AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE
REGARDING COVID-19
FROM BILLIE OSBORNE-FEARS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For immediate release: March 19, 2020

Starting Point has been and will continue to monitor the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak with guidance from local, state and federal government agencies. The health, safety and well-being of the people we serve, employees, and other stakeholders remain our top priority. All of our offices are closed to the public until further notice.

Starting Point is committed to continuing to serve families seeking child care, early education and out-of-school time services by telephone and our website www.starting-point.org where families may conduct their own child care searches.

The following guidelines are effective as of March 17, 2020 and will remain in effect as long as necessary. These guidelines have been developed to protect the health and safety of the people we serve and their families as well as Starting Point employees. These guidelines are subject to change pending new or revised guidance issued by local, state and/or federal government agencies. Any update to this correspondence will be made available on our website www.starting-point.org if changes occur. You may also follow us on Facebook and Twitter to find additional information and links to resources and tools.

PREVENTION:
Preventing the spread of COVID-19 is the responsibility of each of us. Be sure to follow all recommendations from the Ohio Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control, including:

❖ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
❖ Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
❖ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
❖ Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
❖ Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
❖ Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
❖ Stop handshaking – use other methods of greeting.
❖ Practice social distancing.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/COACHING VISITS TO CHILD CARE & EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS:
Starting Point has reduced face-to-face contacts by suspending technical assistance and coaching site visits to child care centers, early education programs, family child care homes and out-of-school time programs by Starting Point employees. Starting Point will conduct routine business by telephone and virtual technical assistance visits, in place of face-to-face visits. Our staff will continue to be available by telephone and email.
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:
We will continue to provide technical assistance to community-based organizations by telephone.

TRAINING FOR CHILD CARE & EARLY EDUCATION PROVIDERS
All face-to-face training are cancelled (effective March 16th, 2020) until further notice. We are exploring the possibility of offering training remotely (web-conferencing). Please check our website at www.starting-point.org periodically for updates on when these services will be available.

MEETINGS & GATHERINGS:
Starting Point will not host any non-mission critical meetings, gatherings or events as long as this guidance is in effect. Likewise, Starting Point employees will not be required to attend any non-mission critical meetings, gatherings or events. (Supervisors will assist employees in determining the types of meetings considered to be non-mission critical.)

COMMUNICATION:
We will post updates on the home page of our website www.Starting-Point.org. If you have a need or question, please contact us by calling 800-880-0971 Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM. You may also use the ‘Contact Us’ option on our website (www.Starting-Point.org).

Should you have questions concerning COVID-19, visit the website operated by the Ohio Department of Health that is updated daily with information: www.coronavirus.ohio.gov or call the toll free number staffed by health care and infectious disease professionals. This call center is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and can be reached at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

If I can be of assistance to you, please contact me.

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