January 22, 2021

Dear Kindering Families,

Thank you for being a part of Team Kindering and for your patience and flexibility as we find new and innovative ways to support children and families during this challenging time. This year we are excited to celebrate each small yet significant step toward recovery, much like we celebrate each momentous “inchstone” that our children and families make.

I am filled with hope as our region makes progress to combat the spread of COVID-19, including recent access to vaccines and a variety of health and safety precautions. I am also reassured by our own positive experiences with limited in-person services (Kindering’s Step ONE) that began in August. Your feedback has been key, and we appreciate it greatly. We value your experiences, and hope that you will continue to use this link to provide any feedback. Looking ahead, I am so grateful for our staff-led task force as they pave the path forward and continue to safely expand in-person services. In fact, we are beginning Step TWO soon!

**Starting Step TWO**

Beginning February 8th, we will transition to Step TWO which increases in-person individual services to more families. To ensure the safety of all, and in compliance with the state’s Early Support for Infants and Toddlers program as well as public health guidance, these in-person services will still be limited. Currently, Step TWO does not include group-based activities, such as classes, which we plan to return in later steps. Please know that virtual services remain an option for all families.

Your provider team will make the determination if your child is a candidate to return to in-person services during Step TWO; and, if interested, they will walk you through that process. Please note that virtual services will still be a part of the picture using a hybrid approach. Importantly, families who prefer fully virtual services still have this option.

If you are both approved for and choose to participate with in-person services, please keep in mind that time, location, and frequency of services may be limited (due to physical distancing and facility requirements as well as your provider’s changing schedule as they too make this transition). We greatly appreciate your understanding and ongoing support.

**Ensuring Safety in Step TWO**

Kindering continues to follow guidelines from Washington’s Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program, the Washington Department of Health, and official health and safety authorities.

As we move forward, we will continue to consider many factors, including children and family well-being, staff safety, health tracking and screening, infection prevention, equitable access, and effective program structure. We are committed to continuing with all health measures such as health screening, hand washing, PPE/mask wearing, and physical distancing whenever possible. Please let your providers or Family Resources Coordinator know about anything that would make your virtual or in-person experience more successful.
Vaccine Access

For the past two weeks, staff have been supported in their choice to access vaccines as a part of Washington’s Phase 1A - Tier 2. We are grateful to Washington’s Department of Health for recognizing and prioritizing the Neurodevelopmental Centers of Washington including Kindering. Regardless, we remain equally dedicated to all current safety measures such as supplying PPE, cleaning protocols, and health/safety plans to keep our campuses and all in-person services safe.

You may wonder when you will be approved and invited to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. [Click here](#) to see Washington’s Phase Finder for adults and youth age 16+.

Thank you again for being part of the Kindering family, and for your ongoing support as we find the best ways to provide the finest education and therapies to nurture hope, courage, and the skills to soar. Your tenacity during this challenging time is inspiring.

Thank you for your partnership as we work together for a brighter future for our kids.

Warmly,

Lisa Greenwald, PhD
Chief Executive Officer