Greetings BANANAS families, providers and friends,

The safety of our staff, families, providers and visitors are our top priority.

In concert with many of the school districts in our service area and our stakeholder partners, we have made the difficult decision to close our offices to the public as of Monday, March 16, 2020 for 3 weeks. Our plan is to reopen Monday, April 6, 2020.

We will continue to provide limited services to assist families and child care providers.

- Access child care referrals via our website or our Referral Line at 510-658-0381
- Families with questions about child care subsidy recertifications, eligibility or rescheduling appointments should call their Client Services Counselor or call the main line at 510-658-7353
- Child Care Providers can call our main line for general questions at 510-658-7353
- Child Care Providers that have questions about payments can email AP@BananasBunch.org or call the mail line at 510-658-7353

Workshops, trainings, playgroups, meetings (group and in-person) have been cancelled. Please check our website and social media for updates.

We recognize a closure can be inconvenient and a burden. However, we feel this decision is in the best interest of people’s health and we apologize for any hardship this creates. If you need any support during the closure, please call the main office at (510) 658-7353.

Fortunately, young children are much less likely than adults to be made sick by the coronavirus, however, they can carry the disease and make others sick, especially people over 60 and those with chronic conditions like cardio-vascular and respiratory challenges and compromised immune systems.

You can help to limit the spread of the coronavirus by keeping your child home if they become sick (cough and/or congestion with fever) until they have been fever-free without medication, for at least 24 hours.
How to talk with your children about the coronavirus:

The coronavirus, or COVID-19, is big news and your children, depending on their age, have probably heard about it and may have questions. It can be tricky to find a balance between providing enough information to help children understand and be reassured, and providing too much information and adding to your child’s anxiety. A good place to start is by asking your child what they’ve heard and what questions they have. Respond with facts, in a way that young children can understand. For example, you could say: “many people are working hard to understand this new virus and to stop the spread and to take care of anyone who gets sick and help them get better.” Emphasize what they can do to help keep themselves healthy (like regular handwashing) and what steps the adults around them are taking to help keep them safe. Remind them that this virus doesn’t make children as sick as it does adults. Even if an adult should get sick, most people have mild symptoms and most people recover. For additional guidance on talking to kids about the coronavirus: https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/

For additional updates about the coronavirus situation, facts about the disease and helpful tips to stay healthy, visit:

- **California Public Health Department**: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx
- **Alameda County Health Department**: http://www.acphd.org/

If your ability to work is impacted by the situation, here is a list of potential resources:

- https://www.labor.ca.gov/coronavirus2019/#chart

Please check our website and social for additional updates and information: https://bananasbunch.org/

We are grateful for your support as we work together to navigate this public health challenge and to keep ourselves and our community safe.

Take care and be well,

Kym Johnson
Executive Director
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