

EarlyON

Child and Family Centre

EarlyON COVID-19
Participant Handbook
January 2022

Welcome

Huron EarlyON facilitators are excited to welcome children, parents, and caregivers to a variety of EarlyON programs throughout Huron County. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we will be offering virtual programs, and when safe to do so, in-person programs both indoors and outside. With guidance from the Ministry of Education and Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH), EarlyON facilitators have worked to develop and revise policies and procedures that will ensure children, families, and caregivers can return to our in-person programs in a manner that maximizes their health and well-being while continuing to engage in valuable early year's programs and services.

Huron EarlyON facilitators understand that participants and community partners may have many questions as the County of Huron moves forward with the reopening of in-person programs. We hope that this handbook will communicate the information needed to ease any possible concerns or questions. If you are not ready to resume the in-person program, no worries, we will be continuing to offer virtual programs and services.

By taking a measured approach to in-person programs, we can help to protect children, their caregivers and staff, while supporting our mission to provide opportunities for children from birth to 6 years of age to participate in play and inquiry-based programs and support parents and caregivers in their role.

Huron EarlyON facilitators are committed to creating safe and engaging play environments for our participants. During this time, when physical safety is a priority, we also understand that our programs can allow children to explore, gain new skills and build confidence in their abilities while providing parents and caregivers with meaningful conversations of support as they navigate their journey of raising young children. Within an environment that ensures all health and safety measures are met, a focus on the overall well-being and emotional wellness of all our participants remains important in our programs.

Participants are asked to read through this handbook before attending any Huron EarlyON programs.

All the information found in this handbook is subject to change based on recommendations from Huron Perth Public Health and the Ministry of Education.

Some EarlyON locations may require proof of full vaccination to meet facility Covid Immunization Policies

Pre-Registration

All participants attending EarlyON in-person programs will be required to pre-register. Pre-registration will be completed on the KEyON Registration System. Pre-registration is required for contact tracing, to complete an updated registration form, to sign new waivers, and to receive the screening tool link to complete before attending an in-person EarlyON program.

At this time, families that have not pre-registered will not be able to participate in an in-person EarlyON program.



EarlyON program notices will be made available on Facebook, Instagram, and the [Huron County Website](#)

Full program details will be available on the KEyON system for each program. Due to the limited spaces available at program locations, participants may be asked to stagger the in-person programs they attend in order to ensure that more families have the opportunity to attend the in-person programs. Program locations include North Huron, Goderich, Clinton and Exeter and their surrounding areas.

When necessary, a waitlist will be compiled for programs. If participants are unable to attend the program they are registered for, they are asked to cancel their reservation on KEyON immediately so that an effort can be made to fill the spaces with waitlist participants.

The attendance list created from the pre-registration information will be used by EarlyON facilitators as a sign-in tool. The information on this form may be required to be shared with Huron Perth Public Health should contact tracing be necessary.

That, in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak, I indemnify the County of Huron, the third party facilitator, their officers, elected officials, contracted employees, servants and agents, and hold them harmless of and from all claims, suits, actions or damages that I have, may or hereafter acquire as a result of a COVID 19 outbreak at the facility, other than what might result from the gross negligence of the County of Huron or the third party facilitator.

Screening Procedures

Screening Questions:

Huron EarlyON will use the most up-to-date screen and screening process provided by the Huron Perth Health Unit, Ministry of Education, or Ontario Public Health. **These screening measures will be modified from time to time to reflect public health and government requirements.**

For the most current screen, please visit the following sites:

For Children and participants:

[COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#)

and the employees and visitors:

[COVID-19 screening tool for employees and essential visitors in schools and child care settings.](#)

Updates to the screening tools reflect the latest advice from the Ministry of Health for schools, child care and other workplace settings.

You will be asked to show verification that you have completed the tool the day of the program. If you have not completed the screen prior to the program, you will need to complete the screen at the registration table prior to entry. If you or your child fail the screen, you will not be able to enter the program. The latest screen is attached to the end of this document.

Illness and Exclusion

Should you or your child (ren) have any symptoms you are asked to not attend the in-person programs. Please follow the instructions based on the screening results using the [Ontario COVID-19 School and childcare screening tool](#).

Should your child or you become ill while attending an EarlyON program, you will be asked to leave the program. When you get home, please complete the [Ontario COVID-19 School and childcare screening tool](#) for either you or your child and follow the instructions based on the screening result.

