We are learning more every day regarding COVID-19 in children. We are using the latest research to help NC make decisions about how we should operate our schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to follow new data and science as it is available to learn more. The current research summarized below still presents an early and limited picture of children and schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Be sure to check back for regular updates by visiting https://www.nc.gov/covid19.

**Children may be less likely to have and spread COVID-19 than adults**
- Children, particularly younger children, may be less likely than adults to become infected with COVID-19, even after being exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Newer findings suggest that adolescents and adults may be equally likely to become infected.
- Newer findings suggest that because of mild to no symptoms, there may be an undercount of actual number children infected and more cases in children have been detected recently.
- Young children can spread the virus, however children under 10 years of age may be less likely to spread COVID-19 to others than older teens and adults.
- Newer findings suggest that younger children may be more likely to get COVID-19 from an adult than to spread an infection to an adult.
- Spread of COVID-19 is more likely within a household than not within a household (such as school).

**Most children have very mild illness with COVID-19, but some have more severe symptoms and we are learning more about children who are at higher risk for infection or more severe illness**
- Children infected with COVID-19 generally have mild or no symptoms.
- Although rare, some children can have severe disease, need hospitalization, and have developed multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C) after exposure to SARS-CoV-2.
- Children with underlying medical conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
- Our African American and LatinX communities and children are disproportionally affected by COVID-19.

**Data from other countries does not show a large spread of COVID-19 associated with schools being open for instruction**
- International data that are available show limited transmission in schools when a child was infected.
- While there have been some specific examples of spread in school, schools have not seemed to play a major role in the spread of COVID-19, especially in areas with low viral transmission, and few school outbreaks have been reported.
- Overall, countries that have reopened their schools after infection rates had gone down did not see large rises in infection at a population level.

**Less than 6 feet of social distancing may still be protective for children**
- The CDC still recommends 6 feet of social distancing as the most health-protective distancing.
- However, in low- and medium-risk settings, 3 feet of social distancing may lead to a similar risk for the spread of COVID-19, especially when people wear cloth face coverings. Because of decreased risk of spread among children, schools may be considered low or medium risk.
- Keeping students spread out with more space in between them provides additional protection.
Children may be less likely to have and spread COVID-19 than adults, but we are learning more about children’s ability to spread the virus.

**Learn More**

- **Preprint, MedRxiv. Susceptibility to and transmission of COVID-19 amongst children and adolescents compared with adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis; May 24, 2020**

- **CDC, COVID 19 Information for Pediatric Health Care Providers: May 29, 2020**

- **Prevent Epidemics, COVID-19 Weekly Science Review: June 20-26, 2020**

- **Nature, Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in children and/or adolescents: a meta-analysis; June 17, 2020**

- **Science, Changes in contact patterns shape the dynamics of the COVID-19 outbreak in China; June 26, 2020**

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Preparing K-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in Fall 2020. Updated July 23, 2020**


- **BMJ Contact tracing during Phase 1 of the COVID-10 pandemic in the Province of Trento, Italy: key findings and recommendations. July29, 2020**

- **School Opening across globe suggest ways to keep coronavirus at bay, despite outbreaks. July 7, 2020**


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Most children have very mild illness with COVID-19, but some have more severe symptoms and we are learning more about children who are at higher risk for infection or more severe illness.

Balancing the Risks of Pupils Returning to Schools; Royal Society DELVE Initiative; July 24, 2020


COVID-19 in Children and the Dynamics of Infection in Families Pediatrics; July 2020

JAMA Pediatric Age-Related Differences in Nasopharyngeal Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) Levels in Patients with Mild to Moderate Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) July 30, 2020


Household transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in the United States; August 16, 2020

Transmission Dynamics of COVID-19 Outbreaks Associated with Child Care Facilities — Salt Lake City, Utah, April–July 2020. Early Release / September 11, 2020 / 69

Susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection among children and adolescents compared with adults. September 25, 2020


Household transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in the United States. August 16, 2020

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Children and Fecal SARS-CoV-2 shedding: Just the tip of the iceberg of Italian COVID-19 outbreak? Digestive and Liver Disease; July 18, 2020


Hospital Admission in Children and Adolescents With COVID-19. Early results from a national survey conducted by the German Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases (DGPI). May 2020


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School Opening across globe suggest ways to keep coronavirus at bay, despite outbreaks. July 7, 2020

Data from other countries, for the most part, does not show a large spread of COVID-19 associated with schools being open for instruction

Lancet Child and Adolescent Health, School Closure and Management Practices During Coronavirus Outbreaks Including COVID-19: A Rapid Systematic Review; April 6, 2020

Balancing the Risks of Pupils Returning to Schools; Royal Society DELVE Initiative; July 24 2020


Surveillance of COVID-19 school outbreaks, Germany, March to August 2020

NCIRS, COVID-19 in schools - the experience in NSW; April 26, 2020


Learning Policy Institute, Reopening Schools in the Context of COVID-19: Health and Safety Guidelines from other Countries, May 15 2020

Less than 6 feet of social distancing may still be protective for children


The Lancet, Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection to prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: a systematic review and meta-analysis; June 1, 2020

NCIRS, COVID-19 in schools - the experience in NSW; April 26, 2020

World Health Organization, Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19; May 10, 2020

Prevent Epidemics, COVID-19 Weekly Science Review; June 20-26, 2020

Center for Global Development, Back to School: An update on COVID cases as schools reopen; June 12, 2020