



**LOWCOUNTRY**

— YOUTH SERVICES —

# Covid Guidance Prevention Strategies & Procedures

Guidance is subject to change as new information requires. Updates will be posted available via DHEC/ CDC website as needed.

Information Obtained- Last Updated: September 10, 2021, on DHEC Website

While fewer children than adults have become seriously ill with COVID-19 during the pandemic, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, get sick with COVID-19, spread the virus to others, and have severe outcomes. Vaccine eligibility has been expanded to include school-aged populations 12 years and up. However, children under age 12 are not yet eligible to be vaccinated, and children ages 12 to 15 are only recently eligible. There is an increased risk of COVID-19 transmission in youth-serving settings. The introduction of new variants of COVID-19, as well as rising vaccination rates among adults and adolescents, may also change how COVID-19 impacts this population.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), in alignment with current scientific evidence and guidance from CDC, strongly recommends the consistent use of layered mitigation strategies to help limit the spread of COVID-19 and protect people who are not fully vaccinated, including mentees, mentors, volunteers' participants, staff, and members of their households.

This document also provides recommendations for the LYS youth programs' policies, practices, and strategies to promote health and safety while mitigating the risk of COVID-19 transmission to mentees, staff, volunteers, and guests who are attending.

## **Plan and prepare:**

- Encourage staff to be fully vaccinated (two weeks after completion of a two-dose or a one-dose series) before your youth program to reduce the risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 and help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 to others.
- Before sessions begin, communicate with families to set expectations for program participation, including following mitigation strategies and attendance requirements related to illness, symptoms, exposure, and quarantine.
- Regularly communicate and educate participants and their families about the program's COVID-19 mitigation measures and acknowledge that strategies and available programming may change if the level of community transmission increases.

- Consider engaging program participants in developing communications or creative strategies to limit the spread of COVID-19 (e.g., develop a competition around creating new greetings, providing alternatives to hugs, or high-fives).
- Hold staff and volunteer meetings, training, etc., virtually or in a space large enough to accommodate social distancing.
- Have a staffing plan that is flexible enough to accommodate staff members or volunteer absences due to illness or quarantine for exposures.
- Review sick and absentee policies to ensure you support participants staying home when ill or in quarantine due to exposure.

### **Prevention Strategies for Youth Programs:**

Prevention strategies are essential to the safe delivery of in-person instruction and help to prevent COVID-19 transmission. Youth programs will have a mixed population of both people who are fully vaccinated and people who are not fully vaccinated. These variations require the youth program to decide to use COVID-19 prevention strategies in their specific facility environment to protect all people in the community, including those who are not fully vaccinated.

The need for layering specific prevention strategies will vary, and localities might implement more, or fewer COVID-19 prevention strategies based on community transmission levels, vaccination coverage, and local policies and regulations.

These COVID-19 prevention strategies remain critical to protecting people, including mentees, parents and guardians, volunteers, mentors, and staff, who are not fully vaccinated, especially in areas of moderate-to-high community transmission levels:

1. **Vaccination:** is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, vaccination with the highly effective Pfizer vaccine is available to all ages 12 years and above. Vaccination with the highly effective Moderna and Janssen vaccines are available to those 18 years and above.

2. **Mask use:** On July 27, 2021, the CDC issued updated guidance about wearing face masks. Everyone—**regardless of vaccination status**—should wear a mask in public indoor settings.

**Indoors:** Masks are strongly recommended to be always worn in the facility (classroom and non-classroom settings), with exceptions for specific people (children under two years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone unable to remove the face covering without assistance), or to settings or activities, such as while eating or drinking or when alone in an office.

**Outside:** In general, people do not need to wear masks outdoors, with the following exception. In areas of substantial to high transmission, CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated

**LYS will implement mask-wearing at the Fishburne facility and/or any other outside community events inside a building. However, LYS does not require mask-wearing during outdoor events/activities. Guidance may change based on the level of covid spread in the community.**

**3. Physical distancing:** Physical distancing, or social distancing, keeps at least six feet of space between you and others to help prevent disease spread.

