

NEW REPORT

TRUMP AND REPUBLICANS DENY THE DANGERS OF REOPENING SCHOOLS

*as Outbreaks Occur in Classrooms and
as Cases Spike Among Children*



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CORONAVIRUS
WAR ROOM

Trump and Republicans Deny the Dangers of Reopening Schools as Outbreaks Occur in Classrooms and as Cases Spike Among Children

President Trump has erred at every juncture throughout the pandemic. He falsely claimed the virus would “disappear,” he pushed junk science and touted harmful drugs, he failed to ramp up testing while urging the economy to reopen prematurely — and now, he is making the same mistakes with America’s children.

President Trump is calling for schools across the country to reopen despite the fact that the United States still has the worst outbreak in the world, and despite the fact that ample evidence suggests doing so would exacerbate the pandemic and endanger both children and their families.

In fact, Trump-pushed reopenings have already resulted in outbreaks at schools and summer camps, as more and more children across the country contract the virus. The fact of the matter is that everyone wants schools to reopen — but only if it can be done safely. Until then, President Trump’s push is nothing more than putting his personal politics above the wellness of children, teachers, families and communities across the country.

HIGHLIGHTS

- President Trump and senior White House officials like Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos have downplayed the danger that the virus poses to children as they push to reopen schools.
- As the school year begins, cases among children are rising: infections among children grew by 97,000 — or 40% — in the last two weeks of July alone.
- Children can become sick from the virus and suffer complications. At least 45 children under the age of 14 have died from the virus.
- Children can transmit the virus to others — possibly putting family and teachers at risk. Those between the ages of 10 and 19 have been shown to transmit the virus at least as well as adults, while those younger than 5 have been shown to have even greater amounts of virus in their noses.
 - 3.3 million seniors live with children in the United States.
 - One in four school teachers is at risk for serious complications from COVID-19 due to preexisting conditions.
- Schools in Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Indiana are already experiencing outbreaks of the virus since reopening — resulting in chaos and fresh quarantines.

President Trump and Senior Administration Officials Have Downplayed the Risk That Reopening Schools Poses to Children’s Health

President Trump

- **Trump On August 11: “This Disease Has Very Little Impact On Young People.”** “In an interview with conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt, President Trump said: ‘I think you should play football. These are young, strong athletes. As you know, this disease has very little impact on young people, the immune system, and plus, they’re in great health. They’re in very good health. And I think you should play football.’” [Hugh Hewitt, [8/11/20](#)]
- **Trump On August 10: “They Get Better Very Quickly.”** “Donald Trump has repeatedly insisted that children are immune from the virus. Asked on Monday whether infections among young people gives him any pause, he said: ‘No. There may be a case, a tiny, a tiny fraction of death, tiny fraction, and they get better very quickly.’” [Independent, [8/11/20](#)]
- **Trump On August 5: Kids Are “Virtually Immune From This Problem.”** “‘If you look at children, children are almost — I would almost say definitely — but almost immune from this disease. So few — they’ve gotten stronger. Hard to believe. I don’t know how you feel about it, but they have much stronger immune systems than we do, somehow, for this. And they don’t have a problem. They just don’t have a problem,’ Trump said. Trump said he

would get media criticism for using the term ‘totally immune,’ adding, ‘but the fact is that they are virtually immune from this problem.’” [CNN, [8/10/20](#)]

- **Trump On June 22: “The Young Kids Have Done Unbelievably Well, Their Immune System, I Guess... Is Stronger.”** “Well, we have more cases because we have more testing so they can test a kid who’s got sniffles and is going to be better in about two hours because you know, young -- the young kids have done -- unbelievably well, their immune system, I guess, or whatever is stronger.” [Fox News, Brian Kilmeade Show, [6/22/20](#)]

Secretary Of Education Betsy DeVos

- **DeVos On July 16: Children Are “Stoppers” Of COVID-19.** “More and more studies show that kids are actually stoppers of the disease and they don’t get it and transmit it themselves, so we should be in a posture of — the default should be getting back to school kids in person, in the classroom.” [The Conservative Circus, [7/16/20](#)]
- **DeVos On July 12: “There Is Nothing In The Data That Would Suggest That Kids Being Back In School Is Dangerous To Them.”** “There is nothing in the data that would suggest that kids being back in school is dangerous to them,’ DeVos said. ‘In fact, it’s more a matter of their health and well-being that they be back in school.’ The New York Times, however, obtained internal CDC documents last week that warned that fully reopening K-12 schools and universities would create the ‘highest risk’ for the spread of the coronavirus.” [CNN, [7/12/20](#)]
- **DeVos On A July 7 Call With Governors: “We Know That Risk Is Embedded In Everything We Do.”** “On a call with the nation’s governors Tuesday, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos chastised local officials for doing ‘next to nothing’ to provide academic services to students and demanded they reopen schools in the fall regardless of the state of the COVID pandemic. The issue, DeVos stressed at one point, was merely a matter of calculated risk, nothing all that different from those taken by an astronaut heading into space. ‘Education leaders really do need to examine real data and weigh risk,’ DeVos said. ‘They already deal with risk on a daily basis. We know that risk is embedded in everything we do. Learning to ride a bike, to the risk of getting in a space capsule and getting shot off in a rocket into space.’” [Daily Beast, [7/7/20](#)]

Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany

- **White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany Inexplicably Declared That “Science Should Not Stand In The Way” Of Schools Reopening While Arguing That It Was “Perfectly Safe” To Fully Reopen All Classrooms.** “White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany on Thursday emphasized that schools reopening this fall shouldn’t be contingent on science surrounding coronavirus, but then claimed the “science is on our side here” as the pandemic continues unabated. In response to a question about what President Donald Trump would say to parents who have kids in school districts that may be online-only, McEnany said: ‘The president has said unmistakably that he wants schools to open. And when he says open, he means open in full, kids being able to attend each and every day at their school.’ ‘The science should not stand in the way of this,’ she added, saying it is ‘perfectly safe’ to fully reopen all classrooms.” [USA Today, [7/16/20](#)]

Children Can Contract, Transmit, Fall Ill and Die From the Virus

As Schools Reopen, Cases Among Children Are Spiking

- **Between July 9 And August 6, Coronavirus Cases Among Children Increased 90 Percent In The United States.** “As decision-makers weigh whether to reopen U.S. schools this fall, they face a daunting reality: COVID-19 appears to have surged among American kids this summer. On July 9, there were approximately 200,000 confirmed cases in children; by Aug. 6, that number rose by nearly 180,000, an approximately 90% increase in just over four weeks, according to a new report. That translates to an increase from 319 per 100,000 American children to 501 cases per 100,000, in just four weeks.” [Time, [8/11/20](#)]

More and more U.S. children are being diagnosed with coronavirus

COVID-19 cases per 100,000 children



Chart: Elijah Wolfson for TIME • Source: [American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital Association](#) • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

[Time, [8/11/20](#)]

- **Nearly 340,000 Children Have Tested Positive For Coronavirus Since The Beginning Of The Pandemic.** “As of July 30, there were 338,982 cases reported in children since the pandemic began. Still, that was a relatively small fraction of the total number of coronavirus cases nationally — 8.8 percent. As of April 14, children made up just 2 percent of cases nationwide, according to the data.” [Washington Post, [8/9/20](#)]
- **During The Last Two Weeks Of July, 97,000 Children In The United States Tested Positive For Coronavirus.** “Nearly 100,000 children tested positive for the coronavirus in the last two weeks of July, a new report from the American Academy of Pediatrics finds. Just over 97,000 children tested positive for the coronavirus from July 16 to July 30, according to the association. Out of almost 5 million reported COVID-19 cases in the U.S., CBS News' Michael George reports that the group found that more than 338,000 were children.” [CBS News, [8/9/20](#)]
- **The 97,000 Children Infected At The End Of July Represent A 40 Percent Jump In The Number Of Cases Among Children.** “Coronavirus infections among U.S. children grew 40% in the last half of July, according to a report from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital Association, bringing the total number of child infections to 8.8% of all U.S. cases.” [Bloomberg, [8/9/20](#)]
- **The Total Number Of Cases Among Children Seventeen And Under Rose By 137 Percent In Florida Over The Course Of One Month.** “In Florida, the total number of cases in children 17 and under rose from 16,797 on July 9 to 39,735 on August 9 -- an increase of 137%, according to Florida Department of Health data.” [CNN, [8/11/20](#)]
- **COVID-19 Cases Among Children And Teens Rose By 150 Percent In California Last Month — A Rate That Outpaces Case Growth For The State As A Whole.** “Coronavirus cases among children and teenagers are surging in California, up 150% last month, a rate that outpaces COVID-19 cases overall and establishes minors as a small but growing share of the state's COVID-19 cases.” [Los Angeles Times, [8/10/20](#)]
- **One-Third Of Children Tested In Florida Returned Positive Results, Triple The Overall Statewide Positivity Rate.** “The trend is consistent with data from Florida. About one-third of children tested in the state for COVID-19 returned positive results, which is higher than the overall statewide positivity rate of 11%, according to state data.” [USA Today, [7/17/20](#)]

Experts And Data Suggest That Children Can Spread The Virus To Others, Including More Vulnerable Communities

