



COVID-19 POLICY HANDBOOK

September 2021

Bearspaw Preschool
COVID- 19 Policy Handbook
September 1, 2021

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Overview

Bearspaw Preschool is committed to the health and safety of our students, staff, and community during the continuing COVID-19 Pandemic. We feel that a child's interaction with peers (even during a pandemic) is essential. We also want to provide safe opportunities for those interactions that will minimize the risks of COVID-19. By shaping our policies and procedures we hope that together, with our families and staff, we can keep our community safe.

This handbook has been created to support our families and stakeholders with updated COVID-19 policies for the 2021-2022 school year. This will assist us with operating our program at near normal operations, as defined by Alberta Education and Alberta Health Services.

Our COVID-19 policies were created in May 2020 and have constantly been improved and adapted to ensure compliance with Government of Alberta standards. The policies outlined in our COVID-19 Policy Handbook will be in effect from September 1, 2021. These policies will remain in effect for the 2021-2022 school year, or until our Board of Directors announces that these policies are no longer required.

Should there be conflicting information between this handbook and our Bearspaw Preschool 2021-2022 Handbook, the COVID-19 Policy Handbook will take precedence over all other Bearspaw Preschool Handbooks. This handbook may change as COVID-19 Government directives change.

Daily Screening

Parents/guardians **MUST DAILY** assess their child(ren) for symptoms of common colds, influenza, COVID-19, or any other infectious respiratory disease. AHS has released a COVID-19 guide for parents of children going to school or childcare. This can be found at <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16998.aspx> . We have also included it in Appendix A and B. Parents may be asked to verbally confirm that their child is healthy and well before being admitted into the preschool classroom.

Bearspaw Preschool staff will daily complete the COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST (FOR ADULTS 18 YEARS AND OLDER) (Appendix C) and will follow the same protocols provided by Alberta Health Services.

Alberta Health Services has identified the following symptoms of COVID-19.

These symptoms require either a COVID-19 test OR isolation for 10 days **from the start of the symptoms**. Currently symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of sense of smell or taste

If you child has **one** of the following symptoms your child should **stay home for 24 hours**. If the symptom has improved and your child feels well, they are able to return to school. If you child's symptom **has not improved**, you should consider getting a COVID-19 test done or **wait until 24 hours have past since the symptom went away**.

If your child has **two** of the following symptoms your child should **stay home** and either have a COVID-19 test or isolate for 10 days.

- Chills
- Sore throat or painful swallowing
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Feeling unwell or very tired

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- Feeling sick to their stomach (nausea) or vomiting or diarrhea
- Unexplained loss of appetite
- Muscle or joint aches
- Headache
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)

Temperature Checks

Temperature checks can be used as an additional assessment to see if a child is unwell. If a Bears paw Preschool temperature reading is still not normal, staff will wait 5 minutes and retake a temperature. If after 5 minutes the temperature is still not in the normal range, parents will be notified to pick up the child.

For reference, normal temperatures are:

- Mouth: 35.5-37.5° C (95.9-99.5°F)
- Underarm: 36.5-37.5° C (97.7-99.5°F)
- Ear (not recommended for children under 2 years): 35.8-38.0° C (96.4-100.4°F)
- Forehead: 36.6-38.0° C (97.9-100.4°F)

Children with Pre-Existing Conditions

Children or staff who have allergies or ongoing health symptoms that are like COVID-19 symptoms should have an established baseline regarding symptoms for your child. If symptoms change (worsen, compound with additional symptoms, etc.) the individual must stay home and follow AHS guidelines. Bears paw Preschool staff will track typical symptoms (that may be confused with COVID-19 symptoms) and consult with parents immediately if there is a change in the frequency of those symptoms.

Drop- off Procedures

Drop off procedures may change throughout the year. At the moment, parents are permitted to enter the BLC building. **Our staff have requested that we use the outdoor drop off procedures again this year to limit the amount of people in the classroom.** *Please see our Bearspaw Parent Handbook for more detailed photos and instructions regarding drop off procedures.

