

Youth Club - Covid Protocols - updated Sept 2021

The virus has changed since it first appeared. The form of the virus now dominant in Ireland is called the Delta variant and is more infectious than earlier forms of the virus.

Update - From the 20th of September organised indoor group activities (sports, arts, culture, dance classes) can take place with capacity limits of 100 people (with appropriate protective measures) where all patrons are immune (fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 within previous 6 months) or accompanied minors (under 18). Appropriate protective measures must be in place- social distance, face covering, hand hygiene, ventilation etc

Where patrons have mixed immunity status, **pods of up to 6 participants will be permitted (excluding adult leaders/teachers)**. Multiple pods will be permissible subject to protective measures. Number of pods will have regard to the size of venue and 2 meters social distance between individual pods.

Capacity limits indoor group activities refer to participants only.

Youth Club leaders as well as young people, their parents, guardians and families should be aware that they must not attend Youth Club if they have symptoms or signs that may suggest COVID-19 until they have taken appropriate medical advice and testing if appropriate. This continues to apply after vaccination is completed. They should be aware that if they are not fully vaccinated they should not attend youth club if they have been told they are close contacts of a person with COVID-19. People who are contacts and are fully vaccinated may be advised to restrict their movements and stay of work by Public Health in some circumstances. These messages should be reinforced regularly. Contact tracing guidelines differ for those who have vaccine protection.

What to do before we re-open - A

Contact parents in advance, explain all the COVID-19 infection controls in place & ask parents to sign a parental declaration form to include the following:

- Their child/children will not attend the club if unwell, awaiting the result of a test, have any symptoms of COVID -19, are close contacts of a confirmed or suspected case
- They agree to follow all PH advice, including self isolation, restricted movement and travel advice
- They agree to the plan if their child becomes unwell while at the group
- They agree to follow the group's COVID-19 infection control measures to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus e.g. arrival and departure/ collection and drop off, social distancing, pods, mask wearing, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, activities, equipment, cleaning
- Set out your infection control procedures in writing for sharing with parent
- Link to Symptoms of Covid - <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/symptoms/overview/>

What to do before we re-open - B

- Deep clean environment indoors and outdoors
- Clean all equipment, furniture
- Organise art equipment into containers for different groups
- Consider how you will use your space to support social distancing, pods, the safe arrival and departure of children, and drop off/collection of children
- Consider how you might organise the children & leaders into pods so as to reduce the number of close contacts
- Purchase liquid soap, hand sanitizer, cleaning products, tissues, face masks, child friendly posters, social distancing markings, pedal operated bins and liner bags, disposable gloves
- Identify isolation area - to be used if a child becomes unwell

Overview of how to reduce the risk of transmission

- The public health measures that are taken in the Youth Clubs are about reducing the risk of the transmission of the virus.
- The risk cannot be eliminated but it can be reduced by public health infection control measures

The key areas to focus on are:

- Trying to ensure that everyone that comes into the service is well

- That all activities and materials in the clubs are risk assessed for the likelihood of transmission and impact of the transmission of the virus

Infection Control Measures in the Centre - Children and leaders

- Stay at home if unwell with any of the symptoms of COVID 19 & contact GP for advice
- Wash or sanitise hands frequently for 20 seconds, and if your hands are not visibly dirty
- Practice good respiratory hygiene when coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth or nose with flexed elbow or a tissue, discard tissue in designated bin, wash your hands or use hand gel
- Avoid touching eyes mouth nose

Infection Control Measures general

- If a child or leader feels unwell, or has any of the symptoms of Covid-19, they should stay at home, self isolate, contact their GP, seek medical advice COVID-19 telephone consultation with GP and if needed a COVID -19 test is provided free of charge
- If a child (3 months – 13 years) has a runny nose or sneezing, is otherwise healthy, has no new cough, no temperature, good appetite, not requiring paracetamol or ibuprofen, is not a close contact of confirmed or suspected case, no history of travel, they can attend the club but parents need to monitor
- If a child (3 months – 13 years) has a runny nose or other minor symptoms and 'off form', no fever equal to or greater than 38C, no cough, no shortness of breath, and NO ill contacts or history of travel, they should be kept at home for a period of 48 hours to observe their emerging condition
- Children over 13 years fall under adult guidelines according to this Covid Plan

Self isolation & restricted movement - when & for how long

- If an adult or child is referred for a COVID 19 test, should self isolate until they get test results & members of their household & close contacts should restrict movements until test results known
- If an adult or a child tests positive for COVID-19 self-isolate at home for 10 days from the onset of symptoms (10 days from the date of a test if asymptomatic), the last 5 days should be without fever - & members of their household & close contacts should restrict movements for 14 days
- If an adult or a child is a close contact with someone with COVID-19 or suspected case, need to restrict their movements for 14 days
- As a close contact, the adult or child may feel well and have no symptoms, but because it can 2 -14 days to show symptoms there is a need to restrict movements for 14 days

Isolation quick guide - [age 3 months and up to 13th birthday](#) and [age 13+ and Adults](#)

When should children wash their hands

- Before they leave home, when they arrive at the club and before they go home
- Before eating and drinking
- After using the toilet
- After playing outside
- After sneezing or coughing into their hands
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