- **South Korea Study: “Those Between The Ages Of 10 And 19 Can Spread The Virus At Least As Well As Adults Do.”** “In the heated debate over reopening schools, one burning question has been whether and how efficiently children can spread the virus to others. A large new study from South Korea offers an answer: Children younger than 10 transmit to others much less often than adults do, but the risk is not zero. And those between the ages of 10 and 19 can spread the virus at least as well as adults do. The findings suggest that as schools reopen, communities will see clusters of infection take root that include children of all ages, several experts cautioned.” [New York Times, [7/18/20](#)]
- **Texas Children’s Hospital Chief Of Critical Care Dr. Lara Shekerdemian Warned That Children “Without A Doubt” Can Spread Coronavirus.** “Whether your child is entering preschool or high school, here’s what you should know about the coronavirus and how it can impact your family. Can children carry the coronavirus and spread it? ‘I think the answer is conclusively, without a doubt – yes,’ said Dr. Lara Shekerdemian, chief of critical care at Texas Children’s Hospital.” [USA Today, [7/17/20](#)]
- **OhioHealth Infectious Disease Specialist Dr. Joseph Gastaldo: “Kids Could Act As Vectors To Bring COVID-19 Home To Their Families And Perhaps Even Vulnerable People.”** “[Dr. Joseph Gastaldo of OhioHealth] points to several road blocks. When it comes to smaller kids, not only will social-distancing be difficult, but requiring face coverings as well. Although early research indicates kids may be less likely to get seriously ill, the same can’t be said for loved ones at home. ‘Kids could act as vectors to bring COVID-19 home to their families and perhaps even vulnerable people,’ said Dr. Gastaldo. Dr. Gastaldo also points out another wild card could be cold and flu season. Something else school administrators will have to consider when putting together potential safety plans.” [ABC6, [7/16/20](#)]
- **Children Younger Than Five Have Been Shown To Host Between Ten And One Hundred Times As Much Viral Load In Their Noses As Adults.** “Children younger than 5 have between 10 and 100 times more genetic material from the novel coronavirus in their noses compared to older children and to adults, according to a small study published Thursday in the journal JAMA Pediatrics.... ‘We had just noticed that some of the children that we were testing for SARS CoV-2 that were positive, the youngest children seemed to have a high amount of the viral nucleic acid -- a high viral load in their nose -- compared to some of our older children and adults,’ lead author Dr. Taylor Heald-Sargent, a pediatric infectious diseases specialist at Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago, told CNN. ‘And so when we ... actually ran the numbers, controlled for a few things, we found that there was actually a statistically significant higher amount of the genes that are encoded by SARS, which usually correlates to more virus, in the nose of children less than five years old, compared to older children and adults.’” [CNN, [7/30/20](#)]
- **Kaiser Family Foundation Estimated That 3.3 Million Seniors Live With School-Aged Children.** “Our analysis finds about 6% of people age 65 or older, or about 3.3 million people, lived in a household with a school-age child (ages 5-18) in 2018 (Figure 1). Looking the other way, 4.1 million school-age children, about 7% of those between the ages of 5 and 18, live in a household with someone 65 or over.” [Kaiser Family Foundation, [7/16/20](#)]
- **One In Four Teachers Is At Risk For Serious Complications From COVID-19.** “One in four teachers (24%, or about 1.47 million people), have a condition that puts them at higher risk of serious illness from coronavirus (Figure)... The challenge for school systems and for teachers in particular is the sheer volume of traffic and tight quarters in many school environments, which may make social distancing a significant challenge in many settings. For higher-risk teachers, failure to achieve safe working conditions could have very serious results.” [Kaiser Family Foundation, [7/10/20](#)]

Children Have Become Ill From The Virus And Suffered Complications

- **COVID-19 Hospitalizations Among Children In Florida Rose By 105 Percent In Just One Month.** “Covid-19 hospitalizations among children in Florida rose from 213 to 436 during that same period, a 105% increase. Deaths among children rose from four to seven in Florida during that period.” [CNN, [8/11/20](#)]
- **Doctors In England Reported That There Was A Link Between Virus And Neurological Side Effects.** “They can have seizures, fever, they can have hallucinations that could be very disturbing for them or their family

members, psychotic symptoms,' said Dr. Mike Zandi, a lead author of one study, co-author of the other and a consultant neurologist at Britain's National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery. 'It can be very hard to distinguish what is psychiatric disease from medical disease.'" [NBC News, [8/6/2020](#)]

- **On August 7, The CDC Released A Report Warning That Children Were At Risk Of Developing Severe Coronavirus Symptoms That Would Require Admission To An Intensive Care Unit.** "While most children who catch the coronavirus have either no symptoms or mild ones, they are still at risk of developing 'severe' symptoms requiring admission to an intensive care unit, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a new report released Friday." [NPR, [8/8/20](#)]
- **According To The CDC, Hispanic Children Are Eight Times More Likely Than White Children To Be Hospitalized With Coronavirus, While Black Children Are Five Times More Likely.** "Hispanic and Black children in particular were much more likely to require hospitalization for COVID-19, with Hispanic children about eight times as likely as white children to be hospitalized, while Black children were five times as likely." [NPR, [8/8/20](#)]
- **One Of Three Children Hospitalized For COVID-19 Is Admitted To The Intensive Care Unit — A Rate Similar To That Of Adults.** "Despite persistent rumors that children are 'almost immune' from the virus, the analysis of 576 children hospitalized for the virus across 14 states found that one out of three was admitted to the ICU — similar to the rate among adults. Almost 1 in 5 of those were infants younger than 3 months. The most common symptoms included fever and chills, inability to eat, nausea and vomiting." [NPR, [8/8/20](#)]
- **By May 20, 186 Children In 26 States Had Been Infected With COVID-Related Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome, And Four Had Died.** "Studies published June 29 in the New England Journal of Medicine reported on 186 children in 26 states who were diagnosed with MIS-C by May 20. Four of those children died. A researcher writing in the same issue added in reports from other countries, finding about 1,000 children worldwide have been diagnosed with MIS-C." [NPR, [7/15/20](#)]
- **Prestigious Medical Journal The Lancet Found That A Proportion Of Children With COVID-19 "Develop Severe Disease Requiring ICU Admission And Prolonged Ventilation."** "COVID-19 is generally a mild disease in children, including infants. However, a small proportion develop severe disease requiring ICU admission and prolonged ventilation... The study found that a substantial proportion (8%) of children develop severe disease, requiring intensive care support and prolonged ventilation. Several predisposing factors for requiring intensive care support were identified... Some children develop severe disease and require prolonged intensive care support, which should be accounted for in the planning of health-care services and allocation of resources during the ongoing pandemic." [The Lancet, [6/25/20](#)]
- **According To Former Food And Drug Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, Children In The United States Are More Likely To Have Underlying Conditions That Place Them At Higher-Risk Of Becoming Severely Sick With COVID-19.** "Children in the U.S. are more likely than kids in other countries to have underlying conditions that place them at an increased risk of becoming severely sick with Covid-19, complicating the U.S. debate over how and whether to reopen schools this fall, former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb said Monday... 'We have more co-morbid illness among young people in this country — more asthma, more obesity, more diabetes — so there is going to be higher risk with our school-age population,' Gottlieb said. Those so-called co-morbidities have resulted in more severe illnesses and even death in Covid-19 patients across all age groups, scientists have found." [CNBC, [7/13/20](#)]