Below are the outlined times in which the students may be dropped off outside the school to allow for staggered entries. Please note that drops off and pick-ups will be completed in the parking area in a designated zone and no parents will be allowed into the classroom at this time:

- 3-Year-old Class (Tues/Thurs AM/PM)
 - Mornings 08:50am-09:05am
 - Afternoons 12:30-12:45 pm
- 4-year-old class (Mon/Wed/Fri AM/PM)
 - o Mornings 08:50am-09:05 am
 - Afternoon will be 12:30pm-12:45pm

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When dropping off your child staff will **VERBALLY CONFIRM** that your child is feeling well and symptom free. Once this is complete your child will enter the classroom and go to the hand washing station. Whomever is dropping off the child should be in a mask when in the BLC and when interacting with staff. Bearspaw Preschool students do not need to wear a mask when entering the BLC building or the Bearspaw Preschool classroom.

The teacher or teacher's aide will assist your child in hanging up their coat and putting on their inside shoes.

We know that these new routines might be difficult for some children for the first few days. If you feel your child needs more time, please wait until towards the end of the staggered entry times. Staff will help assist and try to engage your child in activities in the classroom.

Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal procedures will be different than drop off procedures- children will be released to parents **INSIDE** the BLC building. At this time, parents are permitted to wait in the BLC building prior to pick up.

Should the BLC implement procedures regarding limitations or closure of the building to guests, teachers will revert back to pick up routines that require parents to wait outside. *Please see our Drop/Off section of the Parent Handbook for detailed photos and instructions.

Child Illness at School

If a Bearspaw Preschool student develops or exhibits COVID-19 symptoms while at preschool, the child will be directed to a designated isolation area. The child will be given a non-medical mask to wear (if they are able to) and be isolated in a separate room, or space that is 2 meters away from others. If a child needs to be isolated in a separate area, they will be supervised at all times by the classroom teacher or classroom aide.

Staff supervising the symptomatic child will wear gloves, a mask AND a face shield while attending to the child. Staff will also adhere to strict handwashing protocols before and after.

Parents/guardians will be notified by the classroom teacher of the child's symptoms and any pertinent observations made by Bearspaw Preschool staff. It is expected that parents/guardians make every effort to promptly pick up sick children within 1 hour. Should the classroom teacher be unable to contact a sick child's parents/guardians, the teacher will contact emergency contacts. We strongly recommend that parents consult with their emergency contacts to ensure a plan is in place in the event your child must enter isolation while at preschool.

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to review the AHS document regarding guidelines for parents of children going to school, daycare, or camps (Appendix A and B). This document will advise what the required steps are regarding your child's symptoms.

All items that were touched by the isolated child will be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the child is picked up by Bearspaw Preschool staff. Items that cannot be disinfected (paper, books etc.) will be removed from the classroom and stored in a sealed container for 72 hours.

Returning to school after Illness

It is expected that parents/guardians will follow the guidelines by AHS or 811 regarding isolation and quarantine guidelines. We all have an important role in keeping our fellow students, Bearspaw Preschool staff, and BLC community members safe. We also understand the challenges faced by families when a child must remain at home in isolation or quarantine.

Bearspaw Preschool will not require confirmation of a negative COVID-19 test result prior to a child returning to preschool. It is expected that a child will not return to preschool until guidelines by AHS or 811 have been followed and the child is symptom free.

Confirmed COVID-19 Case

In the event that a confirmed COVID-19 case is identified within our school setting, Bearspaw Preschool's President, teaching staff and selected Board Members will work directly with AHS to provide follow-up recommendations and messages for staff, parents/guardians and children.

Alberta Health Services may request that one or more of our preschool classes close to allow for a public health investigation. The decision whether to mandatory isolate staff and students will be made by the Medical Officer of Health. If this were to occur, the school will support children and staff to learn or work-at-home if they are required to self-isolate.

