

Best Practices: Family, Children, and Youth

in consultation with Allie Colp, Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator

Provincial guidelines indicate that all volunteers working with vulnerable populations, especially children and youth, be vaccinated. The rules for faith services apply to children's, youth, and family ministries that happen at church during recognized worship services.

Masks are mandatory for everyone over the age of 5 and are encouraged for children between the ages of 2 and 5.

All volunteers and parents with children of all ages must be provided with the [COVID-19 Daily Checklist](#), and check it before coming to a gathering to confirm that they and/or their child(ren) have no symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and are not required to self-isolate.

- For all types of programming, gather outdoors as much as possible.
 - o When you are outdoors, distance does not need to be maintained as strictly.
- Ensure that all regular participants in programs have registered, and that you have contact information that you can use if contact tracing is required.
- Track visiting participants, ensuring that you have their contact information.
- Ensure that the space used for the ministry is thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.
- Hands should be washed or sanitized upon arrival, and as needed throughout the gathering, particularly before and after eating.

Ministry with Children Under 12

- Physical distancing is the best practice, but is not always practical. As much as possible, maintain distance between:
 - o Sunday School teachers/ministry volunteers and parents/guardians/other visitors
 - o Different groups/Sunday School classes
 - o Work stations
- Alcohol-based hand-sanitizer should be available to be used during Sunday School as needed, but kept out of reach of children so that it is only used with supervision.
 - o Note: Hand sanitizer should not be used for children who routinely put their hands in their mouths.
- Avoid sharing of personal items, food, and drinks.
- If possible, have a set of any materials needed for each child so that they don't need to share crayons, scissors, etc.
- If there are children young enough to put things in their mouths, keep a close eye, and ensure that any object that goes into a child's mouth is removed until it is properly cleaned.

Ministry with Youth

- physical distancing should be the default, but this can be a little bit flexible for games or activities that require participants to be less than 6 feet apart

Family Ministry

- keep families bubbled together, and physically distanced from other families if indoors