

COVID-19 Strategic Plan UAH Early Learning Center

Pandemic/COVID-19 Policy
UAH Early Learning Center
Deana Aumalis, Director

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Introduction

The COVID-19 virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) for at least 15 minutes.
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- **Studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.**

Knowing these facts, the ELC has implemented additional safety measures for families, children, teachers, therapists, and staff to follow so that we do our part in reducing the spread of this illness and keeping everyone as healthy as possible. These safety measures have been in effect since July 2020. The ELC follows the UA System, UAH, and Alabama Childcare Licensing Guidelines.

Physical Distancing Strategies

Based on recommendations from the CDC, AL Department of Public Health, the World Health Organization, and AL DHR Licensing, the UAH ELC will follow physical distancing strategies to include:

Changed 06/01/2021

- Classrooms will include the same group of children each day, and the same teachers will remain with the same group of children each day, *as much as possible*. Groups may combine or move between classrooms during the school day, but this will remain minimal. Groups will combine in Before School Care and After School Care.
- There is to be a minimum of 20 minutes between each group on the playground to allow the equipment be 'sanitized' by the sunlight. Teachers/staff members will also clean high-traffic areas on the playground and all materials in the gym/group play area.
- Arrival and pick up times will be staggered to avoid groups of people gathering in the ELC. Siblings will be allowed to arrive and be picked up at the same time.
- Parents and visitors will be allowed into the center. If COVID-19 numbers rise in our community, we may return to previous policy of no visitors and/or health/temp checks.
- Family style dining is suspended during the health crisis.
 - Children's plates will be made by teachers, and children will be seated as far apart as possible while still allowing for appropriate meal service and conversation.
 - Only disposable service items (plates, cups, forks, spoons, etc.) and utensils should be used.
- All sensory play is suspended (unless in an individual bin) until further notice. Playdoh will not be shared.
- Cots/mats/cribs will be placed 3-6 feet apart when possible. If not possible, children will be placed to sleep head to toe.
- Children will not share art materials. Each child will be provided their own supply box/bag that contains markers, pencils, crayons, glue, scissors, etc.
- All beginning of the year events will be held in a "virtual" format. Family conferences and Special Education Meetings will be held in a "virtual" format (Zoom platform).
- We will schedule individual "Meet the Teacher" times for the fall.

Steps to Take If a Child, Parent or Staff Member Develops COVID-19 Symptoms

- Staff, guardians, or children with a fever (100.4 F or higher), cough, or shortness of breath or at least two of the following symptoms will not be allowed to return to the ELC until a negative COVID-19 test result and/or a doctor's note have been received:
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fever or chills
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle pain or body aches
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Diarrhea
 - New loss of taste or smell
- Children or staff who are awaiting test results or have members of their household who are awaiting test results MUST stay home until notification of a negative test result.
- Children or staff with household members who are known to have tested positive for COVID-19 or who have come into contact with a positive case will also be excluded from the ELC for a minimum of 14 days. This period will be prolonged if the child or staff member develops symptoms or tests positive during the 14 day period.
- If a child or staff member develops symptoms while at the ELC, they are to be immediately separated from others. Parents have 45-60 minutes to pick up a sick child.
- Children and staff who have been sent home due to symptoms must have a doctor's note to return. If tested for COVID-19, they must stay home and notify the ELC of results asap.
- Staff and family members will not have a quarantine period if exposed to a positive case if they are fully vaccinated.

Positive Case of Covid-19 within the ELC

- Employees and parents are required to notify the ELC immediately if there is a positive COVID-19 test result within their household or workplace.
- If we are notified of a positive COVID-19 test result for ANY parent, child, employee, or anyone they live with, we will immediately contact the UAH COVID-19 task force. Information will be sent out on Brightwheel to inform parents of any quarantine period.
- **Classrooms with a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be closed. In some cases the ELC may close.**
 - The ELC should immediately air out the classroom for 24 hours and then follow the 'Cleaning Classroom/Facility after Exposure' guidance.
 - The duration of the closure will be at the discretion of UAH.
- All parents will be notified immediately and asked to come pick up their children if any are on site.
- Most likely the classroom will be closed for a period of 1-2 days for cleaning. UAH Office of Health and Environmental Safety will provide guidance on closures due to COVID-19.
- All staff and families who have been in the facility within the last 1-3 days will be notified.
 - The identity of the individual who tested positive WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL TO ABSOLUTELY EVERYONE unless **that individual** SPECIFICALLY REQUESTS that we inform those potentially infected.