Hygiene

Bearspaw Preschool continues to promote frequent and proper hand hygiene for children. In addition to washing hands before and after eating, children will also wash their hands upon entering and prior to leaving the premise. Regular hand washing with soap and water will be encouraged and monitored. Techniques such as singing the Alphabet Song or counting to 20 will be reinforced with the children.

Hand sanitizing stations will be placed at all entrances and exits. Bearspaw Preschool will work with the Bearpaw Lifestyle Centre (BLC) to ensure that all facility hand sanitizers are approved by Health Canada for effectiveness against COVID-19.

Bearspaw Preschool will continue to work with BLC to ensure that signage is placed throughout the facility to encourage proper hand hygiene and the regular practice of washing or sanitizing. Signage will be placed in the classrooms at entry points and near sanitizing and hand washing

stations. Staff will encourage and model proper hand washing and sanitizing measures for children to observe and practice.

Staff will continue to help promote respiratory etiquette such as coughing /sneezing into the elbow while physical distancing. Handwashing will be encouraged after children dispose of tissues in the trash.

Mask Wearing

It is not mandatory for Bearspaw Preschool students to wear a mask while attending preschool. The safety of our students and staff remain our top priority. Bearspaw Staff (teachers and aids) will wear a mask and/or face shield when in close proximity to students. Parents and families may choose to have their child wear a mask for the duration of preschool classes. Please note that Bearspaw Preschool staff will not be enforcing mask wearing for children; however, they will not discourage mask wearing if it has been an agreed family choice.

When parents are permitted to enter the BLC building for drop off and pick up, parents are required to follow BLC COVID-19 policies including wearing a mask when unable to social distance. Parents and guests are not permitted to enter the BLC building if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

Cohorts

Alberta Health Services continues to emphasize that the risk of transmission of COVID-19 is reduced by limited exposure to others. The creation of cohort groups has been encouraged within school and childcare centers as a means of reducing transmission risks in the past year. A cohort is a consistent group of children and staff who remain together. Contact tracing becomes a simple task when cohort groups remain consistent. Each preschool class (4AM, 4PM, 3AM) will be a separate cohort group. Each cohort group will be limited to 15 students.

Large Group Activities

Throughout the year there may be restrictions regarding large group activities. The Bearspaw Preschool Board will continue to review and follow all AHS guidelines and local bylaws regarding large group activities.

Field Trips

Field Trips have been an important component of our Bearspaw Preschool programs. At this time, the Bearspaw Preschool Board will encourage field trips that are outdoor based and allow for social distancing. Indoor field trips will be reviewed by the Bearspaw Preschool Board on a case-by-case basis. Parents are required to provide transportation for their child to and from locations.

Guest Speakers

Guest speakers have also been an important component of our Bearpaw Preschool program. The Bearspaw Preschool Board will evaluate whether guest speakers/ program facilitators are able to safely provide educational programming to our students, while maintaining our current COVID-19 policies.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing has been identified as a tool to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Physical distancing will be encouraged and maintained during snack times. During circle time, students will be directed to face toward the teacher to minimize exposure. There WILL be times within our play-based program that it will be difficult to maintain physical distancing between children. It is key that parents followed Alberta Health Services guidelines and keep children who are unwell home.

Washroom Use

Regular access to our in-class washrooms will be maintained and signage will be placed regarding proper hand washing methods. Students will not be permitted to use the BLC washrooms while in a Bearspaw Preschool program. Preschool staff will ensure that Preschool washrooms are clean and regularly sanitized throughout the day.

Classroom Cleaning

Regular and routine cleaning continues to be a priority at Bearspaw Preschool. This year we have increase our current cleaning schedule. High touch areas will be regularly disinfected with Health Canada approved cleaners. After each session is over staff will do a thorough sanitization

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of all materials, tables, and chairs. When possible, books, toys and manipulatives will be rotated so that only one cohort group plays with those materials at a time to limit COVID-19 contamination. Classrooms will be deep cleaned on a regular basis by Bearspaw Preschool staff. Students and children WILL NOT be required to wipe down any materials or engage in cleaning/disinfecting activities.

