

Alternatives for Children Reopening Plan 2021 - 2022

- The health and safety of our students and staff is paramount in the successful reopening of Alternatives for Children's four school sites.
- School districts, 4410 and 853 special education providers have received initial and ongoing guidance:
 - July 13th, 2020 NYS Department of Health "Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency." **NYS Department of Health has updated this guidance as of April 9, 2021.**
 - July 16th, 2020 NYS Education Department "Recovering, Rebuilding and Renewing: the Spirit of New York's Schools Reopening Guidance." **On April 19, 2021, NYS Education Department sent out Field Memorandum asking that schools submit "Revised School Reopening Plans" in accordance with the NYS Department of Health April 9, 2021 Guidance.**
 - NYS Education Department issued a "Health & Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year" (August 2021). Guidance is predicated on that of the Center for Disease Control (CDC).
 - AFC will monitor CDS and corresponding NYS Department of Health guidance.
 - Finally, Alternatives for Children must comply with all Executive (Governor) Orders.
- Alternatives for Children had diligently developed its Re-Opening Plan, as well as its Revised Plan, based on the aforementioned guidance documents and recommendations. It is possible that we may need to alternate between in-person and remote learning throughout the year based on future recommendations and guidance, along with directives from the Governor. This document is fluid and will change as necessary based on both guidance, as well as the health and safety of our students and staff.

A. Communication Plan

- Alternatives for Children's mission, since its inception in 1988, has been to provide the highest quality educational and therapeutic programs for children with special needs designed to assist each child reach his/her potential. AFC has and will continue to meet its mission during this COVID-19 pandemic.
- Alternatives for Children has engaged with a number of school stakeholders, as well as community members. The stakeholders include but are not limited to: Alternatives for

Children’s administrative team and targeted staff; the Long Island Coalition for Young Children with Special Needs; local school district input; parent engagement coordination; and our local Departments of Health. The input from the various stakeholders, along with guidance documents have served as a foundation for Alternatives for Children’s reopening and revised plans.

- There were a number of considerations reviewed to arrive at the determination of whether in-person programming could be safely implemented. The determining factors include but are not limited to the development of policies, procedures and protocols regarding:
 - Communication Family/Community Engagement
 - Health & Facility
 - Nutrition
 - Transportation
 - Social Emotional Well-Being
 - School Schedules
 - Budget & Fiscal
 - Attendance/Enrollment
 - Technology/Connectivity
 - Teaching & Learning
 - Special Education
 - And, the assurances that all could be operationalized, as well as maintained on an ongoing basis.

- Communication plans will be disseminated to parents/legal guardians of the children, to staff and visitors that come to our sites. Ongoing communication will be provided by updated postings on AFC’s website, emails to family and staff, as well as a direct mailing. Ongoing communication is especially vital during this critical time.

- Alternatives for Children has developed a communication plan for parents/legal guardians and children, staff and visitors. The plan includes comprehensive instructions with daily health survey, training, signage and compliance expectations. The information for families will be posted on our website and mailed as part of the “initial parent pack” needed for enrollment. Visitors will have access via AFC’s website. Staff will have access via our internal “Public” system.

- Alternatives for Children will ensure that children will be taught/trained on the new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to proper hand and respiratory hygiene, proper face coverings and social distancing.

- Alternatives for Children will encourage all children, staff and visitors, both verbally and via written communication (i.e. signage), to adhere to CDC, DOH, SED and OCFS guidance regarding the use of PPE; specifically, as it relates to acceptable face coverings.

- Alternatives for Children will provide communication in the language(s) spoken at home and through the school community. Written plans will be made accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments.
- Alternatives for Children, as an integral part of its reopening plan, has carefully considered the number of students and staff and contributing factors in the determination of the safety of reopening and remaining open. The factors include:
 - ✓ The ability to maintain social distancing i.e. during student arrival/departure, traversing hallways, classroom instruction and delivery of therapeutic services; securing the needed PPE and face covering, as well as ongoing access to such PPE; the availability of transportation provided by the municipalities and local hospital capacity, which is determined by our local Department(s) of Health. Ongoing communication with identified stakeholders has been paramount in the ongoing decision making process.
- Alternatives for Children will implement our Reopening and Revised Plans with fidelity, as required.

B. Health & Safety Procedures

As Alternatives for Children reopens, the health and safety of our students, families and staff is foremost in our minds. At all times, our organization will be in compliance with NYS Department of Education, NYS Department of Health along with local DOH, CDC, OSHA regulations as well as the health and safety regulations of the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS).

All employees, as a condition of their employment, must be aware of, understand, and comply with the health and safety requirements and procedures as described in this plan.

A comprehensive system of training staff has been developed and formalized into presentations including corresponding attestations and completion of tests associated with each training. Certificates of Completion will be issued upon completion for each module and must be filed with the Human Resources Department.

Daily Health Check

- OCFS requires “Daily Health Checks.” Each teacher will conduct a daily health check for each child on the form provided by OCFS. The Health Check includes but is not limited to noting: the child’s behavior (typical or atypical); the child’s appearance; any information received from the parents; any evidence of illness or injury or any indications of suspected child abuse or maltreatment. COVID-19 symptoms have been added, to the “Daily Health Check” which include:
 - Fever and chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath

- Difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or Body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

If any of these indicators seem to be evident, the school nurse will be notified immediately.

- As part of the daily health check, a temperature screening is conducted. Again, any child exhibiting a fever over 100 degrees will warrant notification to the school nurse and immediate action initiated.
- Children will be sent home if presenting with symptoms and will be immediately separated from other children in a designated “isolation area”, and supervised until their parent/guardian can retrieve them. Parents will be advised to have their child seen by a health care provider for follow-up.
- In addition to the daily health check, staff are required to do visual inspections of the children throughout the day for signs of potential COVID-19 illness, which could include flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing, (without recent physical activity), fatigue or extreme fussiness, unrelated to the child’s respective disability.
- Temperature checking will occur once a day, as required; however, in full-day classes, temperatures will be taken twice a day. If the temperature, again, is over 100 degrees, the school nurse will be notified immediately and subsequent protocols will be put into place. All classrooms will be supplied with a “touchless” thermometer.
- Staff will be required to participate in a daily health screening prior to arriving at school, which includes a questionnaire, as well as a daily temperature check. If staff present with COVID-19 symptoms, they are encouraged to stay home. If staff present with symptoms during the course of the day, they will notify the nurse/HR and will be sent home for follow-up with a health care provider.
- Staff will be trained on symptoms of Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C).
- AFC will notify the parent/guardian if their child shows any of the MIS-C symptoms and recommend that the child be referred for a follow up with a health care provider. These include but are not limited to fever, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, neck pain, rash, bloodshot eyes, and extra tiredness. The school nurse will be immediately notified and

the child separated into an isolation area until they can be retrieved by a parent/guardian or emergency contact.

- Alternatives for Children will call an emergency transport (911) following Project SAVE policies, for any student showing any of these emergency warning signs of MIS-C or other concerning signs:
 - Trouble breathing
 - Pain or pressure in the chest that doesn't go away
 - Confusion
 - Inability to wake or stay awake
 - Blueish lips or face
 - Severe abdominal pain
- Parents/guardians will be given comprehensive guidelines and information regarding the signs of COVID/illness in their child that would require them to stay home from school via email, posting on website and mailing.
- Parents, as partners, are required to notify the school nurse if their child is ill and staying home from school. An absenteeism note is required to return.
- Visitors and vendors will be required to complete a health screening, including a temperature check. AFC will limit visitors/vendors entering its facilities. Meeting will be encouraged to be conducted virtually whenever possible. Deliveries will be limited to one entrance/exit per site.

