Policy on Child Illness

Bright Horizons' policy on child illness is based on the Model Health Care Policies developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Bright Horizons understands that it is difficult for a parent/guardian to leave or miss work. We therefore suggest that alternative arrangements be made for occasions when children should remain at home or need to be picked up due to illness. Exclusion from the Center is sometimes necessary to reduce the transmission of illness or because the Center is not able to adequately meet the needs of the child.

Mild illness is common among children. Because with many conditions children spread infectious agents before showing any symptoms, exclusion serves no purpose as long as we can keep a child comfortable throughout the day. These children do not represent any harm to other children.

See *Guidelines on Child's Exclusion Due to Illness* for Bright Horizons' guidelines on when it is appropriate to exclude a child from the Center due to illness.

Guidelines on Child's Exclusion Due to Illness

Children should be excluded from the child care setting for the reasons outlined below.

Note: The following list covers most common illnesses, but is not inclusive of all reasons for exclusion.

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than faculty can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
- **Fever** (100º axillary [armpit], 101º orally, 102º aural [ear]) accompanied by other symptoms such as lethargy, irritability, constant crying, difficulty breathing, diarrhea, vomiting

Note: An infant less than four months of age will be excluded if he or she has a fever of 100º axillary (armpit) or 100.4º aural (ear) and should receive medical attention as soon as possible.

Any child with a fever of 104º will be excluded and should receive medical attention as soon as possible.

- **Diarrhea** — stools with blood or mucous, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet. See *Guidelines on Diarrhea* in the *Communicable Diseases* subsection for Bright Horizons guidelines on diarrhea.
- **Vomiting** — green or bloody, and/or two or more times during the previous 24 hours
- **Mouth sores** associated with drooling
- **Rash with fever or behavioral changes**, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease
- **Purulent conjunctivitis** (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours. See *Guidelines on Conjunctivitis* in the *Communicable Diseases* subsection for Bright Horizons guidelines on conjunctivitis.
- **Impetigo**, until 24 hours after treatment has begun. See *Guidelines on Impetigo* in the *Communicable Diseases* subsection for Bright Horizons guidelines on impetigo.
- **Strep throat**, until 24 hours after treatment has begun
- **Head lice**, until after treatment has begun and all nits are removed. See *Guidelines on Head Lice* in the *Communicable Diseases* subsection for Bright Horizons guidelines on head lice.
- **Scabies**, until 24 hours after treatment has begun. See *Guidelines on Scabies* in the *Communicable Diseases* subsection for Bright Horizons guidelines on scabies.

- **Chicken pox**, until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually six days). See *Guidelines on Chicken Pox* in the *Communicable Diseases* subsection for Bright Horizons guidelines on chicken pox.
- **Pertussis (whooping cough),** until five days of treatment with appropriate antibiotics. See *Guidelines on Pertussis (Whooping Cough)* in the *Communicable Diseases* subsection for Bright Horizons guidelines on pertussis.
- **Hepatitis A virus**, until one week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered. See *Guidelines on Hepatitis A* in the *Communicable Diseases* subsection for Bright Horizons guidelines on hepatitis A.

For children's comfort and to reduce the risk of contagion, children should be picked up within 1.5 hours of notification. Children should remain home for 24 hours without symptoms before returning to the Center, i.e., the child needs to remain out of the center for the remainder of the day he/she is sent home and the following day (if a child is sent home on Friday, he/she may return on Monday), unless the center receives a note from the child's physician stating that the child is not contagious and may return to the center. In the case of a (suspected) contagious illness or continuing symptoms, a doctor's note may be required before returning.

Required Conditions for a Child To Return to the Center

- A child who has been excluded due to illness from the Center may return
- when he or she is free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for a full 24 hours
- when he or she has been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours (unless otherwise specified)
- when he or she is able to participate comfortably in usual program activities, including outdoor time

The child should be free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless

- a health care provider signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious
- the involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage of drainage through the bandage

If a child is excluded because of a reportable communicable disease, Bright Horizons may require a doctor's note stating that the child is no longer contagious.

The Center makes the final decision whether or not to exclude a child from the program.