Cleaning Facility After Exposure

- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, or EPA-registered disinfectants are to be used.
- Employees are to wear disposable gloves and jackets for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.
- Gloves and jackets should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area. Be sure to wash hands after removing gloves.
- Gloves should be removed after cleaning a room or area occupied by ill persons.

Children/Staff Who Have Had Close Contact with a Person with Symptoms or Diagnosed with COVID-19

- Children who have symptoms should stay home. Parents should notify Director immediately.
- Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) should notify their supervisor and stay home.
- Sick employees should follow CDC-recommended steps. Employees should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.
- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow CDC recommended precautions.
- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, fellow employees will be notified of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Fellow employees should then self-monitor for symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath).
- Employees should not return to work until the criteria to end home isolation is met as instructed in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.

Criteria to Discontinue Home Isolation

Children and staff can return to the ELC after ALL these things have happened:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- No fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers)
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved)
- You have a doctor's note stating you may return or you have been cleared by the UAH clinic or ELC Director
- This criteria may change as more information is known about the virus

Facility Safety Measures

Key Hygiene Practices

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol (or EPA approved). If children use hand sanitizer, a medication form needs to be signed by guardian. Medication forms should be on file.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wear cloth face coverings or clear face shields.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, throw the tissue in the trash, and wash hands thoroughly. If tissues are not available, cough or sneeze into your elbow.

Arrival of Children

- Stagger arrival and pick up times.
- If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children because they are more at risk for [severe illness from COVID-19](#).
- Parents should arrive in their designated window of time, wearing a face covering, if not 14 days past 2nd vaccine injection. Enter in the East hall near the gym/library.
- Children will not be allowed to stay if **either the parent or child** exhibits any of the following:
 - Fever over 100.1 (37.83C)
 - New cough of any kind
 - Shortness of breath
- A Health Questionnaire is completed each upon arrival on the Brightwheel app. **Please answer these questions truthfully each day.** If found that questions have been falsified, you risk the dismissal of your family from the UAH Early Learning Center.
- Parent/Guardian will sign in their child via Brightwheel and exit at the gym door.
- If a child is going to arrive after 8:15, they should notify the ELC via Brightwheel.
- Parents MUST wear face covering (if not 14 days past second vaccine injection) during arrival/dismissal while in the hall at the ELC. Children may wear face coverings (if over the age of 3) at parent's discretion and can be worn throughout the day.
- Children will be escorted to their classroom by a staff member after or using hand sanitizer. Upon arrival to their classroom, they will be greeted by classroom staff and wash hands.

Departure of children

- Children will be dismissed at staggered times.
- Parent will sign out child using the Brightwheel app.
- For dismissal, please use lobby door to enter. The back hall entrance will be used on inclement weather days only. Face coverings are required if not 14 days past second vaccine injection.
 - Teachers are to have children wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before leaving the classroom.
 - Teachers are to ensure that each child's belongings are sent home each day.
 - Face coverings that the child has worn must be sent home with the child daily.
- Parent is allowed to pick up child from the classroom.
- Parent and child will exit at the lobby doors. Back hallway doors will be open on inclement weather days only.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

- High touch surfaces are to be cleaned and sanitized no less than three times per day. This can be done more often if needed. High touch surfaces are doorknobs, light switches, countertops, faucet handles, tables, etc.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized can be returned to all classrooms. These include things such as stuffed animals, pillows, cloth dolls, dress up clothes, etc. We have a Zono machine to clean all classroom items.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated should be set aside in a "yuck bucket" until they are cleaned by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry. You may also clean in a mechanical dishwasher.

Cleaning and Sanitizing (Con't)

- All children's face coverings, blankets, and extra clothes are to stay at the ELC to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 from home to school. All blankets/nap mats should be kept separated in a child's cubby.
- Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a separate container marked for "soiled toys." These are to be cleaned and sanitized before being placed back in use. Rotate toys through cleanings.
- Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils. Have extra sets of these to use while cleaning.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.
- Using gloves all day everyday could instill a false sense of security. Therefore, gloved hands will be reserved for the following times:
 - Universal precautions
 - Diaper changing
 - Nose blowing
 - Handling soiled items
 - Garbage removal
 - Food service gloves are to be used for food service as usual
 - Cleaning/Disinfecting/Sanitizing Protocol

Diapering, Feeding, or Holding a Child

It is important to comfort crying, sad, and/or anxious infants and toddlers, and they often need to be held. To the extent possible when diapering, feeding, or holding very young children:

- *Infant/Waddler Rooms Only:* Wear an over-sized button-down, shirt, or jacket. Wear long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.
- Wash your hands, neck, and anywhere else touched by a child's secretions.
- Change the child's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. Change your button-down shirt if there are secretions on it and wash your hands again.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine.
- Infants, toddlers, and staff should have multiple changes of clothes on hand in the ELC.
- Teachers should wash their hands before and after handling infant bottles prepared at home or prepared in the ELC. Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment used for bottle-feeding should be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing in a dishwasher or by washing with a bottlebrush, soap, and water.