COVID-19 SIGNAGE

- Alternatives for Children has posted signs throughout all of our locations, consistent with CDC and DOH COVID-19 signage.
- Signage will remind staff, families, children and other individuals to:
 - Cover their nose and mouth with a mask or face covering
 - Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE
 - Adhere to physical distancing instructions
 - Report symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19, and how they should do so
 - Follow hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfection guidelines
 - Follow appropriate respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
 - Signage for young children will be posted at their eye level, along with applicable pictures.

Physical Distancing

- Alternatives for Children will recommend that their employees maintain a distance of at least six feet from other employees at all times, unless the safety or the core activity requires

a shorter distance. (i.e. jointly caring for a child or responding to the needs of a child). Employees must wear acceptable face coverings at all times, irregardless of physical distancing. Employees may remove their masks outdoors, i.e. playground.

- Alternatives for Children will ensure that employee and children groupings are as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff whenever possible. Group size will be limited to SED/OCFS ratios. The restriction on group size (children) does not apply to employees/staff.
- Alternatives for Children will limit the group size of children, excluding employee/staff, in a specific area (i.e. classroom) at any given time.
- Alternatives for Children will ensure that different stable groups of children have no or minimal contact with another or utilize common spaces at the same time, to the greatest extent possible.
- Alternatives for Children will maintain a staffing plan that minimizes employees need to “float” between different classrooms or different groups of children, unless such rotation is necessary to safely supervise the children. (i.e. staff absence, lunch coverage).
- Alternatives for Children will limit the number of therapists assigned to a classroom to minimize the number of employees entering or exiting each classroom.
- Alternatives for Children has modified the use/or restricted the number of work areas and seating areas for their employees, so that individuals are at least six feet apart in all directions and are not sharing work areas without cleaning and disinfection between use.
- When distancing is not feasible between work areas, Alternatives for Children will provide and require the use of face coverings or physical barriers. In high use areas and wherever feasible, Alternatives for Children has installed, in accordance with NYS Education Department Facility Guidelines (5/29/20) and appropriate Fire and Building Code, Lexan glass. Lexan is a polycarbonate material, which is fire resistant, as plexiglass is not permissible in a school environment.
- Alternatives for Children has put in place measures to reduce bi-directional foot traffic using tape or signs with arrows in hallways, or spaces, and posted signage and distance markers denoting spaces of six feet in all commonly used areas and any areas where lines are normally formed or staff may congregate.
- Alternatives for Children will limit in-person employee gatherings (meetings) to the greatest extent possible and use other methods such as video or teleconferencing, whenever possible.
- Alternatives for Children will keep necessary in-person employee meetings brief and minimize the number of participants while adhering to social distancing rules.

- Alternatives for Children encourages social distancing also by limiting occupancy in certain areas by closing non-essential amenities and community areas that do not allow for social distancing protocols.
- Alternatives for Children will have hand sanitizers near such amenities and throughout the building as permissible with local fire codes and regulations.
- Alternatives for Children will limit the number of entrances to both manage the flow of people into the facility and ensure that people can maintain six feet of social distancing.
- Alternatives for Children has installed physical barriers i.e. Lexan partitions at the reception and security desk to maintain distancing.
- Alternatives for Children has provided new outdoor seating space where feasible, for employees to practice social distancing while eating.

Social Distancing

- Employees should maintain a distance of at least six feet from other employees unless safety or the core activities requires a shorter distance.
- Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose. Employees must wear face coverings at all times when interacting with children, regardless of the distance between the employee and the children.
- Face coverings must be worn in all common areas and when traveling around the building.
- Face coverings must be worn at all times in the classroom and therapy areas. Face coverings can be removed when outdoors.
- Staff may use alternate PPE (i.e. face shield, or covering that are transparent at or around the mouth), for therapies that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouth (i.e. speech therapy).
- A speech pathologist will be provided with clear panel face masks and face shields to accomplish this objective.
- All staff will be provided with face masks and will be instructed on proper use of and laundering of such masks. Staff may utilize their own face asks, provided it securely covers the nose and mouth.
- Alternatives for Children will provide N-95 masks for staff who administer nebulizer treatments, peek meters for students with asthma and other conditions.

- Alternatives for Children will encourage students to wear acceptable face coverings.
- Face coverings should not be used by children under the age of 2.
- Face coverings are not required for a child who is unable to medically tolerate such covering, including those students with such covering would impair their health or mental health. Or where such a covering would present a challenge, distraction, or obstruction to their educational and therapeutic services.
- Parents/guardians will be encouraged to send their child with a face covering clearly labeled with their name, as well as instructions to appropriate launder such face coverings.
- Children will be instructed on wearing face coverings to the extent practical, i.e. social stories.
- Children will have the opportunity to have face mask breaks during “center” times.
- Alternatives for Children has secured an ample supply of cloth face coverings, as well as disposable masks. Multiple contracts have been established with vendors to assure an adequate ongoing supply.
- Parents, visitors, and vendors will be required to wear a face mask to enter the building. If they need, a disposable mask will be provided.
- Alternatives for Children will provide accommodation to students/staff who are high risk or live with a person at high risk. Remote learning will be offered to students needing such an instructional option. Staff are encouraged to meet with Human Resources if needing an accommodation.

Screening, Testing, Contact Tracing

- Staff are reminded to stay home when sick and must follow required call in procedures to ensure adequate coverage.
- Parents/guardians will be advised to keep sick children home.
- Staff and parents should be aware of and continually check for signs and symptoms of COVID in children. Again, staff will utilize “Daily Health Check” for children.
- Staff will undergo a mandatory health screening, performed remotely, before they are allowed to enter any of our buildings.
- Alternatives for Children has purchased software “Jobsite Check” to accomplish the required screening.

- Alternatives for Children has designated a central point of contact, responsible for receiving and attesting to having reviewed all questionnaires.
- Alternatives for Children has also identified the person(s) for staff to inform if they later during the school day, experience COVID-19 symptoms different from those as noted initially on their questionnaire.
- Alternatives for Children personnel performing screening activities, will be appropriately protected from exposure to potentially infectious individuals seeking to enter the site.
- Personnel performing screening activities will be training by the employer-identified individuals who are familiar with the CDC, DOH, NYSED, OCFS and OSHA protocols. Screens will be provided and will use PPE equipment.
- A child, staff member, parent or visitor who screens positive for or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19, will not be allowed to enter Alternatives for Children's facility.
- Alternatives for Children will maintain a log of every person, including employees, parents/guardians, children, and any essential visitors who may have close contact with other individuals at the work site area. The log will contain contact information, such that all contacts may be identified, traced and notified in the event an employee, parent/guardian, child or visitor is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- The OCFS Child Care Program Tracker (OCFS Form 6039) will be used for visitors, vendors, parent/guardian or other individuals entering the building. (Employees will record attendance on a daily (Jobsite check) health questionnaire and student attendance will be taken along with their daily health care screening.)
- Further, on OCFS Form 6040, each employee/parent and essential visitors/vendors will complete a health care screening one time attestation as required. From time to time, this attestation may be required to be implemented more frequently.
- Alternatives for Children will immediately notify the state and local Health Department about the case if results are positive for COVID-19 test results by an employee or child at the school.
- In the case of an employee, parent/guardian, or child testing positive, AFC will cooperate with the local Health Department by providing the department with the OCFS Child Care Tracker Form and the student and employee attendance information needed for contact tracing. Further, all individuals who entered the site going back to 48 hours before the employee, parent/guardian, or child first began COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive, whichever is earlier, will be notified. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations.
- Individuals who are alerted that they have come in close contact or approximate contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted via tracing, tracking or another

mechanism, are required to contact the Alternatives for Children HR Department and the school nurse at the site location.

