 40 international universities and organizations:

The use of ventilation in learning spaces is an additional important measure to reduce the likelihood of transmission and thereby protect children and educational staff. Ventilation is the process of providing outdoor air to a space or building by natural or mechanical means (ISO, 2017). It controls how quickly room air is removed and replaced over a period of time. Ventilation plays a critical role in removing exhaled virus-laden air, thus lowering the overall concentration and therefore any subsequent dose inhaled by the occupants. Ventilation rates should be increased by system modifications.

Air Recirculation

Learning sites should use 100% outdoor air if possible. Disabling recirculation can be achieved by closing the recirculation dampers and opening outdoor air dampers. In systems where it is not possible, outside air levels can be maximized through filtering or ultraviolet germicidal irradiation to remove or deactivate potential viral contamination from the recirculated air.

At a room (decentral) level, secondary air circulation systems may be installed. Such systems should also provide ventilation with outdoor air (e.g., induction units). If this is the case, such a system should not be switched off. Other systems, which do not have this feature (e.g., split air-conditioning units) should be turned off, if possible, to avoid potential transfer of virus through air flows. When such a system is needed for cooling, additional ventilation with outdoor air should be secured by regular/ periodic ventilation through, e.g., window opening and use of fans.

Summary of Ventilation Recommendations

1. Engineering controls are effective to reduce the risks of airborne infection –and SARS-CoV-2 has the potential and is likely to be causing some infections by this route.
2. Increase the existing ventilation rates (outdoor air change rate) and enhance ventilation effectiveness - using existing systems.
3. Eliminate any air-recirculation within the ventilation system so as to just supply fresh (outdoor) air.
4. Supplement existing ventilation with portable air cleaners (with mechanical filtration systems to capture the airborne microdroplets), where there are areas of known air stagnation (which are not well-ventilated with the existing system), or isolate high exhaled airborne viral loads. Adequate replacement of the filters in the air cleaners and their maintenance is crucial.
5. Avoid over-crowding, e.g. pupils sitting at every other desk in school classrooms, or customers at every other table in restaurants, or every other seat in public transport, cinemas, etc.

Additional information about ventilation can be found [here](#).

Outdoor Learning

- Utilize outdoor learning spaces as much as possible, even for portions of the day
- Using covered and shaded areas and fans can help reduce heat.
- Individual tables or clipboard for writing surfaces

Classroom/Building Cleaning

- Clean and disinfect high-use surfaces like door handles, cell phones, tablets, and computers, tables and chairs, etc.
- Hand-sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol be readily available between handwashing, as per CDC guidelines.

Bathrooms

- Clean and disinfect daily, with bleach or other cleaner that meets CDC guidelines.
- Hand soap and warm running water must be available
- Single-use paper towels should be provided rather than air dryers.
- Minimum touch entry/exit
- Lids on toilets

INDIVIDUAL PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Social Distancing

Minimize the number of people within the same indoor environment.

Provide at least 6ft of space – 9 where feasible – between students and staff, stagger desks or work-spaces. If ever students or staff sit at one table create a triangular sitting pattern to limit shared airspace.

Personal Hygiene to Prevent Viral Spread

Personal hygiene practices will be explicitly taught to students and staff

- Wash hands between activities with soap and warm water, scrubbing for a least 20 seconds and then rinsing thoroughly
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and then throw the tissue in the trash, followed by washing hands with soap and water.
- Students will have access to personal hand-sanitizer at their desks and be encouraged to use before/after touching face, eyes, or handling materials.
- Upon entering the building staff, children, and parents will sanitize their hands at the free-standing hand sanitizing stations.
- Children will wash their hands at least every hour while at school, including before and after going to the playground for outdoor playtime

Masks

- Masks must be properly worn at all times by students, staff, and parents. This is absolutely essential.
- Masks should be closely fitted, have at least two protective layers, and should be cleaned or replaced daily
- Masks with exhalation valves release unfiltered droplets and are not permissible.
- All adults dropping off their child(ren) must wear masks at all times when on or around campus.

Home/School/Home

- We encourage children and staff to shower in the morning before coming to the center and to change clothes and wash hands upon returning home.
- Children and staff with long hair should wear it up.
- Monitor temperature daily
- When students or staff develop symptoms they will be quarantined until an adult can come and get them.
- Students or staff with symptoms are encouraged to get tested for COVID-19 and are asked to relay those results to the center.
- Students or staff with COVID-19 symptoms may not attend the center until 72 hours after the end of symptoms or last medical treatment of symptoms (e.g. Tylenol, Advil, etc.)
- We encourage having the same family member doing drop off and pick up.
- Drop-off should be staggered, ideally occurring outdoors, and at minimum in an area that is well ventilated.
- Parents, staff, and students should maintain social distancing during drop-off/pick-up.

Student or Staff Member with Household Contact

Students and staff who have someone in their home with COVID will be asked to quarantine at home for 14 days from last close contact or the time that person is no longer deemed infectious (at least 10 days after symptom onset/positive test), totaling up to 24 days.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Center for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

COVID-19 School and Community Resource Library: Resources for Clinicians Advising Schools and Community Groups on Strategies to Prevent and Manage COVID-19 (Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School, 2020)

https://www.massgeneral.org/assets/MGH/pdf/medicine/infectious-diseases/COVID-19%20School%20and%20Community%20Resource%20Library_July%206%202020.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0ltioicWEZ1NWEvFRw4xX8K4S9T2HuGm9I6k3Fs_9f-zVMxTztCzHfky8

Morawska, L., Tang, J. W., Bahnfleth, W., Bluysen, P. M., Boerstra, A., Buonanno, G., ... & Wierzbicka, A. (2020). How can airborne transmission of COVID-19 indoors be minimised?. *Environment International*. 142 Retrieved from

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2020.105832>

Reopening K-12 Schools During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Prioritizing Health, Equity, and Communities (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2020).

<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/25858/reopening-k-12-schools-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-prioritizing>

Massachusetts Protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios in school, on the bus, or in community settings

https://readingsuperintendent.files.wordpress.com/2020/07/protocols-for-responding-to-covid-19-scenarios-7.17.2020-vf.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0zs8H-3vR50Qgf8P0Zt64OLGaO25O3A-xtOcWNLnOUw_e15VLvRZMaXuM

How to use ventilation and air filtration to prevent the spread of coronavirus indoors (Miller, 2020)

<https://theconversation.com/how-to-use-ventilation-and-air-filtration-to-prevent-the-spread-of-coronavirus-indoors-143732>

The information included in this prevention plan was compiled by Sunshine Moss to support the development of community learning pods in Alachua County.

Contact

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