

MEMORANDUM

To: All Child Care Service Providers

From: Darlene Edgar, RECE, Director – Children’s Services

Re: Child Care Re-opening

Date: May 22, 2020

It has come to my attention there are service providers who are contacting registered families and informing them that their licensed child care centre(s) will be reopening on June 2nd. As well, part of the messaging by these service providers to families are particulars regarding the operation of the licensed child care centre, more specifically the number of children and staff that will have access to the licensed child care centre once the site is open for operations.

I recognize that these are very trying and uncertain times, and service providers are anxious about the ongoing mandated closure. It is very important to note, that to date, a specific date for the reopening of licensed child care centres has not been decided upon by the provincial government. Therefore, service providers should not be committing to reopening on a specific date before any announcement and information is received from the Ministry of Education. In addition, I would also caution service providers about communicating any particulars as to the operations of licensed child care under a global pandemic, as these particulars remain unknown at this time. The Ministry of Education will be establishing operating guidelines, including child adult ratios, to ensure the health and safety of children and their families, educators and staff.

Niagara Region Children’s Services has encouraged service providers to reach out to their staff and families, in order to get a sense of their thoughts about returning to work/child care. These are important factors when thinking about and setting the stage to reopen child care centres.

Restarting licensed child care will have multiple challenges, on many fronts, even with the clear guidelines and direction from the Ministry of Education. To do so now, without the guidelines and direction from the Ministry is premature, and service providers must be cautious as to the expectations they are setting for families.

Niagara Region Children’s Services has always been and remains committed to providing information to service providers from the provincial government as soon as it becomes available. Please feel free to contact myself or a member of the management team should you have any questions.