



September 1, 2020 - Update #12

Good evening Christian Horizons families in Ontario,

It has been quite some time since many people with disabilities who reside in homes funded by the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS) have had the opportunity to go out and re-engage with their community. And while difficult, it is due to the incredible efforts of people, their family, friends, and community working together with us that we have not seen the devastating results of COVID-19 on a large scale at Christian Horizons. I sincerely thank you for your incredible efforts during this time.

However, it has been many months and many people with disabilities, their friends, families, and Christian Horizons, along with other service providers have been advocating and waiting patiently for these changes. With the reduction and leveling off of COVID-19 cases in Ontario, our government and Ministry leaders have announced some new guidelines to help people safely re-engage in their communities. You can access these guidelines here:

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/docs/MCCSS-Re-Opening-Short-Stay-Overnight-Stays-EN.pdf>

What this means is that people who live in group homes and other settings where multiple people live can now go out and get hair-cuts, hang out with family and friends, eat out, go back to school, and participate in other important aspects of their lives.

At Christian Horizons we know how important community is. In fact, our vision is to see people who experience disabilities belong to communities in which their God-given gifts are valued and respected. We celebrate along side you as people reconnect with the communities, people, and places important in their lives.

To support you and your family member or friend who uses services from Christian Horizons navigate these new guidelines, we have pulled together a few resources. The links below will take you to the resources we have uploaded on our COVID-19 Response and Resource page on our website.

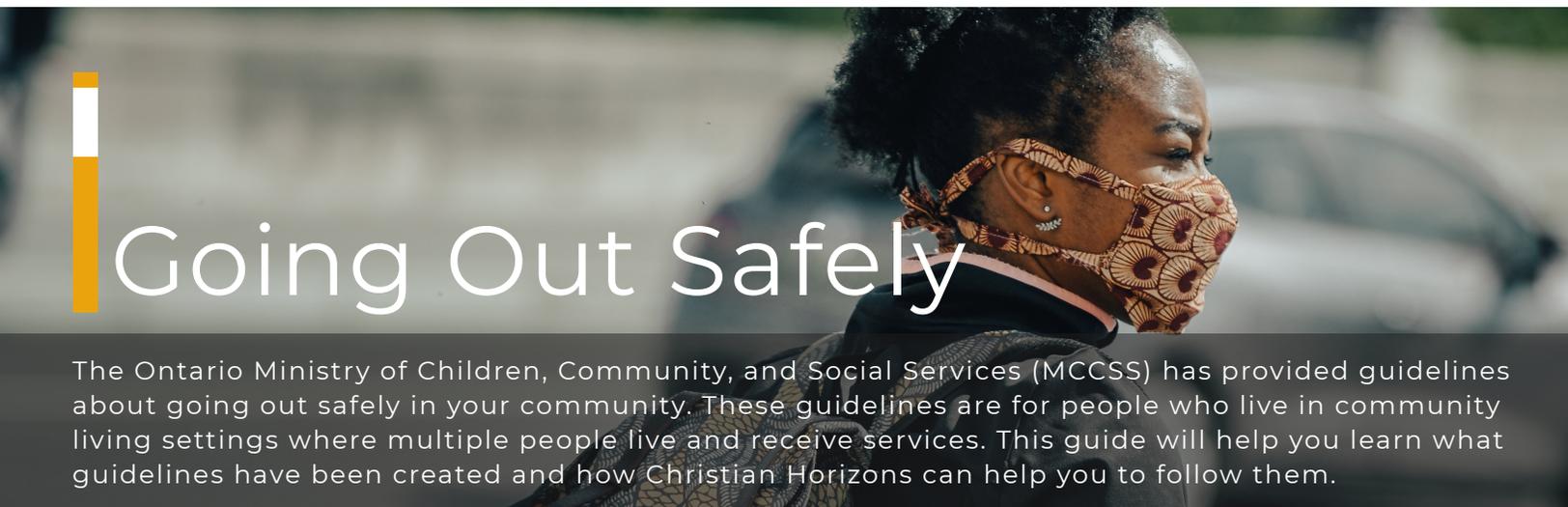
1. [Going out Safely](#)- This resource has been created by Christian Horizons to help you and your family member or friend learn what guidelines the government has created and how Christian Horizons can help you to follow them..
2. [Safety in Your Community Social Story](#)- This visual tool can be used to help understand or help another person understand how to be safe in community settings.
3. [Going out? Do it Safely](#)- this infographic has been created by the Government of Canada to help understand the risks associated with different types of gatherings and different types of places.

Over the course of this week, our teams will be working to establish the plans and tools we need to have in place in order to support people in reconnecting with their community. These processes will be in place by the end of this week. We are happy to be at this stage of helping people re-engage and we look forward to continuing to partner with you as we work to keep COVID-19 at bay and strive to promote communities where everybody belongs.

Together with you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janet".

Janet Noel-Annable
Chief Executive Officer



Going Out Safely

The Ontario Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS) has provided guidelines about going out safely in your community. These guidelines are for people who live in community living settings where multiple people live and receive services. This guide will help you learn what guidelines have been created and how Christian Horizons can help you to follow them.

A guide for going out



Connecting with people in our communities is an important part of our lives. We celebrate with you that it is becoming safer to spend time in the community.

You may feel ready to go out with family and friends, go back to school, shop, eat out, get your haircut, or go to appointments. These are all things we can do in our communities now.

However, COVID-19 has not gone away. It is important that we still take steps to keep us and others safe when we are in the community. This guide helps you to follow the rules the government has asked people using their services to take.

What has the Ontario government asked you to do?

Ontario 



People should wear a mask when they go out and only take it off to eat or drink, putting it back on as soon as they are done.