- Children who are being sent home because of a positive screen (i.e. onset of COVID-19 symptoms), must be immediately separated from other children and supervised until their parent/guardian or emergency contact can retrieve them. An “isolation” area has been identified at each site.

Quarantine for Persons Exposed to COVID-19

Alternatives for Children will follow NYS Department of Health Guidance regarding vaccines and exposure.

General Definitions

- Fully vaccinated is defined as being 2 or more weeks after the final does (e.g., first for Janssen/Johnson & Johnson, second for Pfizer and Moderna) of the vaccine approved by the FDA or authorized by the FDA for emergency use.
 - Vaccines that are not authorized by the U.S. Federal Drug Administration (FDA) for emergency use or approved by the FDA do not satisfy this definition.
 - Recently recovered is defined as 1) recovered from laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 by meeting the criteria for discontinuation of isolation; 2) within the 3-month period between date of arrival in New York and either the initial onset of symptoms related to the laboratory confirmed COVID-19 infection or, if asymptomatic during the illness, the date of the laboratory confirmed test; and 3) asymptomatic after travel or new exposure.
 - Fully vaccinated, may in the future, include booster dose.
 - Vaccines may be required for all employees or weekly COVID-19 testing.
 - AFC will maintain documentation of employees COVID-19 vaccination status.

Quarantine Requirements

1. Fully vaccinated individuals exposed to COVID-19

- Asymptomatic individuals who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 do not need to quarantine after exposure to COVID-19. The CDC recommends, but does not require, COVID-19 testing 3-5 days post exposure.
- Fully vaccinated individuals exposed to COVID-19 who are experiencing **symptoms** consistent with COVID-19 must isolate themselves and should be clinically evaluated for COVID-19 and tested for COVID-19 if indicated.
- This guidance applies to all fully vaccinated people. However, individuals should be encouraged to consult with their healthcare provider if they have any questions about their individual situation, such as immunocompromising conditions or other concerns.

2. Recently recovered individuals exposed to COVID-19

- Asymptomatic individuals exposed to COVID-19 who have been recently diagnosed with laboratory confirmed COVID-19, and have since recovered, are **not** required to retest and quarantine provided the new exposure is within 3 months after the date of symptom onset from the initial COVID-19 infection or date of first positive diagnostic test if asymptomatic during illness.
- This guidance applies to all people who have recently recovered from COVID-19 and are newly exposed to COVID-19. However, individuals should be encouraged to consult with their healthcare provider if they have any questions about their individual situation, such as immunocompromising conditions or other concerns.

3. Individuals who are neither fully vaccinated nor recently recovered and are exposed to COVID-19

- Individuals who have been exposed to someone with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, who are not fully vaccinated or have not recovered from COVID-19 in the previous 3 months, are required to quarantine for 10 days after exposure.
- Testing is not required to end quarantine if no **symptoms** have been reported during the quarantine period. However, a test should be sought immediately if any symptoms develop during the 14 days after exposure.

Monitoring Requirements for Everyone after Exposure to COVID-19

Irrespective of quarantine status, **all individuals** exposed to COVID-19 must:

- Monitor symptoms daily from day of exposure (or first date of awareness of exposure if there is a delay) through Day 14;
- Continue strict adherence to all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions, including hand hygiene and the use of face coverings, through Day 14 (even if fully vaccinated);
- Immediately self-isolate if any symptoms develop and contact the local public health authority or their healthcare provider to report this change in clinical status and determine if they should seek testing.

Local Health Departments and Quarantine Orders

Local health departments (LHDs) will continue to identify individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19. Contact tracing interviews now include questions about vaccination status and previous COVID infection. Contact tracers may validate reports of vaccination status in NYSIIS or CIR, the statewide immunization registry, during the interview. Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine after exposure.

This guidance applies only to asymptomatic individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 and who have not tested positive as a result of a recent exposure. Consistent with ongoing NYS DOH requirements, individuals who **test positive for COVID-19 must isolate**.

Return to School after Illness

Alternatives for Children will follow DOH guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours.
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:

- It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms.
- It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine).
- It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.
- Alternatives for Children will require that children/staff who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus and who are not vaccinated, complete quarantine before returning to in-person instruction.
- In the event that a parent/guardian of a child in our program must be isolated because they themselves have tested for, or have exhibited symptoms of COVID-19, Alternatives for Children will advise the parent/guardian that they cannot enter the site for any reason, including picking up their child.
- If the parent/guardian - who is a member of the same household as the child, is exhibiting signs of COVID-19 or has been tested and is positive for the virus, Alternatives for Children will utilize an alternate parent/guardian or emergency contact authorized by the parent, to come and pick up the child. As a close contact, the child must not return to the program for the duration of the quarantine, as determined by the health care provider or local health department.
- If the child or household member becomes symptomatic for COVID-19 and/or tests positive for COVID-19, the child must quarantine and may not return or attend the program until after the quarantine is complete; with required documentation from local DOH or health care provider.
- Alternatives for Children has a designated site safety monitor whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the site safety plan.

- Alternatives for Children will provide employees and families with information on health care and testing resources.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

- Alternatives for Children will ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC, NYSDOH and NYSED.
- Alternatives for Children has put in place reasonable measures to limit the sharing of objects such as electronic equipment, arts and crafts, touch screens, as well as touching of shared surfaces; or, has required employees to wear gloves when in contact with or shared objects of frequently touched surfaces; and, requires staff and children to practice hand hygiene before and after contact.
- Staff must practice hand hygiene and cough/sneeze covering, as well as reinforce with all children.
- Alternatives for Children provides and maintains adequate supplies to support healthy hand and respiratory hygiene including soap, and hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, tissues and lined trash receptacles.
- Alternatives for Children has increased cleaning, disinfecting schedules both during the day and in the evening.
- Alternatives for Children has purchased “Petra foggers” and OCFS/DEC disinfectors to clean and sanitize the playground(s) regularly throughout the day. Staff will be trained on appropriate use, drying time, etc.
- Both staff and the cleaning service will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces within the school regularly (i.e. equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains).
- Alternatives for Children has ensured that staff have been trained on the safe and correct application of disinfectants registered by the NYS Department of Conservation (DEC), and Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS), and that these products are kept away from and out of reach of children.

Evening Cleaning

- Alternatives for Children recognizes that ensuring the cleanliness of our buildings will help reduce the spread of infection.
- Evening cleaning companies have implemented new protocols including but not limited to: use of disposable rags and wipes; disinfecting common high use areas (door knobs, restroom fixtures and dispensers, light switches, entrance/exit push bars, countertops, tabletops, dispensers).

- Additional Deep Cleaning Protocols have been established and will occur on a regular schedule.
- If an infected child, staff or individual has been in the building, the area(s) used by the ill individual will be “locked off” and appropriate signage affixed to ensure no one enters the area. A deep cleaning and disinfection must then occur. Further, all area(s) utilized by the ill individual (i.e. restrooms) will be subject to the same level of cleaning.