Children Have Died From From The Virus

- **At Least 45 Children Under The Age Of 14 Have Died From COVID-19 Since The Pandemic Began.** "Some [kids] have ended up hospitalized with severe complications. The CDC reports at least 45 children age 14 and under have died from COVID-related causes since the pandemic began. This week, a 7-year-old died in Georgia." [NBC 15, [8/7/20](#)]
- **A 9-Year-Old Girl In Putnam County, Florida Passed Away From Coronavirus, The Youngest Victim To Die In The State.** "A 9-year-old girl from Putnam County is the youngest patient to die in Florida related to the coronavirus, according to data from the state. She is the first reported COVID-19 related child death in the Northeast Florida area." [News4Jax, [7/22/20](#)]

- **The Five-Year-Old Daughter Of Two Detroit First Responders Died From Complications From Coronavirus.** “The 5-year-old daughter of two Detroit first responders has died of complications from coronavirus. Skylar Herbert died Sunday at Beaumont Royal Oak Hospital after being on a ventilator for two weeks, CNN affiliate WXYZ reported. She tested positive for coronavirus last month and developed a rare form of meningitis and swelling on the brain, according to WXYZ. ‘The loss of a child, at any time, under any circumstances, is a tragedy,’ Beaumont Hospital said in a statement obtained by WXYZ. “We are heartbroken that COVID-19 has taken the life of a child. We extend our deepest sympathy to Skylar’s family and all others who have lost a loved one to this virus.” [CNN, [4/21/20](#)]
- **A Second Grader In Durham, North Carolina Died Of Coronavirus.** “A child has died of coronavirus in North Carolina, becoming the first pediatric death in the state to die from COVID-19, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services confirmed Friday. Aurea Soto Morales, a second-grader at Creekside Elementary School in Durham, North Carolina, died Monday after she was hospitalized at UNC Medical Center in Chapel Hill for complications from coronavirus, according to Raleigh NBC affiliate WRAL-TV.” [WCNC, [6/5/20](#)]
- **A 5-Month-Old Baby Of A New York City Firefighter Died Of Coronavirus Complications.** “The 5-month-old baby of a New York City firefighter has died of coronavirus complications, according to Jose A Prosper, president of the FDNY Hispanic Society. Jay-Natalie La Santa was the daughter of the FDNY Hispanic Society’s newest member, Jerel La Santa, and his wife, Lindsey La Santa, Prosper wrote in an Instagram post. ‘One of the worst experiences as a parent is to go through the loss of a child,’ Prosper wrote. ‘Called ‘Warrior princess’ a title given to her by her Father Jerel, for her fighting spirit against the horrible covid-19 Virus.’” [CBS News, [4/23/20](#)]

School Reopenings and Summer Camps Have Resulted in Outbreaks, Highlighting the Danger to Children

Students And Teachers Are Already Testing Positive For The Virus — Resulting In School Closures and Chaos

- **At Greenfield Central Junior High School In Indiana, A Student Tested Positive On The First Day The School Reopened, Forcing Anyone Who Came In Contact With Them To Quarantine For 14 Days.** “Just hours into the first day of classes on Thursday, a call from the county health department notified Greenfield Central Junior High School in Indiana that a student who had walked the halls and sat in various classrooms had tested positive for the coronavirus. Administrators began an emergency protocol, isolating the student and ordering everyone who had come into close contact with the person, including other students, to quarantine for 14 days. It is unclear whether the student infected anyone else. ‘We knew it was a when, not if,’ said Harold E. Olin, superintendent of the Greenfield-Central Community School Corporation, but were ‘very shocked it was on Day 1.’” [New York Times, [8/1/20](#)]
- **At North Paulding High School In Dallas, Georgia, Outbreaks Occurred Among Staff And The Football Team Before The School Even Reopened.** “North Paulding High School, about an hour outside Atlanta, reopened Monday despite an outbreak among members of its high school football team, many of whom, a Facebook video shows, worked out together in a crowded indoor gym last week as part of a weightlifting fundraiser. Within days of that workout, several North Paulding players had tested positive for the coronavirus. The school’s parents were notified just hours before the first day of class. And multiple teachers at North Paulding say there are positive tests among school staff, including a staff member who came into contact with most teachers at the school while exhibiting symptoms last week. Teachers and staff said the school won’t confirm coronavirus infections among district employees, citing privacy reasons. ‘That was exactly one week ago, so we are all waiting to see who gets sick next week,’ a North Paulding teacher told BuzzFeed News of her exposure to the virus.” [BuzzFeed News, [8/5/20](#)]
- **A Georgia Second-Grader Tested Positive For COVID-19 After Attending The First Day Of School, Forcing The Entire Class To Quarantine.** “A Georgia second grader tested positive for Covid-19 after attending the first day of school, the school district told CNN. Sixes Elementary in the Cherokee County School district began in-person classes on Monday. But by Tuesday, a classroom was temporarily closed for deep cleaning and the teacher and 20 other students had been asked to quarantine for two weeks after the second grader tested positive.” [CNN, [8/5/20](#)]