Should the results of your screening tool recommend that you go for testing this will require participants to isolate themselves away from in-person programs until the results are received? If participants decline to have a COVID test completed, then they are asked to remain away from in-person EarlyON programs for up to 14 days from the onset of the symptoms.

If you or your child exhibit COVID-like symptoms within 24hrs of attending a Huron EarlyON program, please follow the advice of your health care professional and/or HPPH and notify EarlyON if required.

Mask/Face Covering Requirements

Huron EarlyON facilitators will be wearing medical masks as well as eye protection during indoor, in-person programs.

Physical distancing will be encouraged, however, given the age of the participants, physical distancing may be difficult to maintain. Therefore, for indoor programs, adult participants will be required to wear a mask. Masks are not recommended for infants and toddlers up to the age of 2 years. Children over the age of 2 will be encouraged to wear a mask during indoor programs.



Participants can choose non-medical or cloth masks.

For outdoor programs, Huron EarlyON facilitators will set up a play environment or plan for activities that encourage physical distancing of 2 metres. If a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained, masks are recommended for outdoor programs, otherwise, program participants will not need to wear a mask unless they prefer to do so.

Program Limits

Huron EarlyON in-person programs (both indoors and outdoors) will have limited group sizes to ensure the safety of all participants and to promote physical distancing. There will be signage at each program indicating the capacity limit. Please note, these numbers may be lower than the provincial standard so that programing can focus on the families in attendance and quality interactions.

Huron EarlyON facilitators will set up an inviting and engaging play area that supports children in playing with their parents/caregivers who are in their household and encourages distance between other children and adults. Visual cues (e.g. signage, posters) will be used to help participants support appropriate physical space between activities. Adults are encouraged to model physical distancing while in the program.

Hand Hygiene



All participants must use the alcohol-based hand sanitizer provided before entering the play area.

Parents/Caregivers are asked to support their children with completing hand hygiene practices. With a greater emphasis on hand hygiene, participants may be asked to engage in hand washing or hand sanitization prior to some activities, such as sensory play.

Respiratory Etiquette

Parents/caregivers are asked to place any toys that have been in their child(ren)'s mouth in a designated bin to be cleaned. (These bins will be labelled and placed throughout the room for the EarlyON facilitators to clean and be disinfected before placing them back out on the shelves). All will be encouraged to cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue and wash hands immediately after.

Snacks/Beverages

Parents/caregivers are asked to refrain from bringing food or drinks into the indoor program area. The consumption of food/drinks will not be permitted within the program room (with the exception of children needing to breastfeed or formula feed/water). If participants have any medical considerations requiring food or drink while within the Huron EarlyON program, they are asked to speak with the EarlyON facilitator.

Arrival and Departure

Participants are asked to:

- Arrive at program locations and leave these locations, within the set program times to ensure that Huron EarlyON facilitators have the proper time to clean play items and program locations. You will be asked to stagger your exit from the program in a manner that supports 2 metre physical distancing between participants.
- Use only the designated EarlyON program entrance/exit, as well as washrooms. Program participants will not be permitted in other areas of a building
- Respect physical distancing as other families enter the program please wait in your vehicle, or dress for the weather, if a program location does not have a large lobby to accommodate multiple participants entering at one time
- Only bring only the necessities into the program location to minimize extra items in the room. Huron EarlyON facilitators will make every effort to accommodate strollers and will support participants in their use of this stroller space as you enter/exit program rooms while respecting physical distancing

Enhanced Sanitary Practices

To support a safe and healthy program environment, Huron EarlyON facilitators will ensure the following:

- Program toys and equipment will be disinfected at the end of each program
- High touch areas (doors, tables, etc.) will be disinfected before and after the program and as needed throughout the program
- Parents/Caregivers continue to be responsible for the diapering/toileting of the children in their care. EarlyON staff will sanitize the bathroom at the beginning and end of the program or when visibly dirty throughout the program.
- Parents/Caregivers will place any toys mouthed by the children in their care in the designated bins in order for facilitators to clean and disinfect before further play
- The consumption of food/drinks will not be permitted within the program room (with the exception of breastfeeding or formula for infants)
- Emphasize improved ventilation for indoor programs, including open windows to improve fresh air circulation.
- Huron EarlyON facilitators will work closely with the community partner for any specific cleaning requirements based on each individual location.



- Huron EarlyON facilitators will be using disinfectants with appropriate Drug Identification Numbers (DIN). Information regarding the disinfectant product will be provided upon request.