Hand Hygiene/Hand Sanitizers

- Alternatives for Children has provided and will maintain hand hygiene stations on site, as follows:
 - For hand washing - soap, running warm water and disposable paper towels are available.
 - For hand sanitizing - and alcohol based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where hand washing facilities may not be available or practical, has been made available.
 - Hand sanitizing stations are available throughout the common areas on site. They are placed in heavily traffic locations such as entrances, exits, and security/reception desk.
 - Signage near hand sanitizing stations indicates that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; hand sanitizing is not effective on visibly soiled hands.
 - Alternatives for Children has placed labeled receptacles around the facility for disposal of items to include PPE.
- Staff hand washing must occur: At the beginning of each day, before and after the administration of medications, when they are dirty, after toileting or assisting children with toileting, after changing a diaper, before and after handling or eating, after contact with any bodily secretion or fluid and after coming in from outdoors. Gloves are not a substitute for hand washing.
- Staff must ensure that children thoroughly wash their hands or assist children with thoroughly washing their hands with soap and running water: when children arrive at the beginning of each day, when they are dirty, after toileting, before and after food handling or eating, after contact with any bodily secretion or fluid, after coming in from outdoors.
- All staff, and children will wash their hands using the following steps:
 - Moisten hands with water and apply liquid soap

- Rub hands with soap and water for at least 30 seconds – remember to include between fingers, under and around fingernails, back of hands, and scrub any jewelry.
- Rinse hands well under running water with fingers down so water flows from wrist to finger tips.
- Leave the water running.
- Dry hands with a disposable paper towel or approved drying device.
- Use a towel to turn off the faucet and, if inside a toilet room with a closed door, use the towel to open the door.
- Discard the towel in an appropriate receptacle.

School Emergency Response Drills

- Alternatives for Children will maintain standard operations and procedures without deviating to the maximum extent possible, from current NYSED and OCFS requirements. Any modifications are to accommodate children/staff to decrease density and ensure social distancing.

Fire Drills/Evacuation

- Cohort group of children and staff will be maintained and appropriately distanced from one another.
- Drills will be staggered to decrease the number of staff during the evacuation.
- Face coverings should be worn during all fire/evacuation drills and extra face coverings will be available.
- All other protocols, such as “red backpacks,” emergency contact information, etc. will remain intact.

Lock Down and Shelter In Place Drills

- Alternatives for Children will continue to conduct the required number of lock down and Shelter in Place drills.
- All lock down and Shelter in Place drills will be conducted in the classroom.
- Social distancing can only be maintained if there is room to distance without being in the “line of sight” of any potential intruder.
- Face coverings should be worn at all times.
- All drills will occur with the frequency prescribed in regulation(s).

Safety Coordinator

- Alternatives for Children has designated a COVID-19 safety coordinator whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of our organization's reopening plan(s) and revised plans. The responsibilities include any phased-in reopening, or any reopening post closure(s).

C. Facilities

- Alternatives for Children has reviewed all of its facilities to ensure the safety of the children and staff. Health and safety measures have been implemented in accordance with requirements and guidance documents aimed at preventing the spread of the COVID-19 infection.

Fire Code Compliance

Alternatives for Children will comply with the requirements of the 2020 NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.

- **Fire Doors/Doorways**
 - The function, position and operation of corridor doors, which have closers with automatic hold opens and are automatically released by the fire alarm system, will remain unchanged. This is vital in the prevention of a fire spreading in the building.
- **Plastic Barriers**
 - The NYSED Office of Facilities Planning has found that plexiglass does not meet NYSED or Code Standards with respect to fire resistance and is thereby prohibited.
 - The Fire Code does permit an alternate plastic known as "polycarbonate," which may be used as a barrier in areas where there is heavy traffic or where staff may sit in close proximity.
 - AFC has installed polycarbonate barriers (Lexan) at reception/security desks and other areas where staff may be concentrated.

Ventilation

- Alternatives for Children has reviewed all ventilation systems, including HVAC and window units at each of its facilities.

- All windows will be opened each morning to increase airflow. Windows must be closed upon arrival of the children for safety reasons. (i.e. elopement).
- All air conditioning window units have been individually cleaned and disinfected at the Southampton and Dix Hills sites, where such units are utilized.
- Air Filter maintenance has been increased meaning for those sites with HVAC systems, filters will be changed on a more frequent basis. Wherever feasible, MERV-13 air filters have been purchased and installed. These filters are designed to filter out very small particles in the air.

Water Filtration Systems

- Alternatives for Children has installed a water filtration system using a Waterlogic WL2 Tower. The WL2 Firewall uses unique Firewall UVC technology at the point of dispense to eliminate up to 99.99% of bacteria, delivering the purest water possible.
- “Touchless” modifications to the water cooler system have been installed/foot pedals.

Space Utilization/Expansion

No changes to Space Utilization or Space Expansion are being proposed.

Plumbing Facilities and Fixtures

No changes to plumbing facilities are being proposed.

D. Child Nutrition

Alternatives for Children does not provide lunch for students at its East Setauket, Southampton or Aquebogue locations. The Dix Hills site has a food program via the Child & Adult Care Food Program. (CACFP).

- Alternatives for Children, as required by Office of Children & Family Services would serve children “family style” meals/snacks. Given COVID-19, the practice of family style meals has been suspended.
- Alternatives for Children does address and meet all applicable Food Service Health and Safety guidelines outlined in the DOH guidance.
- The current practice of Alternatives for Children is that every child eat lunch and snack within their respective classroom. This practice will remain intact.

- Alternatives for Children will ensure protocols and procedures for how children will perform hand hygiene before and after eating and how appropriate hand hygiene will be promoted. Hand hygiene protocols and procedures are described under the Health & Safety assurances.
- All staff and children will follow proper hand hygiene protocols for both before and after meals, as described in the Health & Safety section of this plan.
- Staff are fully aware of children’s food allergies and all allergies are posted conspicuously in the classroom.
- Alternatives for Children has described cleaning and sanitizing of table surface areas under the Health & Safety Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this plan. Use of acceptable products for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces meet OCFS/DOH requirements, as well as Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).
- Alternatives for Children will purchase “individual” size snacks to deter sharing.
- Alternatives for Children will use disposable plates and napkins.
- Alternatives for Children staff will use gloves when coming in contact with handling/delivering or providing any food for children.
- Alternatives for Children will communicate with families that only lunch should be sent in with their child in clearly marked lunchbox or paper bag that can be discarded.
- Each classroom team will ensure social distancing, to the maximum extent possible, during lunch by separating children at different tables or staggering lunch times.
- Snacks will be provided at/during “Center” to minimize the number of children engaging in snack at one time.

E. Transportation

- The municipalities of both Suffolk and Nassau, provide transportation as a “related service” on the child’s Individual Education Plan. (IEP).
- The municipalities offer families that transport their children a “Parent Mileage Reimbursement Program” (PMRP) wherein parents are reimbursed for mileage.
- Parents/legal guardians will be encouraged to utilize PMRP to reduce density on buses.

- The respective bus companies contracted by the municipalities to provide transportation are responsible to comply with all requirements designed to ensure the health and safety of the children, as well as the bus drivers/matrons. These include but are not limited to:
 - Use of PPE equipment, such as the use of masks
 - Completion of health assessments
 - Proper hygiene
 - Cleaning and sanitizing
 - Social distancing as applicable
 - Protective barriers, as permissible
 - Training
- Parents will be contacted by the bus company prior to the commencement of “in-person” transportation regarding bus protocols, as well as routing information.