- **More Than 900 People In Cherokee County, Georgia Are In Quarantine After Exposure To The Virus In The First Days Of School.** “Dear Parents,’ wrote Dr. Ashley Kennerly, the principal of Sixes Elementary School. ‘I am writing this letter in order to communicate that a student in 2nd grade has tested positive for Covid-19.’ By the time the last bell rang on Friday afternoon, principals at 10 other schools had sent similar letters to families in Cherokee County, a bucolic and politically conservative stretch of suburbs north of Atlanta. This week, more letters went out. Altogether, more than 900 students and staff members in the district have already been ordered to quarantine. On Tuesday, one high school closed its doors until at least Aug. 3.” [New York Times, [8/12/20](#)]
- **Seven People Have Tested Positive In A Mississippi School District Since Schools Reopened On July 27 — Forcing More Than 100 To Quarantine.** “At least 116 people in a Mississippi school district have been instructed to self-quarantine for two weeks after six students and one staff member tested positive for the coronavirus less than two weeks after the start of school. Of the seven people who have tested positive since classes resumed July 27 in Corinth, a city in the state's northeast corner, five are high school students, one attends middle school, and the other is a staff member at an elementary school... At least 116 people who are considered to have been in close contact with one of those seven have been instructed to quarantine for 14 days.” [NBC News, [8/6/20](#)]
- **Five Students From Saraland City Schools In Alabama Were Forced To Quarantine After Exposure To COVID-19 On The First Day Of Class.** “Five students in a south Alabama high school are now in quarantine after coming in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 after the first day of school on Thursday. ‘We had an individual who last night started developing symptoms of COVID-19,’ Saraland City Schools Superintendent Aaron Milner told AL.com. ‘They had contracted it from a family member, it appears.’” [Alabama Local News, [8/7/20](#)]
- **As Of August 12, Forty-Two Cases Had Been Reported In Mississippi From 27 Different Schools.** “Mississippi schools are reopening and with that comes new COVID-19 cases. State Health Officer Dr. Thomas Dobbs said Tuesday that 27 different schools have reported coronavirus cases so far. Dobbs said there have been 42 COVID-19 cases reported in schools. Twenty-five of the cases were among students and 17 were employees, Dobbs said.” [WAPT, [8/12/20](#)]
- **In The Three Weeks Since Schools Have Started To Reopen In Tennessee, At Least 39 Cases Have Been Identified, And At Least Three Schools Have Reclosed Or Altered Their Schedules.** “Less than three weeks since the first school districts in Tennessee reopened to students amid the coronavirus pandemic, many are already closing their doors. Nearly 65 school districts have started the school year as of Friday, Aug. 7 — the majority of them in-person — and at least 39 confirmed COVID-19 cases connected to schools have already been reported. Three school districts, including Williamson County Schools, Coffee County Schools and Blount County Schools, have already closed schools or altered their schedules as a result of exposure to the virus.” [Tennessean, [8/12/20](#)]
- **Dr. Michael Saag, Director Of UAB Medicine's Division Of Infectious Disease: “Watching These Horrific Explosions Of Cases, Be It In The Summer Camp... Now We're Seeing Schools That Seem To Shrug Their Shoulders. ... It's Impossible To Stay Quiet.”** “The way that schools across America are handling the start of classes amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic is being watched closely by public health experts, teachers, government officials, and parents. Some doctors don't like what they're seeing. ‘Historically, my response up to this last couple of weeks has been typically much more neutral and just trying to implore people to do the right thing, to lay the information out in front,’ Dr. Michael Saag, director of UAB Medicine's Division of Infectious Disease, told Yahoo Finance. ‘But watching these horrific explosions of cases, be it in the summer camp... now we're seeing schools that seem to shrug their shoulders. ... It's impossible to stay quiet.’” [Yahoo News, [8/8/20](#)]
- **Annette C. Anderson, Assistant Professor Of Education And Deputy Director Of The Center For Safe And Healthy Schools At Johns Hopkins University: “We Have No Idea How To Properly Reopen Schools.”** “‘We knew how to close schools,’ said Annette C. Anderson, an assistant professor of education and deputy director of the Center for Safe and Healthy Schools at Johns Hopkins University. ‘But we have no idea how to properly reopen schools.’ The result of this chaos is uncertainty for students and their parents, with profound ramifications for health, learning, emotional development and economics in schools that open and those that don't.” [Washington Post, [8/9/20](#)]

Outbreaks At Camps And Child Care Centers Offer A Glimpse Of How The Virus Can Spread Among Children And Staff