Snack Time

Food sharing is not allowed. Snacks sent from home must be sent in an enclosed lunch kit or snack bag. Snack bags/ lunch kits must be stored with the child's belongings until it is time for snack. Please be cognizant of food packaging and containers that little hands are able to open and close with minimal assistance. If a child requires help opening a snack container or bag, staff will wash hands prior to and after assisting the child. As in the past, students will wash their hands before and after snack time. As well, tables and surfaces will be wiped before and after snack.

Parent Volunteers in the Classroom

Parent volunteers have always played an important role in our preschool programs. This year parent volunteers will resume. All volunteers **WILL NEED TO BE MASKED** while in the preschool classroom. Teachers will keep a record of daily volunteers and will consider them as close contacts should there be a confirmed case at the preschool. ** Parents should not enter the BLC building or the Preschool classroom if they are feeling unwell or experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms. Bearspaw Preschool staff may ask parents to verbally confirm that they are feeling well, have not travelled recently, or been in close contact to a confirmed COVID-19 case before admitting them to the classroom.

Bearspaw Preschool Staff COVID-19 Policies

Staff will not be allowed into the building if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. All staff are expected to complete the self-screening questionnaire before they enter the premise. Staff are expected to complete the AHS COVID-19 self-assessment online tools if symptomatic. It is expected that staff will follow AHS guidance regarding testing, isolation, or quarantine requirements. Staff will not be required to provide a negative test prior to returning to school. The Bearspaw Preschool Board will encourage staff to regularly utilize the AHS asymptomatic testing for Educators screening services when available.

Substitute Teachers

The Bearspaw Preschool Board understands that there may be an increase in staff absenteeism due to AHS screening protocols. The board continues to work to increase its substitute list to ensure availability of substitute teachers and teacher's aides.

Employee Hygiene

It is expected that Bearspaw Preschool staff will engage in frequent and proper hand hygiene etiquette. Employees must wash (or sanitize) their hands upon entering and leaving the premise and before and after eating. Staff will also wash (or sanitize) hands before and after assisting students with snacks, or touching student personal belongings.

Staff should also follow proper respiratory etiquette (e.g., coughing or sneezing into an elbow or tissue when distanced if possible)

Bearspaw Preschool Employees will also be required to wear a mask when utilizing the BLC gym or common areas throughout the day.

