

KIDS FIRST PARENT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

March 18, 2020

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND PREMIERS:  
CLOSE DAYCARES NOW TO REDUCE CONTAGION

Dear Premiers and Prime Minister Trudeau,

If you have not already done so, please require all daycare venues be closed immediately and indefinitely to protect children and their families, staff and their families, and the public in this pandemic.

Some examples of research are included below.

It makes no sense to ask us to practice social distancing; stay home inside; ban gatherings; close restaurants, university and schools, etc., while allowing daycare venues to stay open.

Daycare venues are one of the places - possibly the place - where pathogens of all sorts are most likely to be transmitted.

Antibiotic resistant 'super-bugs' have been documented to originate in daycare centres.

Research has clearly shown for many years that children's feces, urine, saliva, mucous, and sometimes vomit and blood contaminate hands, all surfaces, carpets, toys, etc.

Washing toys and surfaces weekly or even daily or more often is completely inadequate to prevent contagion.

Little children and babies are not physically or cognitively able to practice good hygiene like adults or older children; it is pure folly to think this is possible for them even with help from the most diligent staff.

Babies and children put their hands everywhere. Babies and young children routinely put things in their mouths. They are in very close proximity to each other: social distancing is not possible.

Also, babies and young children are more vulnerable to infection and illness as their immune systems are immature.

The corona crisis will go on for some time. Moreover, a similar crisis will inevitably happen again at some time in future given our globally interconnected way of life in the 21st century.

Policies intended to increase the usage of daycare facilities must be reviewed and abandoned in light of the clear evidence of these biological facts about daycare settings and contagion.

These babies and children have Charter rights like all other Canadians to security of person which includes physical well-being. The willful refusal to acknowledge their extreme physical vulnerability implicit in policies intended to increase usage of daycare settings is done in violation of babies and young

children's Charter, human rights laws, and international human rights agreements.

Staff at daycare venues - who are overwhelmingly female - are working in chronically unhealthy working conditions. They have the right to a healthy work environments. The health of young children and the overwhelmingly female staff must not be sacrificed for this highly problematic and discriminatory policy.

Please close daycare venues immediately in the current crisis, and revise current policies for their compliance with human rights laws and in light of peer-reviewed empirical evidence on contagion in daycare settings.

All the best,

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#### INFORMATION/SOURCES

1 - <https://globalnews.ca/news/4197771/are-germs-playground-daycare-dangerous/>

"Daycares are essentially Petri plates," Tetro says. "You're definitely going to get a spread of different types of microbes."

2 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/06/health/06real.html>

The International Journal of Environmental Health Research.

"A team of scientists spent four years collecting nearly 1,100 samples ....The most frequently contaminated areas were... day care centers, with 46 percent. Public restroom surfaces ranked far behind, at 25 percent..."

3 - <https://www.med.upenn.edu/antibiotics/>

Childcare and Antibiotics: Know When to Say No

4 - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/926673.stm>

Day care centres breed 'superbugs'

"Day care centres incubate and spread antibiotic-resistant bacteria which cause infections of the respiratory system, say researchers."

5 - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26591334>

Presence of Pathogenic Bacteria and Viruses in the Daycare Environment.

6 - <http://ispub.com/IJMB/3/1/6808>

Bacteria In Day Care Environment

7- <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001974.htm>

## Day care health risks

8 - <https://academic.oup.com/occmed/article/49/7/427/1467471>

Child care workers and workplace hazards in the United States: Overview of research and implications for occupational health professionals

9- <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/contentassets/9e1024976b9b44c3adc1bf4e95088980/smitta-i-forskolan-en-kunskapsoversikt-2008-126-1.pdf>

Smitta I förskolan (Engl: "Contagion in preschool" – "preschool" is for age 1-5) p 18, Sweden's National Board of Health and Welfare

Children in centre care are 6.78 times more likely to be sick than children in parental care.

10 -

[www.health.gov.bc.ca > library > publications > year > com018](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/com018)

Preventing Illness in Child Care Settings - BC government:

p3 "It is inevitable that children in group care will get ill. They play very intimately, sharing toys and joys with one another. As well, children at younger ages have lower resistance to infection and communicable disease. Children in group care have an increased chance of exposure to these because of the larger numbers of individuals that they are in daily contact with."

p5 "Although establishing hand washing routines with young children can be frustrating, persistence and patience will help children develop hand washing as a habit"