Loading/Unloading & Pick Up/Drop Off

- AFC may stagger arrival and dismissal time to promote social distancing. The determination of staggered schedules will be based on the number of buses/cars arriving/departing at each site during each session start/end time.
- Each site has developed a Bus Loading/Unloading protocol, as well as a Parental Pick Up/Drop Off protocol.
- Parent pick up and drop off is subject to change* based on the volume of families driving (pick up/drop off), safe traffic patterns ensuring the safety of our children, families and staff.

LOCATION: EAST SETAUKET

Parent Drop-off/Pick-Up Procedures for Class Times

9:00am-11:30am, 9:00am-1:00pm, 9:00am-2:30pm

Drop-off – Parent Drop-off will begin at 8:45am

- School buses park in the back of the building by the playgrounds. Metal arm is used to ensure buses remain stopped while students are taken off the buses.
- Parents will be directed to either the front driveway or to the back row of the parking lot circle. Parents directed to the front driveway will pull all the way up to the stop sign, stopping close to the school. Those directed to the back parking lot will drive around, pull up to the side driveway, and stop at the stop sign at the front corner of the building.
- Parents will check their child into school using the Brightwheel application.
- When a staff person is stationed near the car, parents will take the child from their car seat and hand the child to the staff person. The staff person will escort the child to their classroom.
 - Prior to retrieving new students all staff will sanitize their hands with hand sanitizer.

- When buses are done unloading, the metal arm would be moved to block the cars so they cannot proceed to the side driveway for Drop-off.
- Once buses have left, the gate can be reopened to allow cars to pull up to the side driveway to finish child Drop-off.

Pick-up

- School buses park in the back of the building by the playgrounds.
- Parents will enter the front parking lot of the school and proceed to the stop sign, at the entrance close to the nurse's office.
- Assigned staff will, using a school iPad, begin the process of having parents check students out of school on Brightwheel; this ensures the person picking up the child is on the approved list.
- Classes will bring their students to the front lobby area to wait for the children to be called to leave the building.
- As their child is brought outside, the parent will buckle the child into their car seat and immediately return to their car and leave the school property.
- Cars are released two or three at a time.

Parent Drop-Off/Pick-up Procedures for Class Time **9:00-12:00**

Drop-off – Parent Drop-off will begin at 8:45am

- School buses park in the back of the building by the playgrounds. Metal arm is used to ensure buses remain stopped while students are taken off the buses.
- Parents will be directed to either the front driveway or to the back row of the parking lot circle. Parents directed to the front driveway will pull all the way up to the stop sign, stopping close to the school. Those directed to the back parking lot will drive around, pull up to the side driveway, and stop at the stop sign at the front corner of the building.
- Parents will check their child into school using the Brightwheel application.
- When a staff person is stationed near the car, parents will take the child from their car seat and hand the child to the staff person. The staff person will escort the child to their classroom.
 - Prior to retrieving new students all staff will sanitize their hands with hand sanitizer.
- When buses are done unloading, the metal arm would be moved to block the cars so they cannot proceed to the side driveway for Drop-off.
- Once buses have left, the gate can be reopened to allow cars to pull up to the side driveway to finish child Drop-off.

Pick-up

- School buses park in the back of the building by the playgrounds.
- Parents will enter the front parking lot of the school, park, and enter the front vestibule.
- Parents will use the Brightwheel QR code posted in the vestibule to check their child out of school and then will wait outside the main door for their child. A staff member will be present to keep a list of the parents as they check out.
- Classes will bring their students to the front lobby area to wait for the children to be called to leave the building.

- As parents check out, the students will be brought outside to their parent. Parents will immediately return to their car, buckle their child into their car seat, and leave the school property.

Parent Drop-off/Pick-Up Procedures for Class Times
11:30am-3:30pm & 1:00pm-3:30pm

Drop-off

- School buses park in the back of the building by the playgrounds.
- Parents go to the back row of the parking lot circle, pull up to the side driveway, and stop at the stop sign.
- Parents will check their child into school using the Brightwheel application.
- The parents in the first two cars will take the child from their car seat and stand, holding the child's hand, waiting for staff to take the child into the building. A staff member will escort the children to their classrooms.
 - Prior to retrieving new students all staff will sanitize their hands with hand sanitizer.
- When the children from the first two cars are in the building, the next two cars will move up to the Drop-off spot.
- When buses are done unloading, the metal arm would be moved to block the cars so they cannot proceed to the side driveway for Drop-off.

Pick-up

- School buses park in the back of the building by the playgrounds.
- Parents will enter the front parking lot of the school and proceed to the stop sign, at the entrance close to the nurse's office.
- Assigned staff will, using a school iPad, begin the process of having parents check students out of school on Brightwheel; this ensures the person picking up the child is on the approved list.
- Classes will bring their students to the front lobby area to wait for the children to be called to leave the building.
- As their child is brought outside, the parent will buckle the child into their car seat and immediately return to their car and leave the school property.
- Cars are released two or three at a time.

Parent Drop-Off/Pick-up Procedures for Class Time
12:30-3:30

Drop-off – Parent drop-off will begin at 12:25pm

- School buses park in the back of the building by the playgrounds.
- Parents will enter the front parking lot of the school, park, and enter the front vestibule.
- Parents will use the Brightwheel QR code posted in the vestibule to check their child into school and then will wait for a staff member to take their child from them.
- Parents will immediately return to their car and leave the school property.

Pick-up

- School buses park in the back of the building by the playgrounds.

- Parents will enter the front parking lot of the school and proceed to the stop sign, at the entrance close to the nurse's office.
- Assigned staff will, using a school iPad, begin the process of having parents check students out of school on Brightwheel; this ensures the person picking up the child is on the approved list.
- Classes will bring their students to the front lobby area to wait for the children to be called to leave the building.
- As their child is brought outside, the parent will buckle the child into their car seat and immediately return to their car and leave the school property.
- Cars are released two or three at a time.

Dix Hills

Arrival: Busing Procedures

- All buses will line up as usual along the curb outside of the front entrance.
- All students will be provided with tags bearing their name, their teacher's name, bus number and classroom number.
- Designated staff members with thermometers will be positioned in the front of the school. Additional staff will assemble to retrieve students from the busses. All staff members will wear masks.
- To start, the first 5 busses will be unloaded. Once these busses are emptied, they will leave the premises and the remaining busses will pull up along the curb at the front of the building.
- After a student disembarks from the school bus, the school nurse or designated staff member will take the child's temperature. If a child has a temperature 100 degrees or higher, the child will proceed directly to the nurse's office and the parent/guardian will be contacted. The child will be isolated from other students until parent is able to retrieve the child.
- All children will wash hands upon entering the classroom as usual.
- Staff members will be required to wash or use hand sanitizer before retrieving additional children.
- This procedure will continue until all busses are emptied.
- All staff members will wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water when bussing is complete.

Arrival: Parent Drop-Off Procedures

- Parent drop-off will begin at 8:55 AM.
- Cars will enter from the Burrs Lane entrance and park in the lower lot.
- Parents will walk the child from the lot to the day care entrance. Assigned staff members will be posted at the entrance with iPads and thermometers. Additional staff members will assemble to transport children to their classrooms.
- Parents and staff members will be required to wear masks at drop-off.

- Parents will be asked to provide an assigned 4-digit code or scan a QR code. These codes will be entered in the Brightwheel app on an AFC iPad.
- Prior to student entry into the building, a designated staff member will take the child's temperature. Any student with a temp at or above 100 degrees will be sent home with parent.
- Parents will not be permitted to enter the school building.
- A designated staff member will take the child from the parent at the door and will escort him/her to the classroom.
- Children will be directed to wash their hands immediately upon entry. Staff members will wash or use hand sanitizer prior to retrieving another child.
- This process will continue until all children are checked in and in their classrooms.

