

# COVID-19 Community Resource Guide

County of Huron  
Children's Services

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# COVID-19

# Community Resource

# Guide

## Children's Services

This Community Resource Guide is a brief consolidation of practices, procedures, and subsequent information related to the Corporation of the County of Huron and its response to COVID-19, which may be subject to future revisions.

The compilation is for convenient administrative purposes. The most current version or any legal interpretation of the documents herein should be verified with the respective departments.

# CAO's Message

As we work through the uncertainty that COVID-19 has delivered, please be assured that we are committed to being both responsive and responsible, and navigating through these times with the safety and wellbeing of County of Huron staff and Huron County residents as our top priority.

We, at the County, are committed to maintaining our core service delivery throughout this period. We will continue to provide social supports to our residents and resources to local businesses who are impacted by the pandemic outbreak.

The following Community Resource Guide has been designed to guide you through the adjustments made to some of our regular County operations and services in response to COVID-19.

We recognize, and are grateful for, the important actions and sacrifices that all Huron County residents are making during these unprecedented times.

We are all in this together, we will get through this together.

Sincerely,



Meighan Wark,  
CAO

**OUR VISION**  
A Community for Generations

**OUR MISSION**  
We cultivate a healthy environment  
for prosperous living

**OUR VALUES**  
Integrity / Teamwork / Excellence



# Contact Information

## Children's Services

For general inquiries:

[childservices@huroncounty.ca](mailto:childservices@huroncounty.ca)

519-482-8505

Toll-Free: 1-888-371-5718

# Background

The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting many local communities and business operations. The County of Huron is continuing to provide essential supports to our residents and resources to local businesses throughout this event and will continue to do so as we transition into recovery. The safety and continued wellbeing of all County of Huron staff and Huron County residents will remain our first priority

While all County of Huron offices are closed to public access until further notice, core service delivery continues. As a result of the outbreak, the County's services and operations have adjusted according to recommendations from health authorities and other advisors. This Resource Guide will clarify what services this department is providing and how they are being provided, in light of the COVID-19 situation. Please do not hesitate to contact the department for further clarification on their services or for additional information not contained in this document.

## Self-Monitoring, Self-Isolation and Physical Distancing

Physical distancing, including self-monitoring and self-isolation, are public health measures that can delay and decrease the number of cases of COVID-19 over time so to not overwhelm our healthcare system. Huron County urges all residents to practice physical distancing and proper hygiene protocols.

For current and additional information on Self-Monitoring, Self-Isolation and Physical Distancing, please visit Huron Perth Public Health at [www.hpph.ca](http://www.hpph.ca).

### **Huron Perth Public Health**

For the most up-to-date information related to COVID-19 in Huron and Perth, visit [www.hpph.ca/coronavirus](http://www.hpph.ca/coronavirus)

Follow Huron Perth Public Health at  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/HuronPerthPublicHealth](https://www.facebook.com/HuronPerthPublicHealth)  
and Twitter: [www.twitter.com/HPPublicHealth](https://www.twitter.com/HPPublicHealth)

## Resources

### **Ministry of Health:**

[www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus)

### **Public Health Agency of Canada - Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Outbreak Update**

[www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html)

### **Public Health Agency of Canada - Travel Health Notices**

[www.travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notices](http://www.travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notices)

### **County of Huron**

[www.huroncounty.ca](http://www.huroncounty.ca)

# Huron County Children's Services COVID-19 Impacts and Response.

## Office Closure

The office will be closed to the public effective end of day March 16, 2020 until further notice. Although the office will be closed to in person visits, all essential services will continue to be delivered. Please call the office at 519-482-8505 with any further questions or for more information.

## Licensed Child Care Centres

Licensed child care centres care for infants, toddlers, pre-school, and school-aged children. They include nursery schools, full-day care and before-and after-school programs. Ministry of Education staff inspects child care centres at least once a year to make sure the programs meet specific provincial standards for the health, safety and meeting the developmental needs of the children. **Currently all centre and school based child care programs are closed following the mandate from the Province of Ontario until further notice. Up-to-date information can be found on the Ministry of Education website at [www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-education](http://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-education).**

## Home Child Care

Huron County Community Home Child Care is a home child care agency that is municipally operated by The County of Huron and licensed by the Ministry of Education. This licensed child care program aims to offer a home away from home for children while their parents or guardians are at work or in school through contracts with independent home child care operators. **The order to close Child Care Centres as part of the Provincial State of Emergency does not apply to Licensed or unlicensed Home Child Care. This decision is in compliance with approvals to remain open from the Ministry of Education and the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Up-to-date information can be found on the Ministry of Education website at [www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-education](http://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-education).**

