



Well, it's October!! It's hard to believe we're a month into the school year already. It seemed like a switch was flipped and here we are in Fall. There are a few things we wanted to be sure to update you on to start the new month!

## COVID

Like many conversations over the last year, I'll start with COVID. We did have to quarantine two classrooms in September for positive COVID tests within the classroom. It did allow us to work through our processes and communication and we learned some things to help us improve next time it happens. I appreciate all of the feedback on the survey. It did shift some of our processes so thank you for taking the time.

One of the main questions that came up was what happens after you receive a call from Racker about an exposure. We put together the attached Quarantine FAQ document to try and answer some of the questions. Please reach out with additional questions about this process.

## Staying home when sick

Thank you for continuing your work to help keep our classrooms as safe and healthy as possible by following the exclusion and return to school protocols. I attached the guidelines (which should look very familiar from what you signed earlier this year) and our return to school documentation as well. There is one slight shift in the language on the exclusion criteria to address a question that has come up is about if a child is sick over the weekend. Please reach out if your child is ill over the weekend so that we can assess their return to school.

Note on picking up a sick child: If you need to pick up your child who is sick at school, please call the school from your car and we will bring your child out to you.

## Masks

As we've shared, masks are required at Racker. This has been a standard for the State Education Department and is also now a requirement for the Office for Family and Children's Services for all children over two. Each classroom has been assessing children on their ability to tolerate masks and wear them safely and building skills and tolerance. We've seen great progress so far! If your child is medically unable to mask, please send in an MD note that explains that.

## October Dates to Remember

- October 5 - Dr. Temple Grandin presentation
- October 11- Our Special Education Preschool Program **ONLY** is closed for Indigenous People's Day.
- October 22 - This is a conference day for all Racker Early Childhood staff and Racker is closed for ALL children. We'll be learning about outdoor play, visual supports, motor development, and MORE to make your children's experience at Racker even better!

## Temple Grandin and the Racker Speaker Series

Dr. Temple Grandin will be doing a virtual presentation on October 5. Please join us! See attached flyer for registration information. Keep your eyes open for more education sessions as the months progress.

Handwritten signature of Sonia Ferro in black ink.

Handwritten signature of Patrick Schloupt in blue ink.

Handwritten signature of Cris Donovan in black ink.



## Quarantine FAQs

### **What is quarantine?**

Quarantine means separating a healthy person or group of healthy people away from others due to exposure to a contagious disease like COVID-19. When someone has been exposed to a person who has COVID, they can be placed into Quarantine by the Health Department. Quarantine is designed to limit further exposure to others and limit the spread of the infection.

### **What is the purpose of quarantine?**

The purpose of quarantine is to monitor an individual for the development of symptoms of contagious disease during its incubation period. Incubation goes from date of exposure to the onset of symptoms.

### **When Racker has a confirmed COVID case in the preschool, what happens?**

First, we identify the “close contacts” of the person who is ill.

1. We track children’s attendance as well as staff and therapist schedules and absences and are able to determine who was in contact with the person who is ill.
2. Close contacts in a preschool setting includes the children in the classroom, staff who work in the classroom, and therapists who were in the classroom or provided therapy to the positive child (if it is a child)
  - a. If a child is positive for COVID, we also trace who was on the bus

Once we have the list of staff and children, we share the information with the local Health Department and then attempt to contact each person by phone. If we are unable to reach the close contacts by phone, we also use text and email to attempt contact.

### **Is everyone who is a close contact placed into quarantine?**

People who are unvaccinated are placed into quarantine. People who are fully vaccinated (2 weeks following last dose) AND are **not** exhibiting symptoms of COVID are not placed into quarantine.

### **Who places people in quarantine?**

The Health Department, or State Contact Tracers, will call you to discuss quarantine and what it means.

### **How long is quarantine?**

Based on current NYSDOH guidance, quarantine for unvaccinated individuals potentially exposed to COVID-19 is 10 days if the individual reports no symptoms during the quarantine period. Following the 10-day period, individuals must continue to monitor themselves for symptoms for an additional four days. If symptoms develop during these days, the individual must immediately isolate themselves from others and contact the Health Department or their primary care provider to determine if testing is needed.

### **Can I get a test for my child and stop being quarantined?**

No, you cannot “test out” of quarantine.