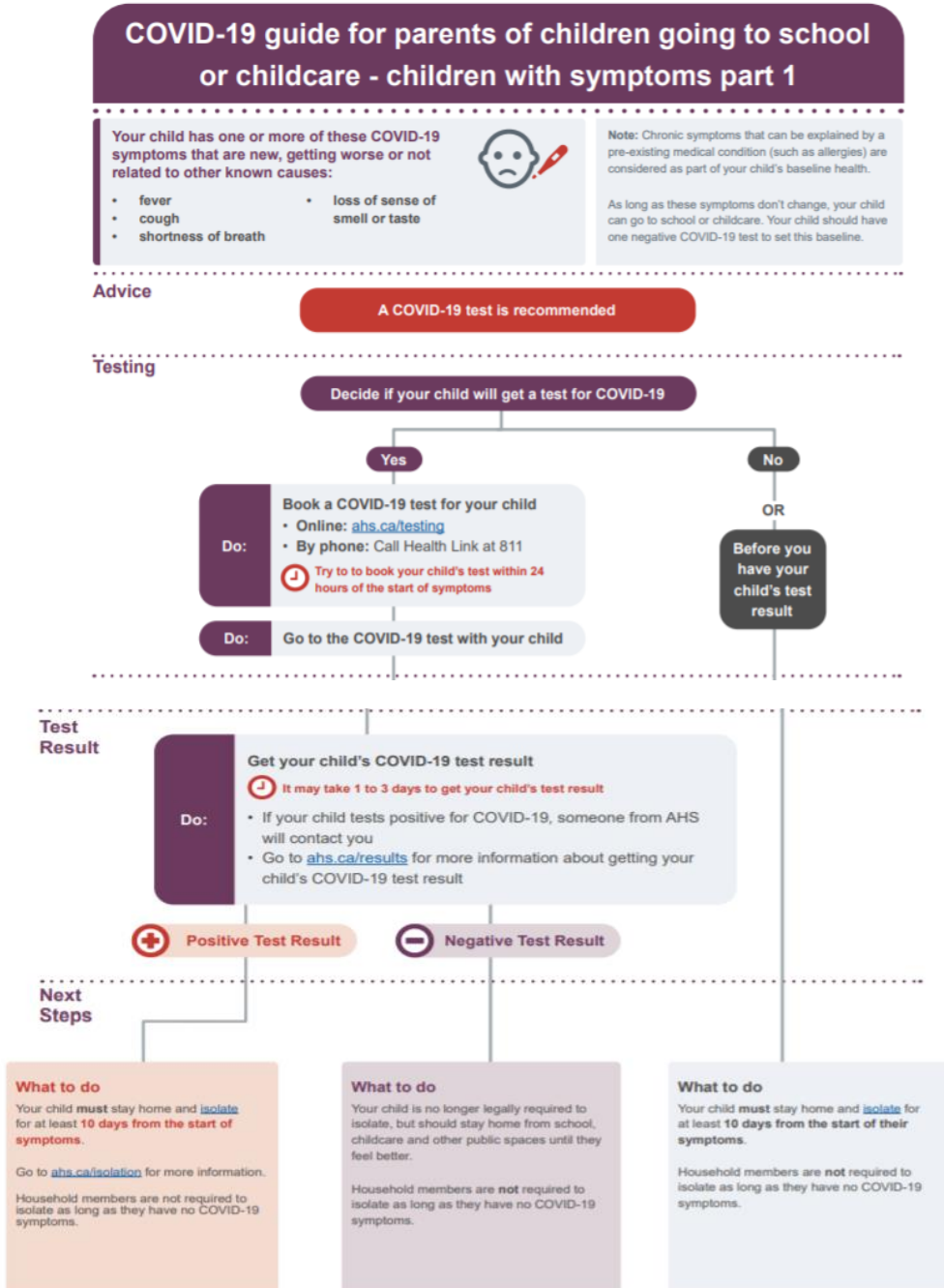
Bearspaw Lifestyle Centre

The Bearspaw Preschool Board will continue to work with the Bearspaw Lifestyle Centre (BLC) to ensure that our policies are compatible with their building COVID-19 policies. At this time parents are permitted to remain inside the BLC building. Parents who utilize BLC programs with their family need to ensure that they are meeting all BLC COVID-19 policies.

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Appendix A

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16998.aspx>



Appendix B

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16998.aspx>

COVID-19 guide for parents of children going to school or childcare - children with symptoms part 2

Your child has one or more of these COVID-19 symptoms that are new, getting worse, or not related to other known causes:

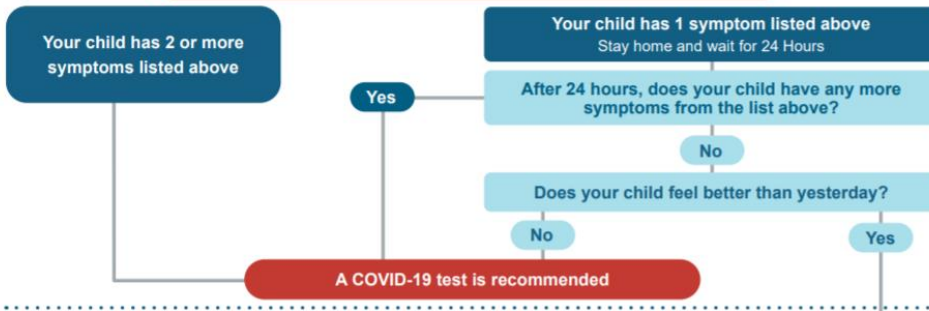
- chills
- sore throat or painful swallowing
- runny or stuffy nose
- feeling unwell or very tired
- feeling sick to their stomach (nausea) or vomiting or diarrhea
- unexplained loss of appetite
- muscle or joint aches
- headache
- pink eye (conjunctivitis)

Note: Chronic symptoms that can be explained by a pre-existing medical condition (such as allergies) are considered as part of your child's baseline health.

