

Governor Greg Abbott and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service today announced a series of free online trainings for child care providers and parents who are either in need of, or who will be providing care for, children of essential employees throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first three trainings are available on Texas A&M AgriLife's [online learning platform](#). Additional free training sessions will be rolled out incrementally and will address health and safety guidelines, practices for staffing, essential materials for child care operations, developmentally appropriate activities, adult-child interactions and more. Trainings will also address topics such as emergency management planning, stress management and self-care for caregivers, planning at-home activities for children, parent-child communication, and supporting children's emotional needs. Additionally, Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott provided an [introductory video](#) for the child care training sessions.

"These trainings provide crucial health and safety information to parents and child care providers affected by the COVID-19 response, and ensure that providers and parents alike have the tools they need to effectively care for young Texans," said Governor Abbott. "I am grateful for this ongoing collaboration with our public and private partners to support Texans throughout this challenging time."

"AgriLife Extension has long been a leader in providing practical, research-based, objective information to the people of Texas so we are very well positioned to help them address various aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic," said AgriLife Extension director Jeff Hyde, Ph.D. "I'm proud that we were able to develop these trainings to help support the Texas Frontline Child Care Task Force in providing important information and assistance to essential employees and their children during this difficult time."

"In my role leading the Frontline Child Care Task Force and as chair of the Texas A&M Board of Regents, I knew the people in AgriLife Extension not only had the knowledge and expertise needed to develop these online trainings, they also had credibility with child care providers," said Texas Frontline Child Care Task Force Chair Elaine Mendoza said. "I asked Dr. Stephen Green, head of AgriLife Extension's Family and Community Health Unit, to put together a team of early childhood experts from his agency and any state agencies that could advise and support them in developing a series of trainings."

These online training courses were developed through a collaboration between the Governor's Texas Frontline Child Care Task Force, specialists in child and early child development, health, disaster assessment and recovery and family economics from AgriLife's Family and Community Health Unit. It also included experts from the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children, Children's Learning Institute, Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Health and Human Services Commission and Texas Department of State Health Services.

The first three trainings available now are:

- [Special Considerations for Infection Control During COVID-19](#)
- [High-Quality Emergency Child Care During COVID-19](#)
- [When & How to Provide Child Care During COVID-19](#)