Group Size

The current Alabama State Department of Human Resources Daycare Licensing requirement does not limit the group size due to COVID-19. Class sizes are small at the ELC. Please refer to your family handbook for classroom staff to student ratios.

- At nap time, ensure that children's cots (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 3-6 feet apart. If the full six feet is not possible, ensure that children are placed head to toe at nap time. This will reduce the potential for viral spread.

Hand Washing

Handwashing posters should be posted at every hand washing sink within the ELC. All children and staff should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival at the ELC or classroom
- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding children
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- Before and after diapering
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After handling animals
- After playing outdoors or in sand
- After handling garbage
- After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using the restroom
- Before coming in contact with any child
- After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated
- After using shared equipment like toys, scissors, iPad, etc.
- All staff and children must adhere to regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
 - Turn water on and wet hands, remove from water
 - Add soap to hands and create friction to make bubbles
 - Scrub for 20 seconds, sing Happy Birthday or ABC's
 - Rinse hands under running water
 - Dry hands with single use paper towels
 - Turn off faucet with paper towels

Hand Sanitizers

Use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer should only be practiced when soap and water method is not available.

Children must be supervised when they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion. A medication form must be signed by the child's guardian in order for Hand Sanitizer to be used. Hand sanitizer is only used with children aged 12 month and up.

Communication Plan

- Regular communication will continue through Brightwheel App, email, website updates, and our Facebook Page.
- Ensure that all contact information for families and employees is accurate and current.
- ELC Director is available to address any concerns on an individual basis (deana.aumalis@uah.edu)

Scheduling Plan

It is important to adhere to schedules as strictly as possible during a pandemic.

- Center director/administrators will prepare a weekly schedule ***in advance*** for each week of operations during the health crisis. This schedule should clearly define the following:
 - names and ages of each group of children for the week
 - teacher(s) assigned to each group
 - classroom assigned to each group
 - teacher's work schedule
 - children's schedules
- Center administrators will monitor and respond to absenteeism.
 - If a child is scheduled for the day, but not present, parents must be contacted and the reason for the absence must be documented on the current schedule.
 - Scheduled children and staff will be compared to actual attendance by upper management to assist in monitoring absenteeism.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

If ANYONE at the ELC comes down with COVID-19

- ELC will notify families and staff of exposure.
- ELC will report the confirmed case to the UAH Office of Health and Environmental Safety, Dean of the College of Education, Provost, and Department of Public Health and follow specific guidelines as mandated.
- Attempt to determine the date of symptom of onset for the child/employee.
- Determine if the child/employee attended or worked at the ELC while symptomatic or during the two days before symptoms began.
- Identify what days the child/employee was present at the ELC during that time.
- Determine who had close contact with the child/employee at the ELC during those days. Use the Child/Staff Movements Form (6 feet for at least 15 minutes).
- Close off areas used by the individual diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Exclude the children and staff who are determined to have had close contact with the affected child/employee for 14 days after the last day they had contact with the affected individual.
- Follow Cleaning/Disinfecting/Sanitizing Protocol
- Close ELC classrooms to students/staff as needed.
 - This initial short-term dismissal/closing allows time for the health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the center.
 - This allows the local health officials and UAH to help the ELC determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal/closure is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STAFF:

- Bring into the ELC as little as you possibly will need for the day.
- Staff must wear a mask or clear face covering (if it is not 14 days past second vaccine injection) all day excluding meal times and/or break time.
- Use hand sanitizer before leaving lobby.
- Clock in and use hand sanitizer again.
- Place your personal items in a locker and hand sanitize or continue to classroom.
- Remember to do your best to "social distance" with other adults within the ELC—See 12 minute Memo.
- If needed, enter and have temperature checked, logged, and health questionnaire answered.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

If for some reason there is not adequate PPE, cleaning supplies, or paper supplies for the ELC, the Director will close the ELC with UAH approval until proper materials have arrived.

