Greetings Little Village Montessori Families-

I am sure you are all aware of the growing concerns regarding the COVID 19 (Coronavirus). Here is how we are responding, and we are asking for your cooperation and support.

1. The TLVM Communicable Disease policy outlined in the Family & Community handbook states:
	1. A child shall not be accepted to the school nor allowed to remain at the school if the child has the equivalent of a 101 degrees or higher oral temperature (\*please note the change to 99 degrees below) and another contagious symptom, including but not limited to, a rash or vomiting/diarrhea or a sore throat.
	2. Parents will be notified of a contagious illness by the Lead Teacher or the Director.
	3. Other parents will be notified of a contagious illness by the Lead Teacher or Director.
	4. The health department will be notified on any communicable diseases as outlined on the communicable disease chart posted in the school entrance.
	5. Please refer to the Little Village Family & Community Handbook for additional details

Given that our Communicable Disease policy does not address how we will proceed in situations like we are currently experiencing with Coronavirus, I want to make you aware that we will be following additional protocol beyond what we have outlined in our handbook policy. We are expanding our policy in order to properly prepare and respond to this situation. In addition to monitoring the situation from our state and local agencies, we will be adopting the details described below as part of our policy on managing communicable disease.

We need your support and cooperation to ensure that the steps we take are effective.

1. If your child, and/or any member of your household (including you, is showing cold and or flu like symptoms including (but not limited to) coughing, fatigue, fever (even low grade such as 99 degrees), nasal discharge, shortness of breath, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, chills or body aches- please do not send your child to school. Even if your child seems fine, if they have been exposed to illness in the home, then keep them at home for the health of all others in our program.
2. Miss Mya will do a quick assessment of each child as they enter the building in the morning, assessing for a low temp or visual appearance of symptoms. Any child presenting any of the symptoms when entering the building or after their arrival will have their parent called to return for a pickup.
3. If you or anyone in your household has traveled recently or been exposed to an individual who has traveled to any of the countries listed on the CDC website, please do not send your child to school. If you are planning to travel, please notify Miss Mya and take steps to self-quarantine after you return if it becomes necessary.
4. We have a rigorous program of health and safety etiquette that we teach the children daily. We ask that you support our efforts in ensuring consistency at home in the following ways:
	1. Remind your child to cover their cough and to cough into their elbow, or into a tissue if one is available. Covering their cough is an essential skill to prevent the spread of germs, especially given that COVID-19 and flu are spread in this manner.
	2. Remind your child to wash their hands (see the protocol below for when and how). We wash hands a number of times daily, including when we have coughed into our hands, placed our fingers in our noses or mouths. It is absolutely essential that children be discouraged from these behaviors at home as we are working very hard to correct them here at school. Please discourage your child from picking their nose, or licking surfaces- this is very dangerous behavior, particularly in these times. Hands should be washed long enough, with soap, for a child to sing the ABC song – slowly. Parents should support hand washing as soon as the child enters the school in the morning.
	3. Remind your child to put on their inside shoes immediately upon entering the school building. No children, parents or visitors, are to enter the classroom wearing their outside shoes.
5. We intend to be more proactive in regard to minimizing the spread of any illness, but COVID 19 in particular. If your child is presenting even mild symptoms, or is demonstrating resistant behavior that does not support our efforts at maintaining a safe environment, such as persistent nose picking, refusing to cover their cough, keeping their fingers in their mouths or licking surfaces- you will be called to pick up your child. We must be vigilant in minimizing contagion and we need your support and reinforcement at home to discourage these behaviors. Miss Mya corrects for these things daily, as in many cases they are developmentally expected, however when a child persists in the behavior after being corrected then we must act on behalf of all the other children and staff in the school.
6. We are deep cleaning our school daily- our surfaces are disinfected with a 50% bleach water solution and we are deep cleaning with more powerful disinfectants on Fridays that have been approved by the CDC as being effective at killing this virus. As this is in addition to our regular cleaning protocol, we ask that you make every effort to pick up your children on time so that we can attend to these additional tasks.
7. Please plan to take home and wash bedding weekly instead of biweekly.
8. If your child or anyone in your household has been sick, running a fever over 99 degrees, in addition to other symptoms listed above, you will need to provide a doctor’s note and the child must be fever free without fever reducing medications for 24 hours before they return to school.