Dix Hills

Dismissal: Busing Procedures

- Busing will begin at 2:25. Bus numbers will be called, 4 at a time, in order of arrival.
- Classroom staff and designated support staff, will begin transporting students from the classroom to the busses as the bus numbers are called.
- All students will have a tag bearing their name and bus number.
- After ensuring that children are delivered safely to their bus, the staff member will sanitize their hands and return to their assigned classroom for any remaining children.
- This process will continue until all students are loaded.

Dismissal: Parent Pick-Up

- Dismissal will begin at 2:25 at the Burr's Lane entrance.
- Parents will enter on Burr's Lane, park in the lower lot and walk up to the entrance.
- Parents will assemble in a line, following social distance guidelines. Designated staff will be posted at the entrance to receive the parents and dispatch runners. Parents will not enter the building.
- Parents and staff members will be required to wear masks at pick up.
- Parent will identify the child they are picking up and will enter/present the QR scan or assigned 4 digit code for that child. Codes will be entered into the Brightwheel app on the AFC iPad.
- Designated staff members will be dispatched to classrooms to retrieve children and walk them by the hand to the exit door. They will be delivered directly to their parent/guardian.
- Staff members will wash/sanitize their hands prior to retrieving additional children.
- This process will continue until 3:00 pm. Any parent picking up after 3:00 will do so at the main entrance.

Parent drop off/pick up protocol Southampton

Parent drop off/pick up protocol Southampton

Drop Off

- Parents will park in the building parking lot and walk their children to the front of the building.
- Parents will line up on the walk way in front of the building, socially distanced.
- Staff members will be required to wear masks at drop off.
- Parents will be asked to sign their child in to school via the Brightwheel application.
- An AFC staff member will confirm sign in of student with an iPad.
- Prior to student entry into the building the student's temperature will be taken by an AFC staff member.
- The AFC staff member will hand off the student to an assigned staff member who will walk the child to their classroom.

Late Arrival

- Parents cannot enter the building.
- The parent will ring the door bell and a designated AFC staff member will meet the parent and student at the front door.
- The AFC staff member will take the students temperature.
- Parent/guardian will sign their child into school via the Brightwheel application. The AFC staff member will confirm student sign in.
- The AFC staff member will bring the child into the building and notify the classroom staff to come pick the child up in the lobby to transport to the classroom.

Pick Up

- Parents will line up in the front of the building outside and maintain social distancing.
- An AFC staff member will retrieve students for dismissal.
- Designated AFC staff will sign out each child individually using iPad.
- Parent will confirm via app.
- AFC staff member will hand off student to parent.

Busing

- Student will arrive via bus entrance on west side of building.

- All students will be provided with tags bearing their first name, their teacher's name, bus number and classroom number.
- Upon arrival students will have their temperature checked by an AFC designated staff member.
- If a child's temperature is 100 degrees or higher the AFC staff member will proceed directly to the nurse's office with the child. The child will be isolated from other students until the parent is able to retrieve the child.
- All children will wash their hands upon entering the classroom.
- Staff members will be required to wash or use hand sanitizer before retrieving additional children.
- This process will continue until all buses are emptied. All staff will wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water when busing is complete.

Parent drop off/pick up protocol Aquebogue

Parent drop off/pick up protocol Aquebogue

Drop Off

- Parents will park in the building parking lot and walk their children to the front of the building.
- Parents will line up on the walk way in front of the building and maintain social distancing.
- Staff members will be required to wear masks at drop off.
- Parents will be asked to sign their child in to school via the Brightwheel application.
- An AFC staff member will confirm sign in of student with an iPad.
- Prior to student entry into the building the student's temperature will be taken by an AFC staff member.
- The AFC staff member will hand off the student to an assigned staff member who will walk the child to their classroom.

Late Arrival

- The parent will ring the door bell and a designated AFC staff member will meet the parent and student at the front door.
- The AFC staff member will take the students temperature.
- Parent/guardian will sign their child into school via the Brightwheel application. The AFC staff member will confirm student sign in.

- The AFC staff member will bring the child into the building and notify the classroom staff to come pick the child up in the lobby to transport to the classroom.

Pick Up

- Parents will line up outside, maintaining social distancing
- Designated staff will retrieve students for dismissal
- Designated person will sign out each child individually using iPad
- Parent will confirm via application
- Designated staff will hand off student to parent

Busing

- Student will arrive via bus entrance on west side of building.
- All students will be provided with tags bearing their first name, their teacher's name, bus number and classroom number.
- Upon arrival students will have their temperature checked by an AFC designated staff member.
- If a child's temperature is 100 degrees or higher the AFC staff member will proceed directly to the nurse's office with the child. The child will be isolated from other students until the parent is able to retrieve the child. All children will wash their hands upon entering the classroom.
- Staff members will be required to wash or use hand sanitizer before retrieving additional children.

F. Social Emotional Well-being

- Alternatives for Children, in planning for reopening in September, has had our licensed psychologists and social workers to review the NYS Department of Health and NYSED Guidance, OCFS Documents, have developed a plan to address the social emotional well-being of the children, families and staff.
- Research shows the importance of mental and emotional well-being for students, their families, and staff.
- We know many of our children and staff will require social-emotional supports to help them re-engage and re-enter our school(s).
- The Alternatives for Children team has identified the social-emotional objectives along with necessary supports and resources.
- All of Alternatives for Children staff will be trained on the school-wide plan.

- The objectives consist of but are not limited to the following:
 - Assessing and caring for the mental health of students and staff.
 - Compiling a network of referral resources available to address a variety of issues/concerns.
 - Ongoing training for teaching/therapeutic and mental health staff.
 - Reassessing as the situation changes; seek and incorporate feedback.
- Alternatives for Children has identified caring for our students as a priority.
- We know, especially with young children, there is safety in predictability and consistency. Staff are directed to create predictability and consistency wherever possible such as:
 - Routines that students engage in regularly throughout the day.
 - Daily feelings check-ins with students.
- Staff are to utilize a universal language for discussing the pandemic, utilize familiar terms and proactively answer any of the children’s question(s).
- Teachers and TA’s (along with the support of psychological/social work staff) are to utilize consistent social stories that are clear and understandable and where children could ask questions and share fears.
- Alternatives for Children staff may utilize age-appropriate mindfulness activities each day to encourage relaxation.
- Alternatives for Children will conduct social skills groups and the groups will be conducted via: push-in into classrooms.
- Alternatives for Children’s psychology/social work team has outlined what staff can expect from students upon their return, which includes but is not limited to:
 - Children may feel uncomfortable, even if they have been to school before; possible reaction: withdrawn.
 - Children may be over-stimulated; a possible reaction: aggression, anxiety.
 - Children may appear worried and confused; a possible reaction: dissociation, distraction.
 - Or children may not want to come to school; possible reaction: opposition.
- Alternatives for Children will provide support for families.
- Alternatives for Children will provide training, webinars and “virtual” parent support groups.

- Alternatives for Children team will provide support for our professional staff through:
 - Ongoing trainings
 - Regular distribution of resources including articles and videos about helping children manage stress and trauma.
 - Additional classroom support while keeping cohort groups of students and staff maximized.
- Local Resources (including bilingual) for Nassau and Suffolk Counties will be disseminated via posting on website, i.e. Class Dojo etc. for families and staff.
- Alternatives for Children will share with our professional staff, a host of educational resources. Alternatives for Children will provide ongoing professional development opportunities and supports designed to promote and develop coping and resilience skills for both students and staff.

