March 4, 2020

**A message from the Snohomish Health District and Little Kings and Queens Childcare LLC**

Dear families,

There is growing concern about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and how child cares, preschools, and early learning programs are preparing. We share your concerns, but want you to know that our programs following guidance from the Snohomish Health District to be prepared.

The early learning regulations require cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting to be done throughout the day using approved products. This includes using sanitizers and disinfectants on common frequent contact areas on a daily basis, such as tabletops, door knobs, faucet handles, toys etc. We are also encouraging children and staff to practice frequent hand washing, particularly before meal times and after toileting/diapering and outdoor play. Health officials are not recommending the use of face masks for the general public.

Please support your child care program’s efforts to minimize the spread of illnesses. The best steps you can take are the same ones that help prevent other respiratory illnesses like the flu. This includes all children, staff and families being vigilant in:

• Staying at home away from others if you are sick and keeping your child home if they have symptoms of illness including, fever, cough or difficulty breathing.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

• Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.

• Cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces, especially “high-touch” ones like doorknobs, counters, light switches, or remotes.

• Covering mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then throwing the tissue in the trash and washing your hands. Cough into your elbow if a tissue is unavailable.

Decisions on closing child cares for a period of time would be made in coordination with the child care program and the Snohomish Health District.The scientific basis for child care closures in outbreak or pandemic settings is situation-dependent.

In the meantime, you can work on preparing your family:

• Know your work place’s sick leave policy and whether you can work remotely.

• Have a plan for who will pick up and care for your children if your early learning program is closed OR if your child is ill.

• Ensure your child care has updated contact information and updated emergency contacts.

It is important to remember that, while this virus was first identified in China, it is not linked to any ethnic or racial group. Please use and share reliable sources of information on COVID 19. The Washington State Department of Health has established a call center to address questions from the public at 1-800-525-0127 and press #.

There are many resources available on the Snohmish Health District website at http://www.snohd.org/ncov2019. Information will be updated daily at 11am and 4pm as things change.We also encourage you to monitor that page and the Snohomish Health District’s Facebook and Twitter social media accounts for updates,as the situation may change.

Sincerely,

Snohomish Health District

Little Kings and Queens Childcare and Preschool LLC