When people return home after going out, they will be screened for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. People who show signs of COVID-19 will self-isolate at home and can seek testing.



People should use hand sanitizer before and after leaving their home. It is important to use hand sanitizer when entering and leaving other buildings in the community or after touching a surface other people may have touched.



When in the community, people should wear face masks when indoors or when they might come within 2 metres of people outdoors.



Where possible, people should avoid crowded indoor places. People should also maintain a 2 metres distance from other people both indoors and outdoors.

More info on requirements can be found **at these links:**

MCCSS Re-Opening of Congregate Living Settings: Short-Stay Absences and Outings and Essential Overnight Absences

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/docs/MCCSS-Re-Opening-Short-Stay-Overnight-Stays-EN.pdf>

Government of Canada Resource: Going out Safely During COVID-19

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/covid-19-going-out-safely/2020-07-31-risk-assessment-en.pdf>

What can Christian Horizons help you with?



We want to make this process as clear and simple as possible for everyone. Here is what we are doing to help you in this process:

- ✔ We'll help explain these guidelines and the things you can do to stay healthy and well.
- ✔ If you are going out with an employee of Christian Horizons, they will help you remember to keep a safe distance from others, to wear a mask, and to clean your hands.
- ✔ We'll ask you questions about COVID-19 symptoms when you return home.
- ✔ We'll support you to self-isolate and get tested if you show signs of COVID-19.
- ✔ We'll help you to keep track of where you go and who you are with in case you come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 and need to monitor for symptoms.

What can your friends or family help you with?



Hey family and friends,

If you are going out with a person who uses Christian Horizons services, below are some ways you can help them to follow MCCSS guidelines and stay safe while out in their community. Remind people to:

- ✔ make choices about which places they will go depending on the level of risk associated with each location, keeping in mind their health factors.
- ✔ think about how easy or hard it might be to follow the precautions. This may help them decide which places are safe and not safe for them to go.
- ✔ keep 6ft apart from others, to wear a mask, and use hand sanitizer after touching surfaces other people may have touched.
- ✔ keep the vehicle they will be traveling in sanitized by using sanitizer to clean surfaces other people may have touched before they get in.

Safety in Your Community



Adapted from Aptus Treatment Centre

1



Many people have been staying at home to avoid getting sick from the coronavirus or spreading germs to others.

2



This means that many places in the community were closed.

3

Over the past several months, a lot of work has gone into making the community safer.



4



This means that more places in the community are opening and people will be spending more time outside of their homes.

5

It is important to stay home if I am feeling sick so I don't make other people sick too.

SYMPTOMS



- Fever
- Headache
- Flu
- Out of breath
- Severe cough
- Sore throat

6

When I leave my home, it is important that I am as safe as possible to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others.



7

When I go out, I need to follow some rules to make sure that I and the people around me are safe.



8



It is important to clean my hands often using soap and water or hand sanitizer. I will need to clean my hands when I leave my home and right away when I come back home.



9



I will use hand sanitizer when I go into and come out of stores and other places in my community, and after I touch things that other people touch too.



10

It is important to keep my distance. "Social distancing" means keeping at least 2 meters or 6 feet away from others (about the length of a pool noodle!) whenever I can.



11



Every place has different rules. People who support me can help me to understand these rules and to know what I'm supposed to do.

12



Signs on the ground tell me where to stand to keep distance from others.



Arrows or lines on the floor tell me what direction to walk in to keep distance from others.

Keeping safe means **following the signs** that places are using to show people **where to stand** or **what direction to walk in**.

13

Wearing a mask or face covering that covers my nose and mouth helps to keep me safe.

It also helps the people around me stay healthy!



14

If I'm going to be close to other people I will need to wear a mask, and anytime I'm indoors outside of my home.

I can take off my mask for a few minutes to eat or to drink, but then I will need to put it back on again.



15



Many of these rules apply to everybody, but the Ministry of Community, Children, and Social Services has also made some rules for people who live with others in community living environments.

I can learn more about these rules and risks with the "Rules and Risks" Social Story.

16



Just because many places are open does not mean they are all good places to go. I will need to stay away from places that are crowded with people, and try not to visit with too many people at once.

17

Staying away from crowds and other people helps me to keep healthy. I can do this by:

- Moving to the other side of the street when other people are on the sidewalk.
- Choosing to go somewhere else if there is a line-up.
- Waiting to go into a room until some people have left.
- Saying "hi" to other people while staying away from them, like with a wave or nod!



18



It's important **not to touch my face** without washing my hands first. I'll also try **not to touch surfaces** that a lot of other people have touched and use hand sanitizer if I do.

19

I should wash my hands or use hand sanitizer when:

- I come in from outside.
- After I have touched a surface or item from outside.
- Before I touch my face.
- Before I eat.



20

When I come back home after a visit or outing, I will be asked questions about how I'm feeling to make sure I'm not sick.

SYMPTOMS



Fever Headache Flu
Out of breath Severe cough Sore throat

21

While more places in the community are open now, I know that the coronavirus is still around and spreads easily!

This means that when I go out in the community I can still get the coronavirus. I can make other people sick, too, if I'm not careful.



22

If I am in close contact with someone who has coronavirus
OR if I visit a place in the community where there are people who are sick, I will need to get tested.



23

I may also have to "self-isolate," which means keeping away from other people in a safe place apart from my housemates, family and the community for a period of time - to keep everyone safe.



24

Places in the community that are open now could be closed again if things get worse. People going out now may be asked to stay at home again to keep everyone safe.



25



Learning that more places in the community are open and how to stay safe if I choose to go out, might make me feel different emotions.
It is *okay* to feel this way.

26



I have people in my life who are here to support me.
If I have questions or need support I can talk to them.

27