

OVERVIEW OF KIDANGO'S EMERGENCY POPUP CHILDCARE PROGRAM

A Brief from Early Edge California and Kidango

Beginning Friday, March 13, 2020, the Bay Area's largest preschool and childcare provider, Kidango, drastically changed its daily operations due to the COVID-19 crisis, temporarily closing its 55 centers and opening emergency childcare centers for the children of healthcare workers and first responders in Santa Clara, Alameda, and Contra Costa counties. This transformation has required a fast-paced, highly creative, and empathic approach from their entire team to meet the urgent needs of children, families, and communities. Close partnerships with state and local government and other community-based organizations have been critical to its success.



Emergency PopUp Childcare Program

As of March 25, Kidango has opened five emergency childcare centers, including two hospital locations. Depending on the identified need, Kidango will open more of these centers in the near future. Kidango's childcare centers will adhere to social distancing, sanitation, and hygiene guidelines from the [CDE's Public Health Advisory on Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Childcare Guidance](#).

Hours of Care and Ages of Children Served

Kidango began operations for providing emergency childcare during the week of March 16, 2020. Its five emergency childcare centers are open Monday - Friday, 7:30 am - 5:30 pm. The centers are providing care to children ages birth through five years. Children attending will receive at least two meals a day plus snacks.

Intake of Families

Collaborative efforts were taken by Kidango and partnering entities to inform families in need of this new emergency childcare service. Santa Clara county was able to inform 8,000 healthcare workers and first responders about this service. Additionally, a hotline has been created specifically for Kidango's emergency childcare centers, which essential workers needing childcare can call to register their children. The hotline is administered by Kidango's partner organization, Healthier Kids Foundation, whose team is registering families.

Currently, as of April 1, 2020, approximately 100 children are receiving care at a Kidango emergency childcare center. Kidango has been able to provide emergency childcare services to all families who have requested it.

Staffing

Kidango has staffed its emergency childcare centers with certificated early childhood teachers currently employed by the organization, and is providing them with hazard pay of \$20 per hour in addition to their regular pay (for instance, if a teacher typically makes \$22 per hour, they are now making \$42 an hour). The organization has staffed these sites to be in compliance with emergency childcare regulations and standards, adhering to stable group sizes of 12 children, with a teacher/child ratio of 1:6 for preschoolers and 1:3 for infants and toddlers. For children 12 months or younger, Kidango is adhering to a ratio of 1:1.

Health & Safety Checks

Kidango is meeting or exceeding the current public health guidelines for COVID-19 while operating its new emergency childcare centers. These include:



- Morning wellness checks of each child, including a temperature check.
- Following the requirement for a “stable” group model, which separates teacher/child groups within the same site, and ensures that the same teachers are caring for the same group of students every day.
- Frequent and stringent sanitizing occurring both during and at the end of the day.

Kidango is utilizing medical equipment supplied by the counties and hospitals partnering on this effort, and is in communication with the state and county health officials about the organization’s current needs to successfully support children in their emergency childcare centers.

Lessons Learned

Kidango’s CEO Scott Moore offered some advice for other providers in the process of providing emergency childcare support:

- Where possible, pursue partnership. Partner with other nonprofit organizations who can provide support in different areas of this effort and involve entities at the county level. Keep staff involved where possible.
- Be flexible in these uncertain times and be open to new ways your organization can provide support.
- Talk to your stakeholders, listen to what your families and communities need right now. Pay close attention to the new health and safety regulations that have been released.
- Be creative and have fun!



For questions about Kidango’s emergency childcare centers, please contact Mario Fierro-Hernandez at Mfhernandez@kidango.org.

Visit [Kidango](#) and [Early Edge California](#) to learn more about the work these organizations are doing.