### **What happens if my child develops symptoms while quarantined?**

If symptoms develop, quarantine is extended by 4 days and the Return to School Protocols following COVID symptom requirements are followed. The Health Department contacts people in quarantine on a daily basis to check on symptoms. Please be sure to share any symptom information with them during that contact.

### **What if I don't get a call from the Health Department?**

Please call Racker to let us know. We will follow up with the Health Department to ensure you receive the appropriate information.

### **If my child rides the bus, do I need to notify them that my child is in quarantine?**

If you pick up your child from preschool due to symptoms or a COVID exposure outside of Racker, please notify the bus company of the transportation needs and return. If you need assistance with this, please let us know.

If your child is quarantined due to exposure at Racker and a quarantined classroom, we will notify the bus company of the dates of the classroom closure/quarantine.

### **What documentation does Racker need for my child to return to school following quarantine?**

We need your "release" from quarantine documentation. This is typically emailed to you.

### **What steps must be followed during quarantine?**

Quarantine for young children is not easy given their needs; however, per the Tompkins County Health Department, the requirements to safely quarantine include:

- Quarantined individuals must not be in public or otherwise leave the living quarters that have been identified as suitable for their quarantine.
- There must be a separate living area with a separate bathroom facility for each individual or family group. Access to a sink with soap, water, and paper towels is necessary. Cleaning supplies (e.g. household cleaning wipes, bleach) must be provided in any shared bathroom.
- There must be a way to self-quarantine from household members in case fever or other symptoms develop. This should be in a separate room(s) with a separate door.
- The person in quarantine must sleep in a separate bedroom from other household members.
- If the individual develops symptoms, food must be delivered to the person's room(s). Any person in quarantine must use kitchen facilities only when other household members are not in the room. Thorough cleaning/disinfecting must be done by the quarantined person when they have finished in the area.
- A supply of face masks must be easily accessible for individuals to use if they become symptomatic.
- Garbage must be bagged and left outside for routine pick up. Special handling is not required.
- A system for monitoring temperature and symptoms must be in place so that quarantined individuals can be assessed in their separate living areas.
- The primary health care provider or Health Department must be notified if the individual begins to experience more than mild symptoms and may require medical assistance.
- The living area must be secure against unauthorized access.



## Health Screening Standards for Families

CDC and SED no longer require daily COVID-19 health screenings for children or staff working in schools; however, it is important that everyone understands the exclusion standards.

All of us at Racker understand how challenging this can be and appreciate your help limit the spread of COVID-19. Thank you for your efforts to help us ensure a safe and healthy environment for children, our staff, and your families.

(Return to school guidelines can also be found on our website: [Racker.org](https://www.racker.org))

- I agree to monitor my child for symptoms of COVID-19 daily including: fever of 100.0 or higher, chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea
- I agree that I will not send my child to school if they have **any 1 or more** of the symptoms of COVID-19 *within the past 48 hours*
- I agree that I will not send my child to school if they test positive for COVID-19
- I agree that I will not send my child to school if they are waiting on test results due to symptoms or exposure
- I agree that I will not send my child to school if they have been advised by the local health department to isolate or quarantine
- I agree that I will not send my child to school if a household member is in isolation for COVID-19
- I agree that I will not send my child to school if they have knowingly been in close or proximate contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19
- I agree that I will not send my child to school following illness without confirmation from Racker that all required documentation is in place



## Return to Preschool Following COVID-19 Symptoms

### **Contact Information:**

- Karen Kilgore, School Nurse: 272-5891 x323 (8-1:30), [karenk@racker.org](mailto:karenk@racker.org)
- Sonia Ferro, Cortland Preschool Director: (607) 753-9375 x134, [soniafcp@racker.org](mailto:soniafcp@racker.org)
- Patrick Schloupt, Tompkins & Tioga County Preschool Director: (607) 272-5891 x258 or (c)607-227-3129, [patricks@racker.org](mailto:patricks@racker.org)

FAX—Tompkins & Tioga program: (607) 882-9522

FAX--Cortland program: (607) 758-9287

### **COVID-19 SYMPTOMS:**

**If your child has one or more of the following symptoms, your child must stay home:**

Fever 100 or above—Chills—Congestion—Runny nose—Sore throat—Fatigue - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing—Headache—Nausea—Vomiting—Diarrhea - New loss of taste or smell

### **To return to school after COVID-19 symptoms, here's what we need:**

- A note with a *specific alternate diagnosis* from a health care provider OR
- A negative COVID-19 test  
\*Find testing sites here: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>  
OR call your child's health care provider OR your local health department
- AND—be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication  
with symptom improvement per alternate diagnosis (see Non-Covid Exclusion Guidelines on reverse side)
- **We will contact you to confirm we have received the needed documentation.**  
Please do not send your child to preschool without confirmation from us that we received the needed documentation.

