

5 STEPS TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD CARE CENTER FOR RE-OPENING AFTER COVID-19

You may be eager to get your child care center up and running, but there are some important steps to think through first including your finances, updating health and safety procedures, reassuring families their children will be protected and training your staff on new processes. This checklist can help ensure you've taken the necessary steps.

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STRATEGICALLY PRIORITIZE

- Carefully think through all the steps required to reopen your child care center, define priorities and focus on what's most important. Doing this will give you clarity and peace of mind.
- Stay in touch with local regulatory agencies. They have the best, most up-to-date information on what you'll need to do when you reopen.
- Communicate regularly with your families and staff about your reopening plans.

CAREFULLY ASSESS FINANCES

- Forecast enrollment rates, including planning for new regulations that limit the number of children per room. If families slowly re-enroll their children, assess the impact to your finances. Conversely, how would you handle an overwhelming number of new enrollment requests?
- Estimate expenses including the number of employees you'll need and new supplies to purchase such as masks, PPE and disinfectants.
- If you **applied for financial assistance** and haven't received funding yet, stay in constant contact with your lender. Be persistent and don't give up until you get a hard "no."

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ADDRESS PARENTS' FEARS

- Clearly describe to parents the new procedures you're implementing to protect their children. Your reassurance that you're committed to keeping their children safe will impact their willingness to re-enroll.
- Explain new procedures such as screening staff and children regularly for symptoms and requiring curbside pick-up/drop-off. Describe how your staff will enforce proper social distancing, wear PPE and disinfect surfaces frequently.
- **Reach out frequently** to keep parents updated on your reopening timeline and to provide reassurance that you care about them and their children.

PREPARE YOUR STAFF

- Train staff on new procedures and make sure they're comfortable with them.
- Poll your staff to determine which employees will return. Do any have pre-existing health conditions or young children at home that make it difficult to work? Are there other ways they can support your childcare center in the meantime such as doing back office tasks?
- Regularly ask how they're doing and update them on your reopening plans.

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STAY POSITIVE AND FOCUS ON NEW OPPORTUNITIES

- Be positive and confident in all your communications—parents and staff will find it reassuring.
- Look for new business opportunities. For example, some of your competitors may not re-open. Can you form partnerships with them to welcome their students to your center?
- Are there new services you can provide such as extended care hours?

Reopening your daycare center is similar to launching your business from scratch—there are many steps to think through before you open your doors again. Carefully assessing your business's readiness is critical in order to protect children and staff and to help parents' feel confident that your child care center is well-prepared to move forward.



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