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To the Family Focus community,

Thank you for dedicated support of Family Focus and the role we play in strengthening families throughout the greater Chicago region. I'm writing to keep you apprised of the steps Family Focus is taking regarding our centers and employees considering the Novel Coronavirus or COVID-19 pandemic.

Family Focus has been monitoring the evolution of the COVID-19. We have sought guidance from a variety of sources, including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), and the Chicago Public School (CPS) system. We are following their guidelines as it relates to children, families and employees, particularly since our employees and families may have family members who attend school at or work for CPS.

Recognizing the importance of providing regular communication to our employees and families without creating additional anxiety about this outbreak, we are providing this message to both audiences. Much of the information will be posted on our web site and resource materials will be made available to families to use when talking with their children.

1. We are closing our offices and asking employees to work from home. We will pay staff while they are out of office and will not be requiring salaried staff to use PTO (personal, sick, or vacation) time. We are asking them not to come to the office and will leave department communication to department heads and center directors.
2. Many of our staff are involved as resource providers for participants facing challenging situations. From a technology standpoint, we are creating a hotline that can give our participants information and an access number to contact staff if need be. We will not have to field the calls directly and can designate staff to review the messages for referrals for services or assistance.
3. We are encouraged that all major funders including IDHS, DCFS, DFSS and ISBE have confirmed that they will fund staff payroll for grants awarded. Staff will offer visits over the phone or FaceTime/Skype if the family has that capability and follow their curriculum model's recommendations related to conducting and documenting visits that take place virtually or on the phone. We will be communicating with the funders to identify what their expectations are and how to best serve our participants without endangering our staff.

As you know, things are changing quickly. We will continue monitoring and planning appropriately and updating our webpage as needed. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Caterina Varvaro  
Interim President and CEO  
Family Focus