- Currently, the best defense to COVID-19 is hand washing. Therefore, using gloves all day/everyday could become a false security. Wearing gloves will be reserved for the following times: when dealing with bodily fluids/using universal precautions, diaper changing, nose blowing, cleaning, handling food, and garbage removal.
- The Director or her designee will communicate often with other departments that enter the building about the importance of sick employees staying home. All who enter the building must wear a mask if it is not 14 days past second vaccine injection, use hand sanitizer upon entry and exhibit (3 ft) social/physical distancing.

We greatly appreciate your understanding and flexibility during this difficult time. We will continue to navigate through this together!



MEMORANDUM

As UAH continues to transition to normal operations, we would like to announce the latest updates regarding our COVID-19 health and safety requirements.

Face coverings: Consistent with CDC guidance and the [UA System Health and Safety Plan](#), UAH has modified on-campus face covering guidelines for non-clinical settings.

Effective immediately at UAH and all UA System campuses:

- **Fully vaccinated individuals** (14 days or more following the final dose) are no longer required to wear face coverings indoors or outside.
- **Individuals who are not fully vaccinated** are required to wear face coverings at all times indoors except when face coverings are not required by existing guidance.

Vaccines: It is vital that we strive for full vaccination throughout our campus community to continue to ensure the safety and health of everyone here at our University. You can find a vaccine site near you at www.vaccinefinder.org. Although strongly encouraged, COVID vaccination is not a requirement at UAH for enrollment or employment at this time.

Social Distancing: The University will continue to require a 3-foot distance between individuals for all faculty, staff and students wherever possible until further notice.

Thank you for your continued help and vigilance in meeting these requirements and guidelines.

Any questions or concerns regarding the new face covering policy for UAH and the Early Learning Center can be addressed through an email to Deana Aumalis, ELC Director at deana.aumalis@uah.edu or Dr. Beth Quick, Dean of the College of Education at beth.quick@uah.edu.

Children can bring a backpack starting June 7, 2021. We will continue cleaning, hand washing & sanitizing policies as set forth previously. The only changes at this time are face covering and backpacks. We continue to encourage children to leave toys at home.

Please don't forget your nap mat & water bottle on Monday.

GUIDELINES FOR CHILD DAY CARE FACILITIES

In addition to the Safer at Home Order's mandates and Guidelines for Safeguarding All Businesses, the following practices are strongly recommended for all child day care facilities.

These recommendations have been developed in conjunction with the recommendations from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Guidance on *Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19*, and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): *Guidelines for Disinfecting Your Facility and Child Care Programs During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Child care facilities and providers should refer to these guidelines prior to reopening as well as any guidance or regulations provided by their respective state licensing boards, including Alabama Department of Human Resources: Alabama Administrative Code, Chapters 660-5-25 through -27.

These recommendations do not change the Minimum Standards promulgated by the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR).

In addition to the sanitation requirements established by the state licensing board and the Alabama Department of Public Health, which should be strictly followed, it is recommended that these minimum standards be incorporated:

Promote healthy hygiene practices:

- Teach and reinforce washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among children and staff.
 - Face coverings are most essential at times when social distancing is not possible. Staff should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently. Information should be provided to all staff on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
- Have adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, paper towels, and tissues.
 - In order to use hand sanitizer on children, a facility must use DHR's Authorization for Administering Medication/Medical Procedures form (DHR-CDC-1949). This form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian. All medications, in addition to hand sanitizers, and other sanitizing products, shall be kept under lock and key or combination lock, in a separate location away from toxic chemicals and other harmful items.

Health and safety actions:

- Intensify cleaning, sanitation, disinfection, and ventilation.
 - Clean, sanitize, and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (for example, playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) multiple times per day and shared objects between use.
 - Avoid use of items (for example, soft or plush toys) that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
 - Social distancing. Use increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups.
 - Ensure that classes include the same group of children each day and that the same child care providers remain with the same group each day, if possible.

- Space out seating and bedding (head-to-toe positioning) to six feet apart if possible.
- Stagger arrival and drop-off times or put in place other practices to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible. Parents should drop off and pick up children at the door whenever possible.
- Restrict nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving several groups at the same time.
- Cancel all field trips, inter-group events, and extracurricular activities involving more than one classroom at a time.
- Avoid immediate contact (such as shaking or holding hands, hugging, or kissing).
- Limit the number of children playing together in outdoor spaces.
- Designate seating and table space for each child.
- Limit sharing.
 - Keep each child's belongings separated and in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies, or areas and have them taken home each day and cleaned, if possible.
 - Adjust activities and procedures to limit sharing of items such as toys, belongings, supplies, and equipment and clean and disinfect between use.
 - If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each child. Avoid sharing foods and utensils.