- **A CDC Analysis Found That Children Of All Ages Are Susceptible To Coronavirus And May Spread It To Others After 260 Children And Staffers Contracted The Virus In Just One Week At A Georgia Summer Camp.** “A new report suggests that children of all ages are susceptible to coronavirus infection and may also spread it to others... The analysis, released Friday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, details an outbreak at a sleep-away camp in Georgia last month in which 260 children and staffers — more than three-quarters of the 344 tested — contracted the virus less than a week after spending time together in close quarters. The children had a median age of 12. The camp had required all 597 campers and staff members to provide documentation that they had tested negative for the virus before coming. Staff were required to wear masks, but children were not.” [Washington Post, [7/31/20](#)]
- **A Summer Camp In Lampe, Missouri Was Forced To Shut Down After 82 Campers, Counselors And Staff Tested Positive For Covid.** “A summer camp in Arkansas and another in Missouri have closed down after campers and staff tested positive for Covid-19. At the Kanakuk K-2 Camp in Lampe, Missouri, 82 campers, counselors and staff tested positive for Covid-19, according to a Facebook post by the Stone County Health Department.” [CNN, [7/8/20](#)]
- **After Hundreds Of Children Were Exposed To COVID-19 At A Camp In Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, At Least One Child Was Hospitalized.** “Hundreds of children may have been exposed to coronavirus at a church camp over the past month near Dallas-Fort Worth, according to parents of campers. Fellowship Church in Grapevine hosted multiple Christian away camps at their retreat center, Allaso Ranch, located about 85 miles east of Dallas in Hawkins. Camps for various age groups started on June 13 and run weekly until July 24. Photos from the camp show hundreds of people gathered in tight groups and not wearing face masks. At least three parents posted publicly on Facebook that their children tested positive for coronavirus after attending the camp in the past two weeks. One of the children was hospitalized.” [Fort-Worth Telegram, [7/22/20](#)]
- **On July 6th, Texas Linked 1,335 Cases Of Coronavirus To Child Care Centers, 441 Of The Infected Were Children.** “As parents nationwide wonder if it's safe to send kids back to day care, Texas is grappling with a surge of Covid-19 cases from child care centers. At least 1,335 people have tested positive from child care facilities in Texas, the state's Department of Health and Human Services reported Monday, citing figures from Friday. Of those infected, 894 were staff members and 441 were children. The cases came from 883 child care facilities that are open in the state, DHHS said.” [CNN, [7/6/20](#)]

Teachers Are at Great Risk of Being Exposed In Classrooms — And Don't Trust the Trump Administration to Do What Is Needed to Reopen Schools Safely

Teachers Are Panicked At The Prospect Of Returning To School Amid Surging Cases, And Don't Trust Trump To Keep Them Safe

- **Jeff Gregorich, An Arizona Superintendent In Charge Of Reopening Schools: “ I Already Lost One Teacher To This Virus. Do I Risk Opening Back Up Even If It's Going To Cost Us More Lives?”** “The governor has told us we have to open our schools to students on August 17th, or else we miss out on five percent of our funding. I run a high-needs district in middle-of-nowhere Arizona. We're 90 percent Hispanic and more than 90 percent free-and-reduced lunch. These kids need every dollar we can get. But covid is spreading all over this area and hitting my staff, and now it feels like there's a gun to my head. I already lost one teacher to this virus. Do I risk opening back up even if it's going to cost us more lives? Or do we run school remotely and end up depriving these kids?” [Washington Post, “Voices From The Pandemic, [8/1/20](#)]
- **At A School District In Arizona Where A Teacher Became Infected While Teaching Summer School And Died Of Covid In July, At Least Four Other Staffers Have Now Tested Positive.** “A small school district in southeastern Arizona has been hit hard by the coronavirus. Hayden-Winkelman Unified School District lost teacher Kim Byrd to COVID-19 last month. Now, four other staff members are currently infected with the virus and six others await test results. Byrd was teaching a summer class online with two other teachers when she came down with the virus. Those two other teachers also tested positive.” [12 News, [7/31/20](#)]
- **An Arkansas Education Association Survey Of State Educators Found That 98 Percent Of Respondents Were Concerned About Social Distancing In School Buildings.** “The Arkansas Education Association (AEA)

recently conducted a survey that found 90% of respondents — which represented all state counties — were concerned about student health, and 98% were concerned about social distancing in school buildings.” [Business Insider, [7/27/20](#)]

- **National Education Association President Lily Eskelsen Garcia: “I Double-Dog Dare Donald Trump To Sit In A Class Of 39 Sixth Graders And Breathe That Air Without Any Preparation For How We’re Going To Bring Our Kids Back Safely.”** “García noted the premature lifting of restrictions and reopening of bars, without effective safety measures, likely contributed to the record numbers of new infections. The virus has now killed more than 130,000 people in the U.S. ‘This isn’t a bar. We’re talking about second graders,’ García said. ‘I had 39 sixth graders one year in my class. I double-dog dare Donald Trump to sit in a class of 39 sixth graders and breathe that air without any preparation for how we’re going to bring our kids back safely.’” [Huffington Post, [7/9/20](#)]
- **National Education Association President Lily Eskelsen Garcia: “I Represent 3 Million Teachers, Support Staff, Secretaries, Bus Drivers, And Any One Of Us Is More Qualified Than Donald Trump And Betsy DeVos To Talk About What We Need To Reopen Schools Safely.”** “‘I represent 3 million teachers, support staff, secretaries, bus drivers, and any one of us is more qualified than Donald Trump and Betsy DeVos to talk about what we need to reopen schools safely,’ Lily Eskelsen García, the president of the National Education Association, told CBSN anchors Anne-Marie Green and Vladimir Duthiers. García said she was ‘outraged’ and ‘mystified’ over a federal push for reopening that has included the president attacking CDC guidance as ‘very tough’ and ‘expensive,’ and DeVos repeatedly calling for a return to in-person schooling despite ballooning coronavirus rates.” [CBS News, [7/14/20](#)]
- **Matthew Landau, History Teacher At Democracy Prep Charter High School In Harlem: “I Feel There’s No Way To Keep Immunocompromised Teachers Safe.”** “With many teachers reluctant to return to work, according to polls, staffing will be a major challenge for districts across the country. New York estimates that about 1 in 5 of its teachers will receive a medical exemption to teach remotely this fall. Matthew Landau, a history teacher at Democracy Prep Charter High School in Harlem, hopes he will be one of them. He survived stage four cancer several years ago and said he does not feel comfortable going back to his classroom. ‘I feel there’s no way to keep immunocompromised teachers safe,’ he said.” [New York Times, [7/11/20](#)]

