

It is the beginning of a new year with new opportunities ahead. We know that having early learning opportunities is so important for young children's development. However, unfortunately COVID is still with us, and during this time of high transmission, we need to take **EXTRA CARE** to keep ourselves and our children safe. This means that when programmes open, we must put in place **ALL** of the necessary safety measures.

BEFORE YOU RE-OPEN

When re-opening **REMEMBER** to prepare well by following these steps:

- * **COMPLETE** the DSD self-assessment form and the SmartStart re-opening training. (If you did this last year, you don't need to do it again!)
- * **REFRESH** your memory! Make sure you know the DSD standard operating procedures, re-read the SmartStart guides, then make sure and that you meet all the standards.
- * **HELP** all staff members to properly understand COVID safety measures and procedures.
- * **CHECK** you have enough cleaning materials, soap, cloth face masks, and a supply of clean water.
- * **CLEAN** thoroughly your programme venue, equipment and toys.

EVERY DAY

TO keep safe, you need do these things EVERY DAY

- set up your handwashing station,
- clean your site and the resources children will use,
- screen children when they arrive,
- wear masks for adults and assist children wear possible*.
- ensure children follow the 4 key behaviours
- prepare food safely



***PLEASE NOTE:** The government has said that children aged under 6 do not have to wear face masks. It is difficult for young children to wear face masks safely as they tend to fiddle with them, which can spread germs. However, if you or a parent wants their child (over 2 years old) to wear a face mask you should support the child to do so.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Importantly we now know that physical distancing is **SO** important to stop the spread, particularly during this time of high infections. Children should be **AT LEAST 1 metre apart** at all times and you must put in place special measures to ensure this:

Limit the number of children in your programme so that it is possible for everyone to physically distance at all times and ensure your programme is set up to allow physical distancing.



VENTILATION

We also know that **VENTILATION** – getting enough fresh air – helps a **LOT** in stopping the spread. If possible, and you have a safe, fenced outdoor space, run most or all of your programme outside.

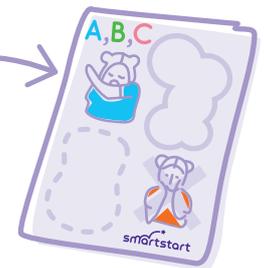
If this is not possible, make sure you spend as much time outside as possible and that at all times, your venue is well ventilated with open windows and doors to allow air to flow.

FOUR IMPORTANT SAFETY BEHAVIOURS

Remind children about the four important safety behaviours. They might have forgotten since last year! These are to:

- **Always cover a cough** or sneeze with your sleeve or elbow
- **Pretend you are in a bubble** and you can just touch the edges - try not to let anyone come into your bubble (but don't worry if they sometimes do!)
- **Clean your hands lots** of times each day -use soap and water and do it slowly and carefully.
- **Don't touch your face** (your mouth, nose or eyes) with your hands

* See the ABC poster on your site for a nice way to remind children every day.



Remember to remind children every day in playful ways about how to stay safe, and help them kindly when they get it wrong. Remember that these rules must **NEVER** mean leaving children with nothing to do, or not letting children play. For more ideas on how to do this and to stay safe go to <https://smartstart.datafree.co/covid-19-resources-smartstart-early-learning-social-franchise/>



If you have any concerns or questions about how to re-open safely, chat to your Coach. Good luck and stay safe!