**The Build-A-Plan Tool Newsletter Article/Blog**

***Stay Open Safely with Confidence! Build-A-Plan: Maryland’s Child Care COVID-19 Plan***

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Whether you operate, manage or teach at a family child care home, child care center, or early learning classroom (Maybe, you are responsible for all operations and instruction.), your goal is to stay open safely with confidence. Have you tried the new Build-A-Plan Tool? [TheBuild-A-Plan Tool](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/5782461/Maryland-Child-Care-COVID-Response-Preparedness-Plan-copy) can help you develop Maryland’s Child Care COVID-19 Plan that follows state regulations and guidance.

In just 15 minutes, you can build a custom plan by using this new interactive tool in three simple steps:

* WATCH: Learn how to Build-A-Plan: Maryland’s Child Care COVID-19Plan with this quick tutorial.
* BUILD A Custom Plan: Build A Full (in approximately 45 minutes) or Partial Plan (15 minutes).
* DOWNLOAD/PRINT: Recommendations for Arrival/Departure, Social Distancing, Mealtimes, and More.

**What is the Build-A-Plan Tool?**

The **Build-A-Plan Tool** can help you develop **Maryland’s Child Care COVID-19 Plan** that uses best practices to limit the spread of COVID-19 and helps you to make feasible decisions that work best for your program. The easy-to-use, interactive Build-a-Plan Tool guides you through different areas of health and safety practices and provides concrete guidance and examples of how strategies can be implemented to help you meet the new state requirements.

All relevant requirements and recommendations from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Maryland Department of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have been integrated into the Build-A-Plan Tool to save you time and effort. By completing **Maryland’s Child Care COVID-19 Plan** and agreeing to implement it, you are eligible for one Professional Activity Unit (PAU) credit.

**How to Use the Build-A-Plan Tool?**

Like you, child care providers across the nation “have sacrificed and struggled to serve children and families since the start of the COVID pandemic,” according to a recent NAEYC [survey](https://www.naeyc.org/pandemic-surveys). MSDE is committed to issuing guidance and support to you through transition to full recovery, including offering the Build-A-Plan Tool.

After building a custom plan for her child care center, one provider said, “It was organized nicely and very clear and concise. It was very time effective for me as well. I had attempted to do this on my own months ago, and it took me FOREVER to do while trying to juggle everything else. This one is much better than my attempt.”

In just 15 minutes, you can build a partial plan or take approximately 30 more minutes to build a full plan based on your program’s individual needs. After completing a plan, the Build-A-Plan Tool generates a customized PDF document for you to share with staff, parents, and families.

As you navigate the challenges of promoting the well-being of children, parents, families, and staff during this pandemic, the Build-A-Plan Tool can help you do this essential work safely with confidence.

For more information about the *Build-A-Plan Tool, please visit:* [*msdechildcarecovidplan.org*](https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/childcarecovidplan)*.*