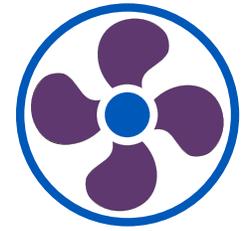


TIPS FOR IMPROVING VENTILATION IN YOUR CHILD CARE PROGRAM



Child care facilities need to have good ventilation for the health of children and staff. These recommendations are general best practices for child care programs. While many have been promoted to help lower the risk of spreading COVID-19, they are helpful prevention strategies against all respiratory illnesses.

- ◆ Plan activities to take place outdoors as much as possible throughout the program day. Identify or design shaded spaces that can be used for activities during the hottest times of the day.
- Increase the amount of fresh air coming into buildings either by adjusting mechanical systems or opening windows. Ventilation is particularly important in shared spaces, including break rooms, staff lounges, rest rooms, and conference rooms, even if those spaces are used individually but by multiple people during the day.
- Facilities should understand what their current mechanical systems are capable of and how they can adjust the function of those systems to optimize their capabilities. Consultation with a Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) professional should provide information on how to maximize the features of your system. Guidance from the CDC on [Ventilation in Schools and Childcare Programs and Improving Ventilation in Your Home](#) provides additional information.
- For buildings with central ventilation systems (i.e., air conditioning), the following is recommended:
 - Keep the system running during all hours that the building is occupied.
 - Provide daily 'air flushing' periods by running the system for full occupancy with maximum fresh air intake for 1 hour prior to occupancy.
 - Do not allow building occupants to make changes to ventilation system controls in their respective floors or classrooms.
 - Change the filters according to the manufacturer's recommended schedule.



- For buildings without central ventilation systems or with certain areas not served by the central ventilation system, there are other important design considerations staff should be aware of, and in control of, in order to maximize available dilution ventilation, and minimize the spread of virus particles inside the facility:
 - At a minimum, where temperature allows and no other means of ventilation is available, windows should be opened to allow for some minimum level of fresh air exchange into occupied spaces.
 - Window air conditioning units should be adjusted to maximize fresh air intake into the system, if possible. If window air conditioner units are to be used, blower fans should be set on low speed and pointed away from room occupants to the extent possible.
 - Ceiling fans should be adjusted so that fins are rotating in a direction that draws air up toward the ceiling rather than down onto occupants.
 - Window fans should be turned to exhaust air out of the window in the direction of the outdoors. Ensure that fans are not blowing out of windows directly into walking paths or areas where individuals may congregate.
 - Window fans that blow air into a room or free-standing fans that only serve to circulate existing air around a room should be avoided to the extent possible (recognizing that their use may be necessary to maintain an individual's thermal comfort during the summer months).
 - Separate, free-standing air cleaner or HEPA filter units are not generally recommended for individual office spaces or common areas, unless no other means of ventilation is available and multiple individuals will spend their workday in an enclosed space with minimal ventilation.
 - Allow restroom ventilation systems to run continuously when the building is in use.

◆ There are also **Frequently Asked Questions** and access to **webinars** on the topic of ventilation and outdoor play on the OEC website.