Mobile Programming

Where programming is being offered in a shared setting (e.g., a community center), EarlyON will work in collaboration with the local public health unit and those sharing the space to follow public health advice. EarlyON facilitators must follow all cleaning and disinfecting practices in all locations where in-person programming is held and uphold a facility policies and procedure, including verifying proof of vaccination as required.

Outdoor Programming

Outdoor programming is strongly encouraged as a program delivery model as it can easily allow for safe, physically distanced activities for children and families. The use of masks is recommended but not required outdoors for adults if physical distancing of 2-metres can be maintained between participants. Where programming is being offered in a shared setting (e.g., park), providers should work in collaboration with HPPH to follow public health advice. EarlyON facilitators must follow all screening, cleaning and disinfecting practices in all locations where in-person programming is held. A First Aid Kit must be available at all outdoor (and indoor) programs.

Huron EarlyON programs will offer outdoor programs except during inclement weather, which is defined as temperatures below -10 degrees Celsius (actual temperature or due to wind chill), temperatures higher than 30 degrees Celsius, heavy rain/blizzard, sleet/hail, heavy winds or as indicated by posted humidex warnings, wind chill or other severe weather statements/advisories (such as a tornado, smog alert or heat alert), any travel warnings that may pertain to unsafe program delivery or at the discretion of Huron EarlyON delivery agents

Virtual Programming

Huron EarlyON is committed to providing virtual programming while we return to in-person programs. A variety of virtual programming will continue to be available on Facebook and Zoom, with additional parent and child information on Instagram and the County of Huron Website.
Follow us at Huron EarlyON

Well-being

You and your family's well-being is important to us. The ongoing COVID-19 outbreak has caused anxiety, distress and other strong emotions in individuals, families and communities across the globe.

Feeling like you need to talk to someone or need more information? It's OK to ask for help!

The EarlyON Team: We are here to talk outside of program times. Have child related or parenting questions? Connect with us either by geographical area or by contacting a facilitator directly.

Clinton, Seaforth, Exeter and Surrounding Area	Megan Disher ✉ earlyon@huroncounty.ca ☎ 519-482-8505 ext. 4205 Sandra Skinn ✉ earlyon@huroncounty.ca ☎ 519-482-8505 ext. 4203
Goderich, Bayfield and Surrounding Area	Kelly Kyle ✉ kkyle@goderich.ca ☎ 519-524-9999
North Huron and Surrounding Area	Maria Walden and Sarah Caldwell ✉ winghamoeyc@northhuron.ca ☎ 519-482-8505 ext. 3516

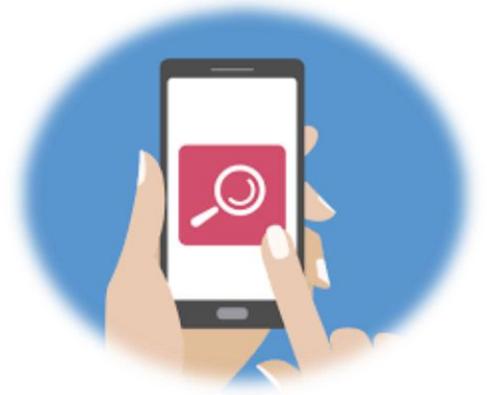
Here are some other local supports you can access:

- Huron Perth Helpline and Crisis Response Team: If you or someone you know needs mental health and/or addiction support, contact the 24-hour helpline at 1-888-829-7484.
- 211 (visit the website or just dial 211) is a free helpline that connects you to community and social services in your area 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in over 150 languages.
- The Huron-Perth Centre for Children and Youth is an accredited community-based children's mental health centre.

Prefer to search the web?

Useful Websites for helping your child:

- [Children's Mental Health Ontario](#)
- [Kids Help Phone](#)
- www.mindyourmind.ca
- www.kidsrelaxation.com
- www.mindcheck.ca



You may wish to visit the provincial COVID-19 website regularly for current information, as well as the Public Health Ontario public resources page for information to help stop the spread, find sector specific resources, including helpful posters, mental health resources, and other information

Recognizing that EarlyON programs may look different as a result of COVID-19, we strive to continue to deliver high-quality programs and services that support early learning and development, engage parents and caregivers and make connections for families through a variety of methods that support the health, safety, and well-being of children and families.

We are happy to welcome you back to in-person programs

The Huron EarlyON Team.