



CoStars Preschool student Kyleena sits with her mom, Taibah with Cincinnati Preschool Promise Executive Director/CEO Chara Jackson at a 2019 children and families event held at The Children's Home. Kyleena is one of the students the Children's Home serves as an emergency pandemic childcare facility as her mom is an essential healthcare worker.

The Children's Home CoStars Preschool named 'Pandemic Certified' childcare facility

Some moms don't have the option of working from home because their job involves saving lives at a time when our community needs them most.

This is true for Taibah Abdul-Muhaimin, a healthcare worker and single mom. Her daughter, Kyleena, regularly attended CoStars Preschool by The Children's Home. But, the worldwide pandemic forced many preschools in the area to shut their doors when ordered to do so by state guidelines.

The Children's Home immediately took steps to become "pandemic certified," which until last month was not even in the national vocabulary. Now, it means having classrooms that meet stringent state criteria, staff to student ratios, and remaining open to serve children of essential community employees – usually healthcare workers and first responders.

Its new territory for the agency, but John Banchy, president and CEO of The Children's Home, said to not find a way to continue serving families like Taibah's was simply an option he and his team never considered.

“At first the decision to open as a pandemic certified site felt scary,” he said. “We had to learn about COVID-19 and what we would need to do to keep folks safe in record time. We knew we had families in need of care, we knew we were centrally located, and our staff overwhelmingly stepped forward to work the program.”



(l to r) John Banchy, president and CEO of The Children’s Home, a fellow classmate at CoStars preschool, Kyleena, and Joseph Dominiak, Chair of the Board of Trustees of The Children’s Home, demonstrate the use of “can phones” at CoStars Preschool.

Banchy said the agency has been operating as a state certified emergency pandemic childcare facility since March 30. CoStars can accept children preschool- and school-aged and is made possible through a continuing partnership through United Way of Greater Cincinnati.

“CoStars have been great in times of need,” said Abdul-Muhaimin. “Not only are they staying open for essential workers, but I was also able to get schooling for my cousins who attend another school, which is closed. Even before the pandemic I could count on Costars for anything. I am more than grateful to have my family at Costars, the staff is absolutely fantastic!”

“We’re proud to serve families in a time when they need peace of mind knowing their kids are safe,” said Carolyn Brinkmann, director of early childhood and school ages services for The Children’s Home.



Kyleena and her “GG”, or great-grandmother who is also an essential worker. Kyleena’s cousins, who live with GG, also receive care at CoStars.



“Kyleena is a five-year-old adorable child who has attended CoStars for the past two years and when the pandemic hit, Taibah had no choice but to continue to work. And frankly, our community needs Taibah right now. I’m glad we can serve her and her family in this way while she’s doing so much to get us through the current crisis.”

Quickly after opening as an emergency site, Taibah learned that the Cincinnati Preschool Promise would continue to cover the fees associated with Kyleena remaining at CoStars. She also learned that her two nieces in need of care, as their guardian is also an essential employee, would qualify to attend the CoStars emergency childcare program.

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“We are currently serving a dozen kids whose parents or guardians are needed now more than ever,” said Jill Smith, operations director of The Children’s Home and emergency childcare program administrator. “We are diligently following the health guidelines the state has issued, have had no illnesses reported among our kids or staff, and have room to serve other families who need us. I’m glad that we have been able to do our part to support the wellness of families during this crisis.”

Guidance for families who may qualify for placing their child with the CoStars emergency childcare program are available by calling 513-527-7306 or by visiting [here](#).



COSTARS
BY THE CHILDREN'S HOME