Some Teachers Want To Quit Their Jobs — Even In A Recession — For Fear Of The Virus

- **Allison Webb, A Former Language Teacher From Cherokee County, Georgia, Quit Her Job Rather Than Return To An Unsafe Environment.** “Depending on whom you ask, the string of positive tests and isolation orders in Cherokee County... proved the district’s folly for opening schools during the worst American public health crisis in decades... ‘This is exactly what we expected to happen,’ said Allison Webb, 44, who quit her job as a Spanish and French teacher in the district because of her concerns about reopening schools, and who put her daughter, a senior, in the district’s remote-learning program. ‘It’s not safe’ to return to the classrooms now, Ms. Webb said.”
- **An Arkansas Survey Of State Educators Found That More Than 40 Percent Of Respondents Said They Were Changing Careers Or Retiring Early As A Result Of The Pandemic.** “The results [of the survey] show 90% of respondents are concerned about student health issues related to teaching and learning in schools, and 98% believe it will be very or somewhat difficult to implement social distancing or other safety measures in school buildings. In addition, more than 40% of respondents said they are considering retiring early or leaving the profession as a result of the pandemic.” [Arkansas Education Association, [7/15/20](#)]
- **Beth Leitch Abruptly Retired From Garrett High School In Indiana To Protect Her Husband From The Virus.** “Students returning to Garrett High School won’t find Beth Leitch teaching Spanish. She abruptly retired years before she planned to. ‘It was tough,’ Leitch said. ‘I had dreams, nightmares and a lot of lost sleep.’ ‘In the end, what made you give up something you love?’ Reporter Rich Van Wyk asked. Leitch didn’t hesitate. ‘My husband, because I love him more,’ she said. Kevin Leitch survived a heart attack. The couple, in their 60’s, might not survive a bout with COVID-19.” [WTHR, [7/21/20](#)]
- **In Kansas, Teachers Who Resign For Fear Of Coronavirus May Be Forced To Compensate Districts Thousands Of Dollars.** “Kansas teachers that don’t feel safe going back to crowded hallways as schools reopen could take medical leave or teach online. But at the many districts that don’t have those options, teachers eye another choice: quitting. Resigning would mean more than losing steady paychecks during a recession and

insurance during a pandemic. Teachers that leave now must pay their districts thousands of dollars. Most Kansas public teachers must retire or resign early in the summer or pay their school district to find a replacement. Unless a district or a teacher says otherwise, contracts roll over into the new year... [Leavenworth High School Teacher Kelly] Smith said she's now terrified [to return to school]. She would consider quitting, but she'd have to pay her district \$2,000 dollars for resigning in August. She said that doesn't leave her much choice other than going back to work. 'For me, that's just shy of a month's paycheck,' Smith said. 'That would hurt.'" [Kansas News Service, [8/11/20](#)]

Where There Is Widespread Transmission, Reopening Schools Poses an Obvious Risk of Further Spread

Research Suggests Reopening Schools In Areas With Widespread Community Transmission Would Exacerbate Outbreaks