G. School Schedules

Alternatives for Children, will provide in-person instruction. Remote instruction will occur when full class(es) are quarantined.

Model A: In-Person (5 Days)

The five day model would include the option of students receiving full in-person center-based programming including the provision of therapeutic services. On-site learning will continue, utilizing the Creative Curriculum, designed to address the developmental goals of the children and meet the NYS Learning Standards. Classroom instruction, plans and activities, will be developed based on the children’s Individual Educational Goals (IEP) and will be differentiated for each child. Clinical therapies will be scheduled and offered as mandated on the child’s IEP and will address the child’s IEP goals.

Classroom instruction	In person	Small group instruction/Individual Instruction to address IEP goals, fine and gross motor activities, sensory integration activities, feeding/self-help activities, Handwriting without Tears, story time/listening center.
Clinical therapies	In person	All therapeutic services will be provided in accordance with the IEP* *It should be noted that to ensure the cohort groups are maintained, some therapeutic services will be rendered in the classroom.
Specials	In person	Special i.e. music will be provided in the classroom to maintain cohort groups and limit sharing of space.

Model B: Full Remote Learning and Tele-Therapy

Although the students are not on-site, the staff are expected to provide all services/programs remotely. Staff will utilize school resources and materials to enhance remote learning and tele-therapy. Remote learning will continue, utilizing the Creative Curriculum, designed to meet the children’s developmental goals and NYS Learning Standards. Remote learning lesson plans and activities will be developed based on the children’s IEP goals and will be differentiated for each child. Clinical therapies will be scheduled and offered as mandated on the child’s IEP and will address the child’s IEP goals. Progress towards goals will be assessed regularly. Student team meetings and parent meetings will be conducted virtually.

	5-Day Remote
Classroom Instruction	Class Dojo postings; Zoom sessions inclusive of boom cards, tech interactive PDF, book flicks, morning meeting and circle, a special each day; sensory group, social skills group or music. Daily read aloud, small group instruction and movement activities. Both as part of the class group, as well as individual with teacher to address all IEP goals.
Clinical Therapies	Zoom sessions individually or in a group addressing all indicated IEP goals.

Full remote learning will be an option based on the following rationale:

- Child may present with medical/physical risk factors;
- Parent may choose home instruction based on other risk factors;
- The Governor, State/Local DOH require school closure based on COVID-19 metrics.*

*All families will have a Class Dojo account, enabling the ability to transition into fully remote, when ordered to quarantine, without interruption of programs or services.

H. Budget and Fiscal

- Alternatives for Children continues to monitor its budget during the COVID-19 pandemic. Decreases in enrollment (revenue) and staff (expense) have been adjusted.
- AFC’s internal budgeting and expense reporting have been adjusted to expand to forecast, track and account for COVID-19 related expenses. Additional expenses include but are not limited to:
 - Deep cleaning and sanitizing all facilities
 - Purchasing of PPE; hand sanitizing stations, masks, Lexan barriers, face shields, gloves, and gowns.
 - Purchasing of foggers to clean playground after each use

- Purchase of technology for staff and/or families in need
 - Hiring of additional staff to assist with cleaning and sanitizing
 - Hiring of additional staff to assist with increased volume of parent pick up/drop off.
 - Purchasing and installation of HVAC MERV-13 filters.
 - Purchasing and installation of water purifiers.
- AFC will continue to seek additional revenue services, i.e. grants, to assist/meet the additional expenses related to COVID-19.
 - Enrollment is critical to the fiscal viability of Alternatives for Children. Efforts to maintain enrollment via parent and student engagement is paramount.

I. Attendance & Chronic Absenteeism

- Alternatives for Children will continue to document student attendance and enter into AFC's CLAIM system.
- Alternatives for Children staff will collect and document teacher/therapist/student/family engagement regardless of the instructional setting (in-person/remote).
- Alternatives for Children will inform and communicate with families as to attendance and participation policies and the importance of attendance.
- Alternatives for Children will contact families to determine reasons for absence and needs or barriers the family/child may have to participate in daily lessons.
- Alternatives for Children will monitor child attendance for "chronic absenteeism." Designated staff will reach out to families and intervene with assistance and/or supports as feasible.
- Alternatives for Children will contact the child's respective School District Committee of Preschool Special Education to communicate any chronic absenteeism/non-participation.

J. Technology & Connectivity

- Alternatives for Children has learned during this COVID-19 pandemic that access to technology and connectivity is critical to the success of remote learning and delivering tele-therapy sessions.
- Alternatives for Children is committed to ongoing planning, improvement and implementation of equitable access of technology.

- Alternatives for Children will make every attempt to ensure digital equity with regard to the technology needs of the families.
- Alternatives for Children will work with the child’s respective school district to accomplish the task of providing access to devices/internet.
- Alternatives for Children’s educational technology department in coordination with the purchasing department, will continue to maintain an inventory of all technology equipment. The two departments will continue to be responsible for maintaining software licenses.
- The educational technology department will provide support for educational, therapeutic, and support staff designed to ensure family/child engagement.
- Alternatives for Children has established and will communicate via email, web posting, and mail, how families can continue to access tutorial guides/links on utilizing software.
- The educational technology staff have created Power Point presentations that could be accessed remotely by staff, as well as “live” zoom interactive trainings.
- Alternatives for Children is proactive regarding ensuring confidentiality. Staff have ongoing training regarding confidentiality. Parents will be given our confidentiality policy as part of their initial parent pack.
- Alternatives for Children, has identified multiple means of access to instruction via the family’s iPhone, Android, iPad, Laptop, Desktop as well as for those with limited access, packets and needed materials being available for pick up at the school.

K. Teaching and Learning

- Alternatives for Children will ensure that a continuity of learning plan for school year 2021-2022 is in place. As in the aforementioned section, our plan includes in-person and remote instruction (based on quarantine only).
- Instruction is aligned with the outcomes described in the Pre-K New York State Learning Standards. Our curriculum, “Creative Curriculum” is aligned with the NYS Learning Standards and one in which Alternatives for Children has adopted and can be implemented for both in-person and remote models.
- Equity is the key in which all school instructional decisions are made. Instruction in our centers will be designed whereby it is delivered in-person or remotely and that we have clear and comprehensive accessible learning opportunities for all children.
- Alternatives for Children has designed instruction for program that clearly defines regular and substantive interaction with special education teachers regardless of whether the instruction is in-person or remote.

- Alternatives for Children has a teaching and learning plan, which includes clear communication for how students and families/guardians can contact the school with questions about their instructions and technology. Parents can interact via their Class Dojo account regarding their child and questions. Parents can always call members of their child's team with any questions or concerns.
- Alternatives for Children teachers and therapists will ensure that each family has an active Class Dojo account. Using the guidelines established, all staff will be able to successfully begin remote instruction immediately should a close down be required.
- Alternatives for Children recognizes that how our organization delivers educational and therapeutic programs must be equitable. Should our school(s) be closed, families will have access to technology provided by AFC, potentially in tandem with local school districts or will have the opportunity to have "learning packets" picked up at the school.
- Alternatives for Children will ensure that all learning activities are constructed to ensure not only that they are meeting NYS Early Learning Standards, but that they will ensure delivery of each individual's IEP goals. Supervisors will provide direction and guidance by both reviewing lesson plans, goals and objectives, as well as observation and assessment of teaching and therapeutic activities to ensure learning standards are being met.
- Alternatives for Children has defined that instruction will be provided on a scheduled basis and all students will have access to every learning experience. Families will be provided a written schedule that details time for learning activities and will be given the information on how to access remotely if students are not in school and are participating in remote learning.
- Alternatives for Children will provide families with newsletters that detail many of the learning activities, as well as the learning objectives. Staff will interact with families via Class Dojo regarding questions or instruction, IEP goals and any technology needs.
- Alternatives for Children understands that consistent and effective communication with families is vital.
- Alternatives for Children has contracted with a translation service that allows members of a child's educational and therapeutic team to speak with a family in a variety of languages. Staff has been trained on how to use this translation service for both written and oral communication. Families will be informed that this service is available and will be provided with information on how to use this program.
- Alternatives for Children will assess students to determine the supports and individualized learning activities that are most effective in addressing their social, emotional and academic needs. Teachers, therapists and support staff will collaborate and create learning activities that address the whole child.