## EarlyON Programs

**All EarlyON programs in the County of Huron have been postponed until further notice.** EarlyON facilitators are offering virtual programs through our Huron EarlyON Facebook and Instagram accounts. EarlyON programs provide play based learning for children and their parents and caregivers through play, song, games, sensory and creative experiences. These opportunities allow children to develop their social and emotional skills, reach developmental milestones and

begin their journey of lifelong learning. **Follow us on our Huron EarlyON Facebook and Instagram pages for virtual playgroups, stories and activities.**

## Fee Subsidy

Families living in the County of Huron may qualify to have the full or partial amount of their childcare costs paid by the County of Huron if funding permits. This can be arranged when childcare is provided at a licensed childcare centre or an approved home provider. All licensed child care centers remain closed until further notices from the Ontario Government. **Families in receipt of fee subsidy will continue to be eligible at their respective child care programs when the mandatory closures are lifted.**

## Growing Together Early Learning Resource Program

The Growing Together Early Learning Resource Program offers consultative support on an ongoing basis to various child care, EarlyON and recreation programs by suggesting strategies for adapting activities and providing training to ensure a positive inclusion experience for everyone. **During the Licensed Child Care Centres closure period, Resource Consultants will be reaching out to families on their caseloads to provide support, guidance and information specific to each family.**

# Children's Services FAQ

## How do I access child care during the mandatory centre closure?

Currently the County of Huron is working with the Ministry of Education and the Huron Perth Public Health to open designated child care services to offer emergency child care to essential workers. Please watch the website for future updates, to determine eligibility and how to apply for emergency child care: [www.huroncounty.ca/childrens-services](http://www.huroncounty.ca/childrens-services)

## EarlyON programs are closed and we miss attending the programs. What can we do?

EarlyON facilitators are offering songs, stories, and activities online through our Huron EarlyON Facebook and Instagram pages. EarlyON Facilitators, as well as Growing Together Resource Consultants are available to discuss any specific questions you may have. Connect with the Children's Services team through direct message on our social media accounts, by calling 519-482-8505 and leaving a message, or by emailing [childservices@huroncounty.ca](mailto:childservices@huroncounty.ca).

## My family uses Home Child Care, but have not been attending. Do I still need to pay?

Families will not be charged for days they do not use approved home child care. Families who are not eligible for emergency child care and who continue to use approved home child care will be billed for their actual use until further notice.

## What is the deadline to complete a re-assessment for child care fee subsidy based on my 2019 income tax information?

As a result of the current situation, no deadline has been set. Letters will be sent out from Children's Services when re-assessment applications are due. No action required at this time.

## **Do the absent days from COVID-19 impact my fee subsidy allotted 25 allowable sick days therefore impact my fee subsidy?**

COVID-19 absent days have no impact on your subsidy or allowable sick days.

## **Can families continue to access services from Growing Together Resource Consulting Program?**

Yes. As all child care and EarlyON programs are closed, we recognize family and children that are involved with an Early Learning Resource Consultant will continue to require support during this time. The consultants will continue to have access to voicemail, and email. Consultants will be in contact with families on a regular basis to support the families and children on their caseloads.

## **I am currently on maternity leave, but need child care when I return to work. What do I do?**

While centre-based child care programs are currently closed, you are still able to register your family on the child care waitlist. OneHSN is designed to help you learn about the licensed child care services available in our community and apply for a child care space. The application process is easy to use and the information you provide will determine the child care options available to you. You can submit your child(ren)'s name to as many Centres as you choose and the Child Care Centre will contact you when a space becomes available. Visit [onehsn.com/huron](https://onehsn.com/huron) for more information.

# What can you do to help?

We want you to participate! Here are a few tips and suggestions on things Huron County residents can do to help get through this together.

## Self-isolate and stay at home

The number one, most important thing you can do to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect our most vulnerable citizens and front line workers by practice physical distancing and stay at home. Talk to your children about ways you can help others in a safe, yet friendly way while at home.

## Join us on Facebook and Instagram

Stay connected to the Children's Service team by joining us on our Facebook and Instagram page at Huron EarlyON. Ask questions about how to talk to your child about these uncertain times, or connect with the Children's Services team by calling 519-482-8505 and leaving a message, or by emailing [childservices@huroncounty.ca](mailto:childservices@huroncounty.ca).

## Connect with your children

This time of change can be difficult for children. Acknowledge their feeling and worries. Provide comfort and reassurance that we will be able to see their family and friends soon. Talk openly about COVID-19/germ and viruses (age-appropriately) and how we can stay healthy. Try to keep routines as normal as possible and create a daily plan together. Connect with the Children's Services team to learn of strategies that may help you talk to your child about these ever changing times.

## Connect with family and friends

This time can be stressful and uncertain for parents as well, and it is important for you to take time for yourself. Connect with family and friends that support and care for you.

## Wash your hands

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 30 seconds. Encourage your children to wash their hands while singing a fun song such as Happy Birthday (twice).