**4. Staying home when sick and getting tested:** It is important to stay home. Suppose you are ill or having covid-like symptoms. Please get tested or seek out a healthcare provider and either isolate or quarantine to protect the safety of our families and our community.

**5. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:** Individuals should practice handwashing and respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses, including COVID-19. LYS will encourage these behaviors and provide adequate handwashing/ hand sanitizer supplies.

**6. Cleaning and disinfection: LYS will follow these cleaning procedures based on Local & CDC guidance.**

- In general, cleaning once a day is usually enough to remove a potential virus on surfaces sufficiently. Disinfecting (using disinfectants on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency COVID-19 list) removes any remaining germs on surfaces, further reducing the risk of spreading infection.
- For more information on cleaning a facility regularly, when to clean more frequently or disinfect, cleaning a facility when someone is sick, safe storage of cleaning and disinfecting products, and considerations for protecting workers who clean facilities, see *Cleaning Disinfecting Your Facility* listed below.
- If a facility has had a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, you should clean AND disinfect the space.

#### **LYS Procedures: At Fishburne Faculty/or other outside activities**

##### **1. During Club Meetings:**

**Cohorting is another way to limit the spread among members during club meetings.** Cohorting means keeping children together in a small group and having each group stay together throughout an entire day. This is used to limit the number of children and staff who come in contact with each other. Your child's program may also maximize time outdoors, stagger drop-off and pick-up times, and maintain 6 feet between cohorts. Youth Programs that serve children across a wide range of ages or grade levels should consider creating cohorts.

- **LYS currently has three grade levels and are already separated; however, staff will ensure that room allocations are made to maximize space and ensure social distancing is practiced. Should there not be a large enough space, the cohorts will separate into smaller groups.**

- LYS will review this procedure, but it is not required at this time.

When local disease transmission is high, LYS will reevaluate in-person club meetings and transition to virtual meetings.

- 2. Community Service Projects/ Events & Outings, etc.:** Each LYS member, mentor, mentee, volunteer, and staff will wear a mask if at any large gathering. If LYS attends any outdoor event- mask requirements will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- 3. Travel Group Events:** Each LYS member, mentee, volunteer, staff will have to be tested three days before the date of the travel event. All test results will be emailed/texted to the appropriate LYS Program Director/Staff member. If any participant tests positive, they will not be able to attend the travel event.
  - a. All attendees regardless of vaccination status are subject to this policy.**

#### **Food Service and Meals:**

4. LYS Staff will wear masks during meal preparation and service and during breaks except when eating or drinking.
5. Mentees & Mentors should wear masks when moving through the foodservice line. LYS tentatively will be providing pick-up bag meals/snacks after each club meeting. After each mentee has received their bag lunch, we encourage all to be dismissed for the day and not to assemble and eat.

#### **Health/Safety of Staff & Members:**

- 1. Testing Positive: LYS Staff, Volunteers, Mentees, and Mentors:** Any staff, mentor, mentee, and volunteer will notify the appropriate person if one has tested positive. They will not be allowed to participate in any LYS activities until they have completed their isolation/quarantine period.
  - a. All members who test positive are expected to notify their Program Director so that they can document the status and track quarantine period. During that time, the affected person will not be able participate in and LYS activities.**
- 2. LYS Mentee not feeling well:**
  - **Mentee**
    - If a child gets sick during any LYS activities, they will notify the appropriate LYS staff member as well as their parent/guardian.
    - If the child is suspected of not feeling well, we will separate that child from others until a parent/guardian arrives.
  - **LYS Volunteer, staff, and mentor:**
    - If any of the following LYS members get sick during any LYS activities, they will notify the appropriate LYS staff member and leave the facility or area.

**Resources:**

<https://scdhec.gov/covid19/resources-community-covid-19/covid-19-cases-associated-staff-student><https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/camp-planning-tool.pdf>