



Infant Welfare
Society of Evanston

5-21-20

Dear IWSE Families and Staff,

Our Leadership team and Board understand there are many questions and concerns about the future of programming and when the centers will be opening.

Most importantly, we are waiting for the Governor's Office and DCFS to reinstate our early care and education license. The only operable childcare licenses at this point are programs providing emergency care to first responders and essential workers. All other childcare licenses in the State were suspended for COVID-19. We anticipate this reinstatement of our license will come in Phase 4 of the Governor's reopening plan, sometime in June. The earliest we **could possibly** prepare to open would be July 1st, 2020.

That said, safety of our children, families and staff is our highest priority. We will not open our centers until we are fully prepared and safety procedures are clear and in place.

We want to make you aware of some of the **potential changes** in procedures and policies in this new environment:

- Arrival & Departure: Changes to entering and exiting the centers as well as parent drop-off/pick-up procedures.
- Classroom Management: Smaller group sizes, no mixing of students or teachers.
- New health and safety policies: Daily temperature checks and monitoring.
- Heightened cleaning and sanitizing: We are looking into purchasing foggers, sanitizing stations and hiring professional cleaning companies for this support, on top of daily staff cleansing of toys, materials and surfaces.
- Staff training: Increased professional development on health and safety as well as new guidelines and protocols.
- For the past few months, we have ordered more Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Masks, gloves and shoe covers, etc. We will also need to acquire new cleaning supplies we do not currently have. We will work with the City of Evanston for support of obtaining supplies.

- We are also requesting a COVID-19 testing protocol with the City of Evanston in partnership with Presence Health, Northshore and Erie Health systems. We hope they will be responsive.

There will also be an expectation that parents will follow our new guidelines. We will develop additional parent policy handbook guidelines that will need to be signed.

We understand all of this is challenging. We want to ensure that our centers stay true to what has made IWSE so special in the field of early care and education. We will continue to be a nurturing, caring, loving and supportive environment that focuses on healthy development, social emotional learning and a strong commitment to the growth of your children.

We are asking for everyone's cooperation as parents and staff assist us with these changes. Everything we are implementing is for the health and safety of everyone: children, family and staff. It is critically important we work together and support these changes. There will be more communication and surveys going out in the coming weeks to ensure we understand your concerns and needs.

These adjustments will be challenging, but with the support of one another we will overcome this challenge and move forward.

Thank you for your commitment to IWSE.

Stephen Vick

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Infant Welfare Society of Evanston