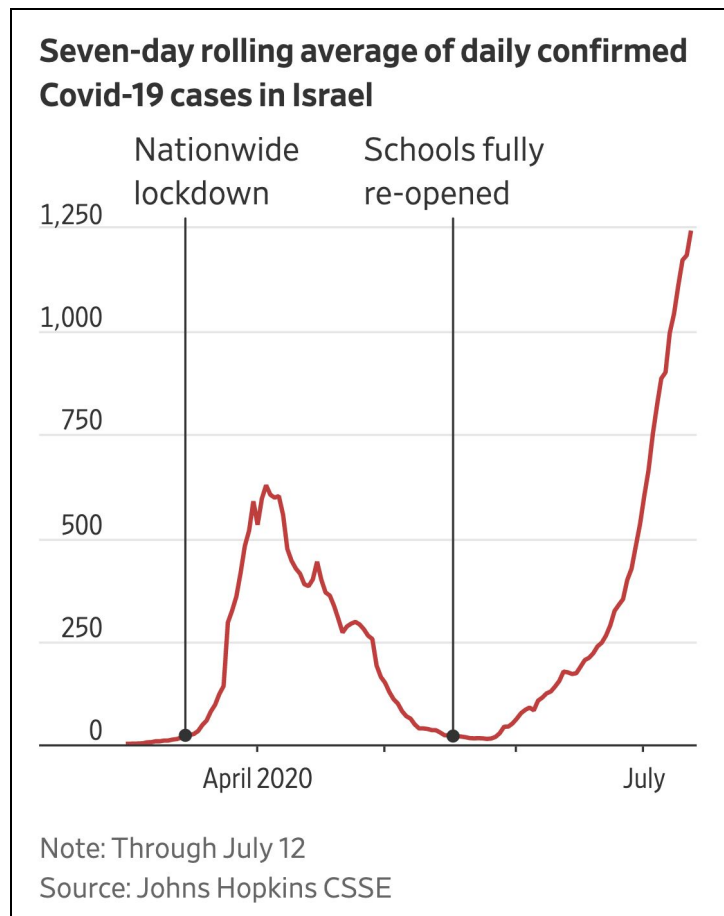
- **Researchers At The University of Texas at Austin Predicted That More Than 80 Percent Of Americans Live In A County Where At Least One Infected Person Would Be Expected To Show Up At Schools With 500 Or More Students And Staff.** "The estimates, from researchers at the University of Texas at Austin, range from sobering to surprisingly reassuring, depending on the area and the size of the school. Based on current infection rates, more than 80 percent of Americans live in a county where at least one infected person would be expected to show up to a school of 500 students and staff in the first week, if school started today." [New York Times, [7/31/20](#)]
- **Researchers At The University Of Texas At Austin Predicted That In Hot Spots At Least Five Infected People Would Be Expected To Show Up At Schools With 500 Or More Students And Staff.** "In the highest-risk areas — including Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Nashville and Las Vegas — at least five students or staff would be expected to show up infected with the virus at a school of 500 people. The high numbers reflect the rapid spread of the virus in those areas, where more than 1 in 70 people are estimated to be currently infected." [New York Times, [7/31/20](#)]
- **A Kaiser Family Foundation Review Of Available Data Found That Where There Is Already Widespread Transmission, As In Many Parts Of The United States, There Is "Clearly A Risk Of Further Spread" Associated With Reopening Schools.** "While other countries that reopened schools have generally not experienced outbreaks in school settings, almost all had significantly lower levels of community transmission than the U.S. and greater testing and contact tracing capacity. Moreover, several disease clusters connected to schools and children have been reported. Taken together, the evidence indicates that where there is already widespread community transmission, as in many areas in the U.S., there is clearly a risk of further spread associated with reopening schools. The risks of reopening need to be considered carefully in light of the recognized benefits of in-person education." [Kaiser Family Foundation, [7/29/20](#)]

Data Shows That School Closings Have Saved Lives, Slowed the Spread

- **A Study Published By The Journal Of The American Medical Association Found That Closing All Of A State's Schools Was Associated With A Drastic Decrease In COVID-19 Cases And Deaths.** "A study published Wednesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association shows that closing all of a state's schools was associated with a drastic decrease in both Covid-19 cases and deaths. And the point at which officials made that call mattered: Those states that adopted the policy while few people were testing positive saw a correlated flatter curve of cases." [Stat News, [7/29/20](#)]
- **The AMA Study Found That There Would Have Been 424 More Infections And 13 More Deaths Per 100,000 Residents Over The Course Of 26 Days If Schools Stayed Open.** "Their projection found that, if schools had stayed open, there could have been roughly 424 more coronavirus infections and 13 more deaths per 100,000 residents over the course of 26 days. Extrapolate that to the American population, and the country might have seen as many as 1.37 million more cases and 40,600 more deaths, explained Samir Shah, the director of hospital medicine at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and one of the authors of the paper. 'These numbers seem ridiculously high and it's mind-boggling to think that these numbers are only ... in the first several weeks,' said Shah. 'That's bonkers.'" [Stat News, [7/29/20](#)]

The United States Should Learn From Other Countries: Israel Had Effectively Defeated Coronavirus, But School Reopenings Prompted A Dangerous Resurgence

- **Nearly Half Of Israel's New Infections During The Virus' Resurgence In June Came From Schools.** “The source of the infection explosion can be seen clearly in the numbers from June. As Klinier told the Knesset, 1,400 Israelis were diagnosed with the disease last month. Of those, 185 caught it at events such as weddings, 128 in hospitals, 113 in workplaces, 108 in restaurants, bars, or nightclubs, and 116 in synagogues, according to Klinier, while 657—which is to say 47 percent of the total—were infected by the coronavirus in schools.” [The Daily Beast, [7/14/20](#)]
- **The Number Of New Coronavirus Cases In Israel Increased From Fewer Than 50 A Day To 1,500 A Day Since Reopening Schools.** “Some Israeli public-health officials are blaming the country's decision to reopen schools in May for helping fuel a large new wave of coronavirus infections that has prompted authorities to shut down sections of the economy once again. In recent weeks, the number of new cases of Covid-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, has risen to around 1,500 per day nationwide from a low of fewer than 50 a day about two months ago.” [Wall Street Journal, [7/14/20](#)]
- **Israel Was Forced To Close Down Schools Two Weeks After Reopening Because Of Widespread Outbreaks.** “Two weeks after Israel fully reopened schools, a COVID-19 outbreak sweeping through classrooms — including at least 130 cases at a single school — has led officials to close dozens of schools where students and staff were infected. A new policy orders any school where a virus case emerges to close.” [NPR, [6/3/20](#)]



[Wall Street Journal, [7/14/20](#)]

- **While Israel Was Averaging Very Few New Cases Daily When Schools Reopened, The United States Was Averaging 60,000 New Cases As Trump Pushed For Schools To Open Up.** “President Trump has threatened to withhold funding for districts that don't reopen. But the U.S. is in a far worse position than Israel was in May: Israel had fewer than 100 new infections a day then. The U.S. is now averaging more than 60,000 new cases a day, and some states continue to set alarming records.” [New York Times, [8/4/20](#)]