

Participant Summary

Perspectives of Parents & Caregivers of Black Students on COVID-19 Testing in Schools

We appreciate you sharing your perspectives about COVID-19 testing in schools with us. This document shares the main findings from the interviews with parents & caregivers of Black students.

BACKGROUND

We conducted rapid formative research with a small group of stakeholders—*parents and caregivers of Black and Latino/a/x students and school personnel*—to inform COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) testing in schools for the Fall 2021 school year.

The formative research was conducted as part of a larger NIH-funded study called, “SARS-CoV-2 Screening and Diagnostic Testing for Return to K-12 Schools,”

<https://abcsiencecollaborative.org/covid-19-testing-in-schools>

led by The ABC Science Collaborative (<https://abcsiencecollaborative.org/about/>)

in partnership with QualCore (<https://populationhealth.duke.edu/research/qualcore>) at Duke University.

PURPOSE

To foster positive aspects and mitigate negative impacts from COVID-19 testing in schools—including any stigma associated with race and ethnicity—by gathering the perspectives of parents and caregivers of Black and Latino/a/x students and school personnel on the social, ethical, and behavioral considerations of COVID-19 testing in schools and sharing this information with key health and education stakeholders.

MAIN FINDINGS

- Possible benefits of school-based COVID-19 testing were providing a safe school environment, providing families with peace of mind, and reducing community spread.
- Concerns about school-based COVID-19 testing were mostly about wanting to know more information about logistics of the testing procedures, who is administering the test, and how students’ privacy will be maintained.
- Suggestions for administering school-based COVID-19 testing were made, such as how to select students to reduce the possibility of stigma.
- School personnel should be notified of students’ test results because of the exposure risk. However, hesitancy with sharing results was expressed.
- Teachers should prepare take-home materials and care packages for students who are diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Concerns about home-based COVID-19 testing mostly focused on the accuracy of testing at home.
- Some children of parents/caregivers interviewed had experiences with school-based stigma or discrimination due to race prior to the pandemic but others had not; experiences may differ by the type of school.

- Anticipated stigma with school-based COVID-19 testing was limited. Concerns, however, exist about stigma toward those who are diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Decision-making about returning to in-school learning in Fall 2021 was rarely impacted by experiences with stigma or discrimination prior to the pandemic. Decisions were mostly influenced by:
 - Concern or hesitation about adherence to safety procedures by parents/caregivers, students, and schools.
 - The potential for exposure for children and their families.
- Providing school-based COVID-19 testing influences some parental/caregiver decisions about returning to in-school learning.
- All but one parent/caregiver were willing for their children to participate in school-based COVID-19 testing.



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