

Take Home Messages:

Covid-19 is among several respiratory illnesses circulating. The best way to limit illness in your work setting is to:

- Encourage flu, RSV and Covid-19 shots when available. Encourage your staff and families to consult the [VDH website](#) and their medical providers to learn more about what they should be getting for vaccinations this fall.
- Ensure basic illness prevention:
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water.
 - Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or tissue.
 - Avoid contact with others if you or they are sick.
 - Consider wearing a mask, especially if you or people you are with are at higher risk of serious illness, or if you have recently been around someone with symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Promote air circulation or outdoor time when able
 - Disinfect surfaces when appropriate and per CDD guidance

Commented [HBW1]: We are using the term RSV shot, rather than vaccination since it technically is not a vaccine.

Encourage your families and reach out to your local providers, as able, to help them understand children, outside of specific symptoms, children should be kept home if they are not able to engage the in group care setting.

Commented [HBW2]: Promote team based care with local child health providers for shared understanding and communication between 2 important sectors (or something like that). Reach out to Breena or Becca for help engaging pediatricians in your local community

We encourage you to promote team based care with your local child health providers for shared understanding and communication, you can reach out for support around engaging with the medical providers in your area.

Your regional [Family and Child Health Coordinator](#) is a nurse in your community available to help answer questions or connect you with resources. Additionally, Dr Becca Bell and Dr Breena Holmes can help support a shared understanding with your local medical providers.

Reach out when you have questions or concerns!

Covid-19 – Vermont Resources (all materials translated in multiple languages)

- How to [avoid spreading](#) covid-19 and other respiratory illnesses
- [Testing](#) – testing types, when to test, how to access tests
- [Symptoms and treatment](#) – when to isolate if able, close contacts, when to test and how to respond to a positive test
- [Vaccination](#) – what is available, how to access

Other Resources and information for Heat, Air Quality and Flooding

Heat

Populations Most Affected

- Individuals who are generally at higher risk for heat-related health impacts include: older adults and young children
- Children's bodies generally warm up faster than adults, and children have less sweating capacity than adults, both of which put children at higher risk for heat illnesses. Hot temperatures in schools can also result in reduced concentration, impaired academic performance, an increase in behavioral issues, increased risk of asthma attacks, and other health problems.

Symptoms and first aid

- Muscle cramps, heavy sweating, nausea, headache or light-headedness may all indicate a heat-related illness. Most heat-related illnesses can be treated with fluids and by resting in a cooler place. If symptoms persist or get worse, or someone you are with seems confused or loses consciousness, dial 9-1-1 and get immediate medical help. Learn more about [symptoms and first aid](#).

At your school or child care facility, please consider the following:

- Make sure that staff are familiar with [symptoms of heat-related illnesses and first aid responses](#). Have an emergency plan in place for providing medical attention in the event of a serious heat-related illness.
- Have a plan for monitoring children at higher risk to make sure they stay cool and hydrated.
- Provide guidance on hydration, appropriate clothing, diet and other ways to stay cool. Provide or make sure students have easy access to water, ice and cool spaces.
- Limit outdoor and physical activity. Provide frequent rest and hydration breaks.
- Make sure that air conditioning or other cooling systems are in place and functioning
- Use window shades to keep out sun and absorb heat. If windows can't be covered, rearrange the room to keep everyone out of direct sun.
- Turn off lights, electronic equipment and other heat-generating equipment if practical.
- In rooms without air conditioning, use fans to blow in cool air and vent out warm air when the temperature outside is cooler or similar to inside. Fans are ineffective when temperatures reach the mid-to-upper 90s. If possible, keep windows open overnight to help cool the building.
- If a room becomes too hot and uncomfortable, move to a shaded outdoor location or to a cooler indoor location, if possible. Basements and lower floors will stay cooler than upper floors. If cooled space is limited, rotate students through cooler spaces throughout the day.
- Consider closing the facility or ending early if indoor temperatures get uncomfortably hot.

Find more information and resources:

- [Heat safety tips](#) in 12 languages (available online or as printable pdfs).
- [Vermont Cooling Sites online map](#) of indoor and outdoor locations where the public can go to cool off (also available as printable pdfs).
- National Weather Service [Hazardous Weather Outlook](#)

- Questions? Call the Vermont Department of Health/Environmental Health at 802-863-7220, extension 0, or contact ClimateHealth@vermont.gov.

Air Quality and Wildfires

Use the [Vermont Children and Youth Activities Guide for Air Quality](#) to help you decide when it is okay to do outdoor activities and for how long. You can find this guide and more information on air quality at www.HealthVermont.gov/AirQuality.

Here is how you can help keep kids safe when the air quality is bad:

- 1. Check the air quality forecast for the next day.** Air quality forecasts for the next day are usually made available by 4:00 p.m. on AirNow.gov. You can also sign up for emergency air quality alerts at [EnviroFlash](#) or [VT-Alert](#) to get email or text alerts. **Be sure to check the box next to Air Quality under Health Alerts when choosing your subscriptions for VT-Alert.**
- 2. Use the [Vermont Children and Youth Activities Guide for Air Quality](#)** to help you decide whether to limit or cancel outdoor activities. The Health Department recommends canceling outdoor activities or moving them indoors when the air quality is **unhealthy (red)**, **very unhealthy (purple)**, or **hazardous (maroon)**.
- 3. Stay informed about the current air quality.** Air quality conditions can change. Be sure to check AirNow.gov to get the current Air Quality Index in your area.
- 4. Trust your eyes and nose:** if you can see or smell smoke, that means conditions are probably unhealthy. Consider moving activities indoors.
- 5. Keep indoor air clean, too:** During bad air quality days, it is also important to make sure indoor air is clean. You can find tips on how to keep your indoor air clean on the [Air Quality Alerts, Wildfires & Your Health](#) web page. You can also find information on [how to use HVAC systems or portable air purifiers to improve indoor air quality](#) from the Washington State Department of Health.

We hope the [Vermont Children and Youth Activities Guide for Air Quality](#) helps you make decisions about children's activities when the air quality is bad. If you have any questions, please email the Health Department at PublicHealthTracking@vermont.gov.

Information for Licensed or Registered Childcares:

Licensed or registered child care programs should call the Child Development Division's Licensor on Duty (LOD), 1-800-649-2642 (option 3) or email AHS.DCFDChildcareLicensing@vermont.gov with any questions specific to how this guidance is supported by CDD.

Flooding

Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children [Resources for those affected by flooding](#). includes a link to the [Vermont Flood Resources](#) page.

[Flash flood recovery information for families](#)