

Questions from VDH/AAP/LGK Presentation August 26, 2021

September 13, 2021 response

Ok so we do not need to do a morning screening, temp check, etc.? Can we still allow outside visitors such as tours or specialists? There are no formal VDH recommendations that address this, such as we had under the Governor's Executive Order. Programs are able to determine their own screening and hygiene policies and also visitation policies that are congruent with any DCF regulation or Caring for Our Children. Clearly communicating your policies and expectations for families is important since they may be wondering if your center has returned to pre-pandemic policies related to illness. <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/symptoms-sickness/symptoms>

When assessing children for illness, please take into consideration the current list of COVID - 19 symptoms:

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever (100.4 °F or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If you are vaccinated but come in to contact with a positive case, do you still need to quarantine? Information about if you are vaccinated but are a close contact is here on our website – including about if you have/do not have no symptoms. [What to Do if You Are a Close Contact | Vermont Department of Health \(healthvermont.gov\)](#)

Can we require a child or staff to get tested if their doctor is not having them tested? The best approach is to talk with the family and encourage testing. There are many scenarios as to why we would consider testing for a child – such as direct exposure in a child care or from a family member. If the family is a close contact, the Contact Tracers may be asking the family members to be tested. There may also be a certain clinical reason as to why the doctor is not having the child tested. The child care cannot require testing – but can ask the child to not attend during an appropriate amount of time – such as if they are a close contact and have been asked to quarantine by the Contact Tracers. Further information is at this link:

https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/CYF_VTBacktoChildCareAfterIllness.pdf

We have asked parents to have their child seen by a physician, but the response I get is “I have to pay out of pocket every time my child is seen.” Yes – this may be the case even if the family uses Medicaid or a federally qualified health center. If the child has been exposed or has COVID-like symptoms, the family can get tested at the many sites around the state at no charge. If the child appears seriously ill, the family really does need to see their doctor. Perhaps also refer to your procedures for if a child is sick with non-COVID 19 symptoms. Link to testing sites: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/testing/where-get-tested#where>

Are we asking parents to test sick kids for covid19 before return? If they have had symptoms of COVID, they should be tested and also they can call their doctor. More detailed information is at this link: [Back to Child Care After Illness \(healthvermont.gov\)](#) under “When can my child go back to child care....?”

Will the vaccine be required when approved for emergency use in young children, or will that only happen when a full approval occurs? The vaccine, whether or not under emergency use authorization, will be strongly encouraged for children when it becomes approved. There are no recommendations at present about requiring vaccination for children.

Should we be requiring masks outdoors for children and staff? The advisory memo from DCF Commissioner Brown (August 18, 2021) states that programs should require universal masking for all children and staff when indoors. However, it is up to the child care operator as to setting guidelines for their children and staff outdoor activities.

Will childcare providers be mandated to get vaccine if they haven’t? There are no recommendations at present about requiring vaccination for child care providers. VDH and CDD are strongly recommending providers and staff get the vaccination at the many easy to access sites statewide. Additionally, many schools are offering vaccinations for eligible students and the public. <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine>

What should we say to families who say they have consulted their pediatrician when their child is having symptoms, but they report the doctor says that testing is not necessary? (ie: fever doesn’t return, then no testing is needed) Here is a link to information about when children can return to child care that will help guide your policies. https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/CYF_VTBacktoChildCareAfterIllness.pdf

It sounds as if we should be encouraging testing to return to care if symptoms of illness are present. Here is a link to information about when children can return to child care that will help guide your policies. https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/CYF_VTBacktoChildCareAfterIllness.pdf

Should we still be requiring the results from PCR tests to return to care or work after illness, not the reapis (rapid?) test results? The Health Department uses and recommends [PCR tests](#). A PCR test will tell you if you have a current infection. It is not a serology/antibody test, which means it will not tell you if you were infected in the past.

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/testing#faq5>

If a vaccine is approved for children under 12, do you foresee it being a requirement for children to be in care/school? or would this be a family's choice?

school's choice? At present, we will be strongly encouraging vaccination for children as the vaccines become approved by age category. Plans are being made for vaccination clinics and doctors' offices to be able to vaccinate younger children once approved. We are always recommending that children age 12 and older get their vaccine ASAP at the many easy to access sites statewide. Additionally, many schools are offering vaccinations for eligible students and the public. <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine>

Are we allowed to require a test before the child returns? Or do we just stick with if they don't get a test then they cannot come back unless symptoms are gone? Child care providers can create policies that seem best suited for their programs and family community. Here is a link to information about when children can return to child care that will help guide your policies.

https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/CYF_VTBacktoChildCareAfterIllness.pdf

Do we know the percentage of increase in number of positive cases in VT childcare centers over the last few weeks?

Here is a link to the VDH COVID 19 data page. On pages 17 – 19 there is data describing how COVID 19 is affecting Vermont children. On page 28 there is information about cases in schools and child care, but the data hasn't been analyzed according to increased cases in child care in recent weeks.

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Weekly-Data-Summary-8-27-2021.pdf>

Is the percentage of positive cases in VT childcare different for infant versus ages 2-5 years?

Here is a link to the VDH COVID 19 data page. On page 20, there is some data on positive tests for children. However we have not done a comparison of positive cases in child care as suggested. Most likely the numbers of actual cases in child care for Vermont are too "small" to be able to do this type of a statistical calculation – it would need to be a larger number of child cases such as regionally or nationally to obtain a statically significant percentage.

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Weekly-Data-Summary-8-27-2021.pdf>

Is there data on transmission rates outdoors?

Here is the link to the updated VDH COVID data.

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Weekly-Data-Summary-8-27-2021.pdf>

We do not have VT data specific for outdoor transmission. Overall, this topic is being actively studied by researchers. Here is a link to an example of this research:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33249484/>

There have been ongoing questions about travel and quarantine when returning to the state.

Vermont does not have any restrictions on travel as compared to last summer and fall when the state was working under the Governor's Executive Order. Information for Vermonters on out of state travel and how to protect yourself and your family can be found at:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/travel-quarantine>. Information on international travel can be found at the VDH site and also CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>