We are monitoring state and local conditions carefully, including quarantine decisions being made by the Lumpkin Co. Department of Education as well as the University of North Georgia. In the event that either or both of these organizations elects to close for a period of time, we will follow their social distancing protocol and also close. Little Village and Lumpkin County Spring Break is April 6-10, any closures outside of that holiday break will be made up at the end of the year in May and, if necessary, at the beginning of next school year in August. We are unable to provide tuition refunds for COVID related closures, however we will make up any missed educational time if it becomes necessary.

Let me know if you have questions or concerns,

Dr. Chris Dockery

Founding Director

The Little Village Montessori

***ADDITIONAL RESOURCES***

*TLVM HAND WASHING PROCEDURES*

*These procedures for proper handwashing can reduce the spread of germs:*

*Wet your hands with clean running water and then lather them with soap; don’t miss the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.*

*Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds (about the time it takes to sing the alphabet song really slowly).*

*Finally, rinse your hands well with clean, running water.  Dry them with a paper towel, use the towel to turn off the faucet, and dispose of the towel in a trash receptacle.*

*Georgia’s child care licensing rules and regulations state that children should wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water, as described above, in these situations:*

*immediately upon arrival for care, when moving from one child care group to another, and upon re-entering the child care area after outside play*

*before and after eating meals and snacks, handling or touching food, or playing in water*

*after toileting and diapering; playing in sand; touching animals or pets; coming into contact with bodily fluids such as, but not limited to, mucus, saliva, vomit, or blood; and after contamination by any other means*

*Staff members must also ensure that their own hands are washed with liquid soap and warm running water, as described above, in these situations:*

*before and after diapering each child; dispensing medication; applying topical medications, ointments, creams, or lotions; handling and preparing food; eating; drinking; preparing bottles; feeding each child; and assisting children with eating and drinking*

*after toileting or assisting children with toileting; using tobacco products; handling garbage and organic waste; touching animals or pets; handling bodily fluids, such as, but not limited to, mucus, saliva, vomit or blood; and after contamination by any other means*

*MORE INFORMATION from DECAL Bright from the Start*

*The following links include additional and more comprehensive information, please see below.*

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

[*http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm*](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm)

[*https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html*](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html)

[*https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf*](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf)

*Georgia Department of Public Health*

[*http://dph.georgia.gov/influenza-what-you-need-know*](http://dph.georgia.gov/influenza-what-you-need-know)[*https://dph.georgia.gov/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-outbreak*](https://dph.georgia.gov/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-outbreak)

*Healthy Children: American Academy of Pediatrics*

[*https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/Pages/Prevention-In-Child-Care-or-School.aspx*](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/Pages/Prevention-In-Child-Care-or-School.aspx)

*The Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) website provides resources you can share with your teachers, students, and their families to help them stay healthy. You’ll find tips for fending off the flu at*[*https://www.choa.org/fighttheflu*](https://www.choa.org/fighttheflu)*. The checklist at*[*https://www.choa.org/medical-services/wellness-and-preventive-care/flu*](https://www.choa.org/medical-services/wellness-and-preventive-care/flu)*can help you assess whether a child has the flu.*

*CHOA recommends taking these steps to prevent illness:*

*·         Encourage individuals to get the flu vaccine—it’s not too late.*

*·         Practice good hand hygiene.*

*·         Visit your primary care doctor or pediatrician as a first line of defense before visiting an emergency department or urgent care center.*

*As the recommendation states, if you think a child in your home may have flu symptoms or symptoms of illness, we encourage you to visit the child’s pediatrician before visiting an emergency department unless immediate care is necessary. If the child needs a written note in order to return to child care or school, please request the note from your pediatrician during their visit, in lieu of requesting a note in an emergency department or urgent care center.*

*I hope you find these materials beneficial and that you share them with your families, friends, and colleagues throughout your communities.*