WHAT SCIENCE SAYS ABOUT CHILDREN RETURNING TO SCHOOL DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

THE ABC SCIENCE COLLABORATIVE

This publication supplement is a collaborative effort between *Pediatrics* and The ABC Science Collaborative. It is a collective effort of 67 authors, across a number of institutions, and shares what we have learned so far about children returning to school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The body of work focuses on the return to in-person learning in underserved K-12 schools and includes an introduction + 11 additional papers on topics such as building partnerships between scientists and school districts, reopening schools to in-person learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, implementing diagnostic testing programs, supporting COVID-19 school safety for children with disabilities and medical complexity, masking adherence in K-12 schools, secondary transmission of COVID-19 in K-12 schools, school quarantine policies and more.

The information below details the titles of publications included in the supplement and the lessons learned.

	TITLE	TAKEAWAY
1.	***"School-Academic Partnerships In Support Of Safe Return To Schools During The COVID-19 Pandemic"***	Community involvement and collaboration with school partners were key to eight RADx-UP Return-to-School projects in underserved areas.
2.	***"Building A National Framework To Pair Scientists And Schools During A Global Pandemic"***	The groundwork laid by the community-academic partnerships currently addressing COVID-19 in schools can help improve the health of children long-term.
3.	***"From Research To Policy: Reopening K–12 Schools In North Carolina During the COVID-19 Pandemic"***	Data shared with ABC from 12 school districts teaching in-person in 2020 gave us better understanding of COVID-19 transmission in schools and shaped legislation after ABC presented to the N.C. General Assembly.
4.	***"Mobilizing Established School Partnerships To Reach Underserved Children During A Global Pandemic"***	Two Latino and Native communities (both vulnerable populations) got COVID-19 testing into schools by taking advantage of existing school-academic partnerships.

The ABC Science Collaborative (ABC): an NIH-funded collaboration between scientists, physicians, schools and community leaders that helps school administrators make informed decisions about returning to school.

RADx-UP (Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics-Underserved Populations): an NIH -funded program aiming for access to COVID-19 testing for all Americans, with a focus on communities most affected by the pandemic.

Pediatrics: the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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5.	*"Implementation of School-Based COVID-19 Testing Programs in Underserved Populations"*	Getting testing consent forms back and added strain on school resources were some of the common barriers to implementing testing in schools, as identified by five projects serving underserved schools.
6.	*"Supporting COVID-19 School Safety for Children with Disabilities and Medical Complexity"*	Children with disabilities face unique challenges when it comes to preventing COVID-19; for example, masking, social distancing, and hand hygiene can be uniquely difficult.
7.	*"Masking Adherence in K–12 Schools and SARS-CoV-2 Secondary Transmission"*	In a study of two North Carolina school districts, ABC found that schools with more masking had lower transmission rates and older students were more likely to adhere to mask mandates.
8.	*"A School-Based SARS-CoV-2 Testing Program: Testing Uptake and Quarantine Length Following In-School Exposures"*	An in-school COVID-19 testing program conducted in a large North Carolina school district reduced the average number of missed school days by 1.5.
9.	*"Secondary Transmission of COVID-19 in K-12 Schools: Findings From Two States"*	46% of within-school transmission of COVID-19 among middle- and high-schoolers was sports-related, while the extent of social distancing on buses didn't seem to play a role.
10.	*"Quarantine Elimination for K-12 Students With Mask-on-Mask Exposure to SARS-CoV-2"*	Quarantining after a mask-on-mask exposure may not decrease rates of transmission in schools, this study suggests, but it will decrease in-person learning time.
11.	*"Urban Classification, Not COVID-19 Community Rates, Was Associated With Modes of Learning in US K–12 Schools"*	In September 2020, rural and suburban elementary schools were 3.4 (rural) and 1.9 (suburban) times more likely to be in-person than schools in urban areas, with similar trends in middle and high schools.

About the ABC Science Collaborative

The ABC Science Collaborative is an initiative that extends across 18 states, connecting scientists and physicians with school and community leaders to help understand the most current and relevant information about COVID-19. The program helps school leaders and state policymakers arrive at informed decisions about returning to school using data from their own communities. Our shared goal is to keep students, teachers, and their local communities healthy and safe.

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