### **If you are unable to provide a negative COVID-19 test or a note with an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider:**

- Your child must quarantine at home for a full 10 days before returning to preschool.
- A Racker staff member will confirm with you the first day your child may return to school after quarantine.
- Prior to return after quarantine, your child must be fever-free for *72 hours* without use of fever-reducing medication and symptoms must be improving per Non-COVID Exclusion Guidelines (See reverse side).

**RACKER**  
**ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STAFF**

**\*\* NON-COVID\*\***

***PLEASE NOTE:** Beyond the guidelines below, Racker staff has the discretion to exclude a child who is too ill to participate comfortably in activities or requires more care than we can provide. Racker has the right to override a health care provider's note.*

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	WHAT TO DO	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE
<b>**Emergency room visit, surgical/medical hospital, or dental procedure, including in or out patient, or an injury requiring more than first aid sustained at school or home</b>	<b>Keep child home. Child may return to program after note or discharge received from health care provider</b>	<b>A note/discharge from the health care provider that includes diagnosis and any restrictions must be explained for the child to return to program. Need documentation and clarification of ANY restrictions to activities while at school.</b>
<b>EARS</b>		
*Ear Ache	Observe	Watch for fever and other symptoms.
*Ear ache with fever	Keep child home	Call health care provider. May return when symptom free and temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
*Runny ears (no tubes)	Keep child home	Call health care provider.
<b>DIARRHEA</b>		
*One or two episodes of loose BM	Observe	Watch for fever, watery BM, and stomach pain.
*More than 2 loose BMs with or without fever	Keep child home	May return 24 hours after last loose BM and a normal temperature without fever reducing medication.
<b>EYES</b>		
*Watery, red/pink eyes	Observe	
*Itching-crusty drainage, yellow-green discharge	Keep child home	Call health care provider.
<b>FEVER</b>		
*98-100.3	Observe	Watch for symptoms
*100.4° F or greater.	Keep child home	May return when temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
<b>HEAD LICE</b>		
	Contact child's teacher or social worker.	Once head lice is confirmed, use treatment of choice. Child may return to school after treatment is complete.
<b>RESPIRATORY</b>		
*Runny nose	Observe	Watch for fever and other symptoms.
*Cough	Observe	Watch for frequency and other symptoms.
*Difficulty breathing	Keep child home	Call health care provider immediately.
<b>SKIN</b>		
*Rash	Observe	Watch for other symptoms.
*Rash with fever, sore throat, itching or that increases in severity	Keep child home	May return when temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. Consult health care provider.
*Diaper rash	Observe	Keep area dry. Use ointment of choice.
*Dry skin sores	Observe	Watch for discharge. Cover sores.
*Skin sores with discharge	Keep child home	Cover sores. Call health care provider. May return when sores are dry or with health care provider's permission.
<b>THROAT</b>		
*Sore throat only	Observe	Watch for fever and other symptoms.
*Sore throat with fever, rash or difficulty swallowing or breathing.	Keep child home	Call health care provider. May return when temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
<b>VOMITING</b>		
*One time only	Observe	Watch for fever and other symptoms.
*More than once in 24 hours with or without fever	Keep child home	May return 24 hours after last episode of vomiting and temperature is normal without fever reducing medication.

Racker  presents

DOCTOR  
**TEMPLE  
GRANDIN**

# Developing Talents



Dr. Temple Grandin draws from her own experience with autism spectrum disorders and her professional career. She speaks on how to nurture & turn talents & special interests into paid work!

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5<sup>th</sup> 2021**

**5:30 - 7pm**

**A Family Support Services Parent Network Event**

For questions, email [dustinz@racker.org](mailto:dustinz@racker.org)

Virtually via **zoom**

Register Now!



[www.racker.org/about-us/events/](http://www.racker.org/about-us/events/)