ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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# Early Care and Education Guidance
## Dear Colleague Letter

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| **DATE:** | July 9, 2021 |
| **TO**: | ACF Grant Recipients and Interested Parties |
| **SUBJECT**: | COVID-19 Guidance for Operating Early Care and Education Programs/Childcare Programs |
| **ATTACHMENT(S)**: | Guidance |

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Dear Colleague:

We want to share the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) updated *COVID-19 Guidance for Operating Early Care and Education/Childcare Programs*. The updated guidance focuses on helping administrators of Early Care and Education (ECE) programs, including Head Start and childcare programs, along with state and local health officials, safely support in-person learning and care.

Vaccination is currently the best public health prevention strategy to control the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting COVID-19 vaccination can help early childhood programs continue to provide in-person learning and care. However, as young children are not yet eligible for COVID-19 vaccination, the updated guidance emphasizes the prevention strategies most important for ECE programs.

CDC continues to recommend that children over age 2 and ECE staff who are not fully vaccinated wear masks indoors.

Although fewer children have been sick with COVID-19 compared with adults, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, can get sick from COVID-19, can spread the virus to others, and can have severe outcomes. As new variants of the COVID-19 virus spread across the country, it's especially important for early childhood programs to remain vigilant and follow

CDC guidance. This guidance gives ECE programs a flexible, science-based approach to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to keep children and staff healthy and in-person.

We encourage you to share this guidance widely with your partners and networks and on your organization's social media pages. We hope you will find this updated guidance useful in your work, and we will continue to share new information and resources as they become available.

Thank you for your continued partnership with ACF and CDC.

*Administration for Children and Families*