- Alternatives for Children will train professional staff in emotional literacy described under “Social Emotional Well-Being” so they may engage students in role playing games that foster positive social skills as they readjust to in-person instruction. Planned lessons will focus on identifying student’s emotions and providing appropriate support.
- Alternatives for Children will utilize visual supports throughout the school to remind the students of the daily routines, structure of the school, and routines will be explicitly taught as well as reviewed.
- Alternatives for Children will continue to follow Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) framework to help create a positive school climate. Our social workers, psychologists, BCBA staff will assist in creating social skills groups that will focus on topics i.e. safety, trauma, and emotional competence. Teachers and therapists will be trained on how to identify students that have experienced significant trauma. The student’s educational team will create support that help students feel safe. School-wide and classroom based routines will be established to provide students with a sense of predictability and structure.
- Special education teachers at Alternatives for Children schedule meetings for each student on a rotating basis. During these meetings, the team will share information on how the student is reacting to the teaching modality, as well as other interventions or services. Meetings will focus on the needs of each individual student, and the team will work together to design proper support for the child and/or families as feasible. Meetings can be in-person if social distancing can be maintained or virtually via Zoom.
- Alternatives for Children will follow all health, safety, hygiene protocols as defined earlier in the plan to ensure that the needs of our youngest learners are addressed whether instruction is provided in-person, or remotely.

L. Special Education

- As an Early Intervention and a 4410 provider, Alternatives for Children serves infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with special needs at a critical time in their development. Research, along with efficacy studies demonstrates the earlier one intervenes with quality educational, therapeutic, and support services, the better outcome for children at risk or identified with special needs. This has been our organization’s long-standing mission.
- Alternatives for Children will ensure that preschool children with disabilities continue to have access to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet the unique needs of children to help them reach their full potential and that these are provided in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Alternatives for Children provides a full range of options across the LRE continuum.

- Alternatives for Children has designed our plan to enable transitioning between in-person five days, and remote – five days at home wherein we ensure the provision of FAPE, taking into consideration the health, safety, and well-being of students, families, and our staff, along with the requirements given by DOH, SED, CDC and the Governor’s Office. We, along with our parents, understand that this young population was particularly impacted by the closing of our schools and that we all agree that in-person programs and services are the best option for the children that we serve.
- Alternatives for Children will ensure that our programs and services provide equity and access to preschoolers with disabilities to be involved with and participate and progress in the general education curriculum. As always, the children will have any necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services and/or technology to include assistive technology, designed to meet the individual needs as well as the goals and objectives on their IEP.
- Alternatives for Children is committed to providing meaningful parent engagement in the parent’s preferred language or mode of communication regarding provision of services to their child based on their IEP.
- Alternatives for Children will maintain regular communications with parents/guardians via postings on website, email, regular mail, and Robo calls to ensure that they are engaged in their children’s education during this re-opening process. Parents will receive a “parent pack” that includes all “re-opening guidelines.” Our organization will ensure that parents are provided communication regarding the delivery of their child’s IEP in accordance with any of the requirements of IDEA.
- Alternatives for Children has good working relationships and collaborates regularly with both the Committee on Preschool Education (CPSE), and the Committee on Special Education (CSE) (when children transition). Alternatives for Children will ensure that school districts are kept informed with regard to the provision of services consistent with the IEP.
- Alternatives for Children’s IEP coordinators document communication logs with school district chairpersons and keep the district informed as to the students that they have placed at Alternatives for Children. Districts receive quarterly progress reports, as well as annual review reports to keep them apprised of the student progress, as well as progress towards goals on their IEP’s.
- Alternatives for Children will pursue any commitment from school districts to share resources to the maximum extent possible.
- Alternatives for Children offers a full continuum of programs as required under IDEA and children can move along the continuum as appropriate and as authorized by their CPSE.
- Alternatives for Children will ensure that there is some flexibility with regard to IEP implementation for the delivery of services due to any closure as a result of COVID-19 and

that these apply to programs and services whether they are delivered in-person, hybrid, or remote. (i.e. flexibility with respect to the mode and/or manner, group or individual sessions, specific group size for related services, frequency, duration, and location of related services, as well as special class ratio and any other flexibilities permitted by NYSED).

- Alternatives for Children will maintain records to document the implementation of each child's IEP. Initial assessments will be conducted to ascertain where the child is performing upon return to in-person instruction or how they might be performing during remote instruction during the 2021-2022 school year. Therapeutic services, whether provided in-person or remote, are always documented on logs, as well as entered in our CLAIMS system. Progress monitoring documentation, and school family collaboration will be documented as well.
- Alternatives for Children will ensure that each child be provided with special education and related services identified in the student's IEP to the greatest extent possible in collaboration with each family. We will determine what methods of delivery of services will be utilized to deliver special education programs and services to meet the needs of their child, as we deliver instructional models including in-person and/or remote learning.
- Alternatives for Children will conduct initial and re-evaluation as requested by the CPSE. These may occur or be conducted in-person or remotely and will be conducted within the NYSED required timelines. Should the evaluations and re-evaluations be conducted remotely, AFC will ensure that the proper technology is available for both staff and families.
- Alternatives for Children will ensure communication with parents is in their preferred language or mode of communication, as we have secured a translation service to assist in such efforts where language barrier may exist.
- It is the goal of Alternatives for Children that the instructional programs and services delivered, along with any necessary accommodations and modifications for children with disabilities are aimed at that child being able to progress in a general education curriculum.
- We understand that accommodations of modifications ensure equity and access to the general education curriculum and it is our goal that children who transition successfully into school district placements.
- Alternatives for Children understands that children with disabilities requiring assistive technology, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve their functional capabilities, be available.
- Alternatives for Children has consistently provided assistive technology to the children with significant disabilities over the years and has a technology and support program to support children needing assistive technology devices.

Staffing

- Alternatives for Children employees certified administrators in school leadership positions, special education teachers that are appropriately certified in special education B-6, all physical, occupational and speech pathologists are licensed and certified, as are psychologists, social workers and BCBA staff. All teacher assistants have their proper certification and nurses are registered and licensed.
- Alternatives for Children provides ongoing training both in-person and in-service to keep staff abreast of the latest methodologies, as well as policies and procedures aligned with NYS Education Department and Alternatives for Children's mission.
- At Alternatives for Children, certifications and licenses are verified by using the NYSED Office of Teaching Initiatives for teachers and the NYS Office of Professions for therapists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, etc.
- Alternatives for Children may need to increase credentialed staff to meet the instructional and operational demands of operating an in-person and remote instructional model(s) concurrently.
- Alternatives for Children will need to increase the capacity of substitute teachers to again, assist with the instructional models, as well as cover any extensive or protracted staff absences.
- Alternatives for Children will make significant efforts to recruit and retain staff. Efforts will be documented.