Protection of employees and children:

- Train all employees on health and safety guidelines.
- Take steps to limit risk of exposure to children and employees at higher risk for severe illness, such as people with diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic conditions, and people 65 or older.
- Screen children and employees each day upon arrival for history of exposure and symptoms, including temperature checks. Facilities must use DHR's Authorization for Administering Medication/Medical Procedures form (DHR-CDC-1949). The form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian before a child's temperature is checked.
 - Any child or employee with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above should not be permitted to attend and should immediately be sent home. Children or employees who are sent home with a fever should receive medical clearance from a physician before returning.

Ongoing monitoring:

- Children who are sick should be separated and cared for by a staff member until a parent can arrive. Parents should be notified immediately of any illness and should pick the child up within 60 minutes of the notification. Rooms and materials used to care for sick children should be thoroughly disinfected after use. CDC recommends waiting 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting, if possible.
- Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home.
- Monitor child and employee absences, and have a pool of trained substitutes and flexible leave policies and practices for employees who may become ill.
- Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.

Cleaning, DISINFECTING and SANITIZING

Cleaning Surfaces:

- Wipe the surface clean of any loose material.
- Clean the surface using fresh, warm water and either soap, detergent or cleanser and a cleaning cloth.
- Wipe the surface with fresh water to remove soap and other residue.

DISINFECTING Surfaces:

A DISINFECTANT is a chemical substance APPROVED by the EPA authority for use in the DISINFECTION of non-food or non-mouth contact EQUIPMENT and surfaces. (Examples of non-food and non-mouth contact surfaces include: diapering surfaces, potty chairs, restrooms, and surfaces contaminated with bodily fluids.)

Prior to using a DISINFECTANT, wipe the surface clean of any loose material. **Follow manufacturer's label** for DISINFECTING process. Surfaces SHALL be DISINFECTED by using one of the following methods along with **required strength and appropriate contact time**:

- Surface application of an EPA APPROVED DISINFECTANT solution from a properly labeled and APPROVED spray container.
- The use of EPA APPROVED DISINFECTING disposable wipes.
- ❖ **The use of reusable cloths is prohibited in removal of bodily fluids and DISINFECTING diapering surfaces.**

A means of testing solution strength SHALL be provided and used to determine the proper strength if manually mixing a solution. (Examples: chlorine test strips if using a bleach solution, quaternary test strips if using a quaternary ammonia solution, etc.) Note: If manually mixing, DISINFECTING solution SHALL be made daily and more often as needed.

Examples of EPA APPROVED DISINFECTANTS include: Lysol Brand DISINFECTING Wipes, Clorox Brand DISINFECTING Wipes, bleach/water solution, using common, unscented house-hold bleach.

SANITIZING Surfaces

A SANITIZER is a chemical substance APPROVED by the EPA for use in the sanitization of food EQUIPMENT and utensils; and mouth contact surfaces. (Examples of food and mouth contact surfaces include: high-chair table surfaces, dining areas, and toys having reasonable expectations to be placed in the mouth.)

Prior to using a SANITIZING solution, wipe any loose material from the surface. **Follow manufacturer's label** for SANITIZING process. Surfaces SHALL be SANITIZED by using one of the following methods along with **required strength and appropriate contact time**:

- Wiping the surface with a cloth or disposable towel soaked in an EPA APPROVED SANITIZER solution.
- Surface application of an EPA APPROVED SANITIZER solution from a properly labeled and APPROVED spray container.
- Submersing the articles in an EPA APPROVED SANITIZER solution.

A means of testing solution strength SHALL be provided and used to determine the proper strength if manually mixing a solution. (Examples: chlorine test strips if using a bleach solution, quaternary test strips if using a quaternary ammonia solution, etc.) Note: If manually mixing, SANITIZING solution SHALL be made daily and more often as needed.

Common EPA APPROVED SANITIZER: bleach/water solution of 50-200 ppm chlorine bleach, using common, unscented house-hold bleach may be used.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: *The concentration of bleach solutions sold in stores has changed in many areas of the country. The new bleach solution available in many stores is now >5.25% sodium hypochlorite solution (higher than the formerly available bleach solution that generic bleach recipes were based on). It is no longer possible to provide a generic bleach recipe for SANITIZING and DISINFECTING in child care programs. **When using an EPA-registered product, follow label instructions for use.***