

California Safe Schools for All Plan: A Conversation with State Public Health Leaders

January 14, 2021

Presenters



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Setting the Context



Investments in Safe Schools



Consolidated Guidance



Ongoing Engagement & Future Sessions

Safe Schools for All Plan



- [Plan](#) announced by Governor Newsom on 12/30/20
- Establish Safe Schools for All Team
- Consolidation of existing guidance for schools
- Framework is built on four pillars:
 - Funding to Support Safe Reopening
 - Safety & Mitigation Measures for Classrooms
 - Hands-on Oversight and Assistance for Schools
 - Transparency & Accountability for Families and Staff

Why now?

- Darkest days of the pandemic
- Arrival of the UK variant
- But, vaccines are on the horizon
- And, we learned from July that it is important to keep planning for in-person instruction
- And, we know more now than we did in March
- How to do in-person instruction in ways that successfully prevent in-person transmission
- Keep our eyes on the prize—plan for when transmission decreases. Mitigate the effects of COVID19 on kids in highest need, safely, for teachers, students, families, leveraging what we now know

Goals for today

- **Review the data on what we know about in-school transmission in elementary schools and the implications for school reopening for in-person instruction**
- Review the additional supports and resources being released today and consider how they fit together to support safe in-person instruction over the next weeks and months

We know more than we did in March

What do we know to inform us thus far?

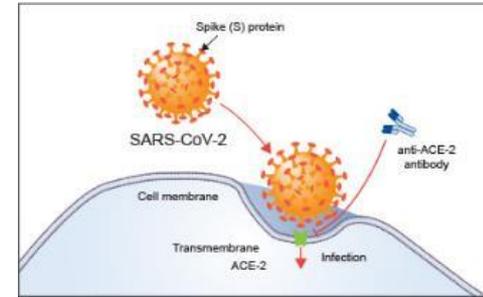
- Summary of data on COVID in children and transmission
- Highlights themes and a few key articles and reports
 - Chosen for their rigor—imperative to get this right
 - Or chosen because they captured a lot of attention but are not well done, so it is helpful to explain and interpret them

Summary of findings

- Children get COVID19 less often and are less ill than adults.
- Transmission in elementary schools differs from high schools.
- Adult to adult transmission in schools is the most likely (and also where we may have more control).
- Community prevalence affects school-based cases but not necessarily in-school transmission.
- Key mitigation strategies: masking, physical distancing, stable groups, ventilation, hand hygiene, symptom screening and screening for contacts, surveillance and screening testing.

Why do children get COVID-19 infrequently and have less severe disease?

- ACE2 receptors are the entryway for COVID
- Ability to make ACE2 receptors varies with age
 - Elementary students < middle and high school students < adults



Implications:

Fewer doors □ less disease and more mild disease

Bunyavanich et al. JAMA 2020



Transmission among or from students is not common

- [Case study](#) of French 9 year old with co-occurring influenza and COVID 19. 3 schools, 80 contacts, 0 cases, but +influenza cases. (Danis, Clin Infect Dis 2020)
- [Australia](#) study of 10 early childhood centers and 15 schools (>6000 people)
 - Overall very low numbers: 1.2% of people got COVID19
 - >90% got it from household contacts
 - Transmission in school groups:
 - Child-to-child frequency: 0.3%
 - Child-to-staff frequency: 1%
 - Staff-to-child frequency: 1.5%
 - Staff-to-staff frequency: 4.4%

<https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2352-4642%2820%2930251-0>

Transmission in schools with high community prevalence

- Study in North Carolina Sept-Nov 2021
- Community rates up to 29 cases/100,000 per day
- ABC schools: the 3 Ws (wear your mask, wait 6 feet, wash your hands)
- 35 school districts, 90K students
- 773 community cases, 32 cases of in-school transmission in ABC schools
- Three clusters in ABC schools, one due to no masking in pre-kindergarten, 2 in special needs setting, 1 with eating in close proximity. Subsequently, face shields were used for special needs students not able to tolerate a mask
- No child-to-adult transmission cases documented