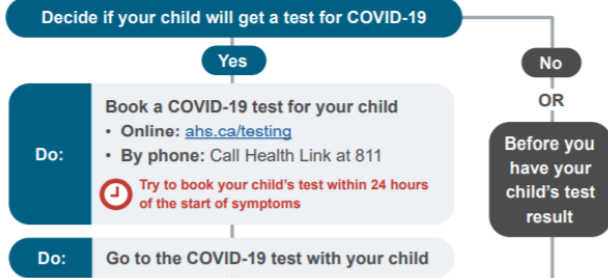
As long as these symptoms don't change, your child can go to school or childcare. Your child should have one negative COVID-19 test to set this baseline.

Advice

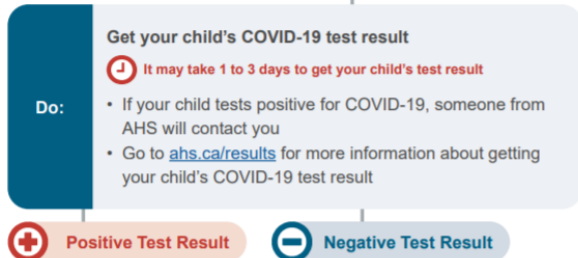
Your child should not go to school or childcare if they are feeling unwell



Testing



Test Result



Next Steps

What to do
Your child **must** stay home and **isolate** for at least **10 days from the start of symptoms**.

Go to [ahs.ca/isolation](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16998.aspx) for more information.

Household members are not required to isolate as long as they have no COVID-19 symptoms.

What to do
Your child can go to school, childcare, and other public places when:

• their symptoms go away **and**
• it has been at least 24 hours since the symptoms started

Household members are **not** required to isolate as long as they have no COVID-19 symptoms.

What to do
Your child can go to school, childcare, and other public places when:

• they feel well enough **and**
• it has been at least 24 hours since their symptom started

Household members are **not** required to isolate as long as they have no COVID-19 symptoms.

Appendix C- Alberta Health Daily Checklist (For adults over 18 years)

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/56c020ed-1782-4c6c-bfdd-5af36754471f/resource/58957831-a4ab-45ff-9a8e-3c6af7c1622e/download/covid-19-information-alberta-health-daily-checklist-2021-08.pdf>

Parents, Staff and Board Members must review Questionnaire to determine whether they can enter Bearspaw Preschool Classrooms.

This tool was developed to support Albertans in protecting others and reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Adults 18 years and older can complete this checklist every day to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.

If you have traveled outside Canada in the last 14 days, follow the [Government of Canada Travel, Testing, Quarantine and Borders](#) instructions, including any requirements for exempt travelers related to attending high-risk environments.

Screening Questions for Adults 18 Years and Older:

1.	Do you have any new onset (or worsening) of the following symptoms:		
	• Fever	YES	NO
	• Cough	YES	NO
	• Shortness of breath	YES	NO
	• Runny nose	YES	NO
	• Sore throat	YES	NO
	• Chills	YES	NO
	• Painful swallowing	YES	NO
	• Nasal congestion	YES	NO
	• Feeling unwell / fatigued	YES	NO
	• Nausea / vomiting / diarrhea	YES	NO
	• Unexplained loss of appetite	YES	NO
	• Loss of sense of taste or smell	YES	NO
	• Muscle / joint aches	YES	NO
• Headache	YES	NO	
• Conjunctivitis (commonly known as pink eye)	YES	NO	
If you answered "YES" to any symptom:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay home. • Use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to arrange for testing and to receive additional information on isolation. • Individuals with fever, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat or loss of sense of taste or smell are required to isolate for 10 days as per CMOH Order 39-2021 OR receive a negative COVID-19 test and feel better before returning to activities. 			
If you answered "NO":			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may attend work, school, and/or other activities. 			