When should adults wash their hands

- Before they leave home, when they arrive at the Centre, before they go home
- Before, between and after handling or preparing food
- Before and after eating
- Before and after giving or applying medication or ointment to a child
- After using the toilet or coughing /sneezing
- If they move from inside to outside areas

- If they have physical contact with a child from another pod other than their own pod
- After contact with bodily fluids (runny nose, spit, vomit, blood, faeces), cleaning tasks, removing gloves, handling rubbish/emptying bins
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- If in contact with someone who is displaying any COVID -19 symptoms
- Before and after being on public transport [if using it], being in a crowd, having a cigarette or vaping

Arrival and Departure Procedures

- Purpose is to support social distancing and minimize the number of close contacts that parents & children have with other parents & children, especially when they arrive and depart from the group
- 2 meter markings are on the ground to encourage social distancing, and parents/children may have to queue
- Adults are asked to wear face masks when arriving and departing
- Adults and children are asked to wash their hands before they leave home, on arrival at the group and before they go home – can use hand sanitizer station if running water not available
- Children are only to bring items that they need in the group e.g. drink bottles. Leave all other unnecessary items at home
- Temperatures of the children attending will be taken at sign-in, with a no-contact thermometer

Social distancing and masks

- Adults to maintain social distancing of 2 meters or 6 feet with other adults
- Adults to wear a cloth face covering/mask when with other adults especially if they cannot socially distance, or if with a person/child with suspected or confirmed COVID-19
- Cloth face coverings to be worn by adults/leaders while with the children indoors where adults cannot adhere to 2 meters social distance
- Face masks not advised for children under 13

Pod System

- Children will be together in smaller groups with the same leaders in 'pods' and family units where appropriate
- A pod limits the number of close contacts that the children and leaders have – helpful for contact tracing if required
- There is no definite number of children in a pod – however it is recommended to have it as small as possible
- Children in pods not expected to socially distance from each other
- There should be no physical contact between pods
- Records of children and leaders attending each session will be kept, along with info on what pod/group they are in & will be retained for at least 14 days

Equipment

- Equipment and art materials will be organised into a number of boxes for the different pods/groups – no sharing across the pods
- Children are asked not to bring unnecessary items from home
- We will use equipment/furniture that can be cleaned and dried daily
- Furniture that can't be easily washed will be rested for 72 hours and then use again without washing provided that they are clean
- No sharing of food, drinks
- Personal phones/tablets etc should be cleaned with a wipe on arrival, during the session, and before the children go home

Cleaning

- Evidence indicates that the virus causing COVID-19 can live on surfaces and objects from a few hours to a few days
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting schedules have been developed e.g. of touchpoints, equipment, surfaces, rooms, outside equipment
- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned regularly e.g. door handles, light switches
- Furniture and equipment will be cleaned daily
- Equipment will be cleaned after each session - there is no sharing of equipment across pods
- Bins will be emptied as needed and at least daily using gloves

Environment

- Good ventilation will be maintained when indoors, with groups not spending more than an hour indoors without a break outdoors
- When possible the group will spend more time outdoors with the children (weather permitting)
- Accessible hand washing facilities with liquid soap and hand sanitizing stations are available in the Centre, and in particular at entrance and exit points and in the room/space where the children and adults are.
- Children will be supervised using hand sanitizer
- Tissues are available
- Pedal operated bins are located inside and outside the youth room and throughout the Centre

What to do if a child or a leader becomes unwell while at Youth Club

If a child or a leader becomes unwell with any of the symptoms of COVID 19 e.g. with a fever of 38C or greater, cough, breathing problems, loss of taste or smell –

This is the plan to manage the situation

- The child will be brought to the designated isolation area, and accompanied by the designated Covid Lead Worker for the session.
- The child's parent/guardian must be phoned immediately, to make arrangements for the child to be collected and brought home as quickly as possible, they should not use public transport to go home, call emergency services if necessary. If the parent/guardian can't be contacted, we will contact the second emergency person.
- The parent (or adult collecting the child) should be advised to contact their GP for advice on their symptoms and the GP will advise if a COVID-19 test is required
- If it is a leader that is unwell, they should wear a mask, keep their social distance of 2 meters from others, and go immediately to the isolation area, and arrange to call GP to seek medical advice and go home
- The child or adult should be advised not to touch surfaces, or any equipment at the group
- We will have a small supply of face masks available
- The environment will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected afterwards
- Contact numbers for Local GPs, HSE will be available at the isolation area

If a child or adult tests positive following attendance at the group

- The parent or adult will be contacted by Public Health (PH) to inform them of positive test result
- PH will contact parent or adult to identify their close contacts
- PH will then contact the group organiser to identify close contacts, to advise on any actions or precautions that need to be taken, to advise on communications to other parents of children in attendance on the day
- Youth Club will have attendance records to hand
- If the Club becomes aware of a confirmed case before HSE PH contact us, we will contact HSE PH as COVID-19 is a notifiable infectious disease for advice
- If unsure what to do contact your local HSE PH/ PHN/ GP