

A **GUIDE** FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOM

Many agree that younger children need to be in a classroom with a teacher to learn concepts and achieve the early learning standards. During this time children need to be socially distanced, which will be a challenging task for teachers in the classroom. In this document, you will find tips to help adhere to Center for Disease Control (CDC) social distancing guidelines in the classroom, although, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) also offers guidance for early childhood classrooms. Please see the links of resources at the end of this document.

PROCEDURES FOR **EDUCATORS** AND **ADMINISTRATORS**:

Create EXTRA floor space by removing some furniture, spacing furniture differently to create individual spaces, and spacing out chairs in the classroom. Teachers should model and have conversations about how to leave chairs and furniture in their assigned space in the classroom.

Create INDIVIDUAL spaces for children with furniture or painter's tape to construct their special area while still being able to see each other. Specialize the area with materials the child likes and will need. Examples of needed supplies would be several books, paper, crayons, trucks, blocks, personal sensory bin, animals, and access to a table. Plan activities that children can do individually but have conversations with each other during their individual play. Teachers will need to model how children can play individually while remaining in their space. Teachers need to encourage open conversations between children while they play in their space.



Create traffic PATTERNS and visual CUES to show children where to sit, how far six feet apart is, and the traffic flow of the room. Use stickers, dots on the floor, or signs to show children this information.

Consider creating an OUTDOOR classroom by setting up learning centers in a safe area on the playground or on school grounds. Providing a classroom outdoors will help expend children's energy, create a new and exciting classroom, and offer a new avenue of learning.

Conduct DEMONSTRATIONS with "airplane arms" to social distance. Other demonstrations such as measuring six feet with yard sticks or measuring tape will be helpful.

LIMIT large group activities and ensure snack, mealtimes, and naptime are distanced. Serve snacks with one to four children at a time, group children in smaller groups for lunch, and place cots at least six feet away from others. As hard as it will be, limit touching children to essential care needs.

Practice SAFETY precautions by standing six feet away from parents when interacting with them, have children immediately wash their hands, and find their assigned seat that is a safe distance from their classmates. Have children wash their hands throughout the day. Children can get a stamp on their hand while working on a project and after they complete the activity, they wash their hands so well that they wash the stamp mark off so they can get another one. Check the child's temperature before entering the room and continue this practice throughout the day.



RESOURCES FOR **EDUCATORS** AND **ADMINISTRATORS**:

[American Academy of Pediatrics: Guidance for School Re-Entry](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\): Guidance for Child Care](#)

[How Families Can Explain Social Distancing to Children](#)

[How to Keep Daycare Safe Amid Coronavirus: YMCA Shares Tips on Social Distancing Using Cones and Hula Hoops](#)

[Summer Camp Uses Hula Hoops to Enforce Social Distancing](#)

[Ways to Social Distance at Preschool During COVID-19](#)

