

Dear Families,

You likely have heard from various media outlets about the coronavirus and the new cases in the U.S. and Georgia. The Clifton School will follow best practices established by the child care licensing agency, Bright from the Start, and the Center for Disease Control. Please see the information below about keeping your child healthy at home and our procedures doing so at school.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, coronavirus outbreaks in young children are uncommon, and severe symptoms are even rarer in children. Even so, to prevent the spread of illness, we will continue to monitor the children in our care for signs of illness, including fever, cough, difficulty breathing, body aches, fatigue, sore throat, headache, and diarrhea. If your child is exhibiting any of these symptoms, please keep them home. In addition, we will utilize good health practices such as appropriate handwashing, covering coughs or sneezing with a tissue or into the elbow, and disinfecting surfaces. We will continue to enforce the rules prohibiting children and staff who are sick or who show specific symptoms of illness from being in child care facilities. For more information on children and the coronavirus, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html> Though the symptoms of the coronavirus are similar to the flu, there is no vaccine currently available to prevent the coronavirus. Infectious disease specialists strongly recommend that children and adults receive a flu vaccination because it can help protect them from various strains of the influenza virus.

The Clifton School will implement the following practices:

- We will keep children who become ill at the child care facility in a separate room where interactions with unexposed children and staff will be limited until the family arrives.
- We will enforce guidelines for excluding children with infectious diseases from attending the child care facility. If your child is not at school due to illness, please inform the child's teacher. If you do not contact the teachers, they will contact you to gather information regarding your children's absence. **Children can return to school after being fever free for 24 hours without medication. During this time of concern, we will require a doctor's note (or approval from an administrator if a note cannot be obtained) to return to school.** We will practice daily health checks of children and adults each day for illness. Teachers will inquire about children's health upon arrival at school. They will also perform a general health check and only take temperatures if needed.
- We will ensure that staff members who are ill remain home or are sent home if they become ill during the day.

These procedures for proper handwashing can reduce the spread of germs:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and then lather them with soap; don't miss the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds (about the time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice).
- Finally, rinse your hands thoroughly with clean, running water. Dry them with a paper towel, use the towel to turn off the faucet, then dispose of the towel in a trash receptacle.

Georgia’s child care licensing rules and regulations state that children should wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water, as described above, in these situations:

- immediately upon arrival for care, when moving from one child care group to another, and upon re-entering the child care area after outside play
- before and after eating meals and snacks, handling or touching food, or playing in water
- after toileting and diapering; playing in sand; touching animals or pets; coming into contact with bodily fluids such as, but not limited to, mucus, saliva, vomit, or blood; and after contamination by any other means

Staff members must also ensure that their own hands are washed with liquid soap and warm running water, as described above, in these situations:

- before and after diapering each child; dispensing medication; applying topical medications, ointments, creams, or lotions; handling and preparing food; eating; drinking; preparing bottles; feeding each child; and assisting children with eating and drinking
- after toileting or assisting children with toileting; using tobacco products; handling garbage and organic waste; touching animals or pets; handling bodily fluids, such as, but not limited to, mucus, saliva, vomit or blood; and after contamination by any other means
- **Families please help us by washing your hands upon entering the classrooms**

The following links provide more information about flu prevention and about the coronavirus:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>

Georgia Department of Public Health

<http://dph.georgia.gov/influenza-what-you-need-know>

<https://dph.georgia.gov/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-outbreak>

Healthy Children: American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/Pages/Prevention-In-Child-Care-or-School.aspx>

The Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) website provides resources about staying healthy during flu season. You’ll find tips for fending off the flu at <https://www.choa.org/fighttheflu>. The checklist at <https://www.choa.org/medical-services/wellness-and-preventive-care/flu> can help you assess whether a child has the flu.

CHOA recommends taking these steps to prevent illness:

- Encourage individuals to get the flu vaccine—it’s not too late.
- Practice good hand hygiene.
- Visit your primary care doctor or pediatrician as a first line of defense before visiting an emergency department or urgent care center.

As the recommendation states, if you think your child may have flu symptoms or symptoms of illness, please visit your pediatrician before visiting an emergency department, unless immediate care is necessary. Please get a written note in order to return to child care or from your pediatrician during your visit, in lieu of requesting a note in an emergency department or urgent care center. Please inform us if your family travels internationally and/or has exhibited concerning symptoms

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have questions or suggestions about our plans or procedures, please feel free to contact us. Together, we can help keep The Clifton School environment healthy and safe for children.

Thank you for trusting us with your children's early learning experience; it is a privilege we do not take for granted.

Best Regards,

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