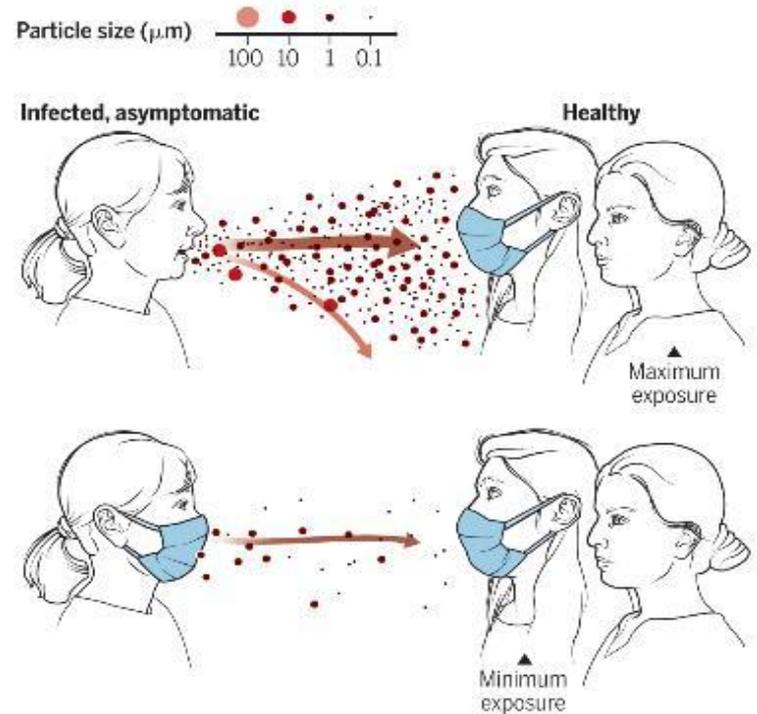


<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2021/01/06/peds.2020-048090.full.pdf>

Why don't children transmit as efficiently?

Practical considerations:

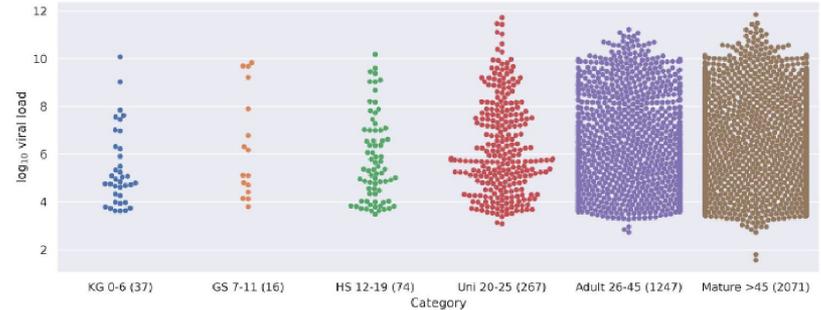
- Smaller lungs □ smaller clouds of viral particles
- Less severe disease □ less coughing □ less spread
- Children are shorter than adults □ gravity pulls respiratory droplets down



But aren't children super spreaders? Are they equally infectious or more infectious than adults?

[Heald-Sargent et al.](#), JAMA Peds, July 2020

- Patients with mild or moderate symptoms. Higher viral loads in children <5 compared to 5-17 and 18-65.
- BUT, only tested *symptomatic* children, and early in the pandemic.



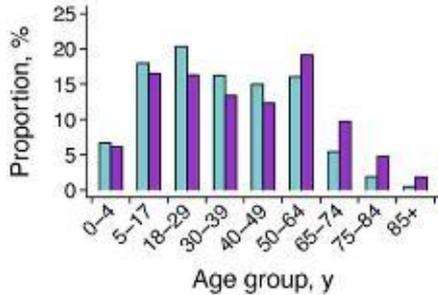
Implications:

- Likely reflecting more highly symptomatic children.
- Even if all symptomatic pre-schoolers have higher viral loads □ follow symptom screening recommendations to break transmission

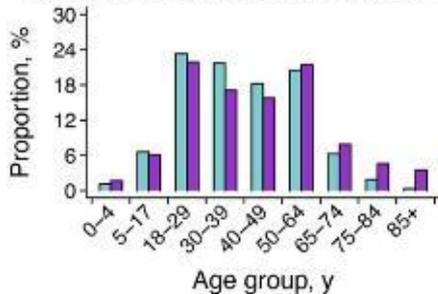
Similar to: [Drosten et al.](#). "Analysis of SARS-CoV-2 Viral Load by Patient Age". April, June pre-prints.

But aren't children super spreaders?

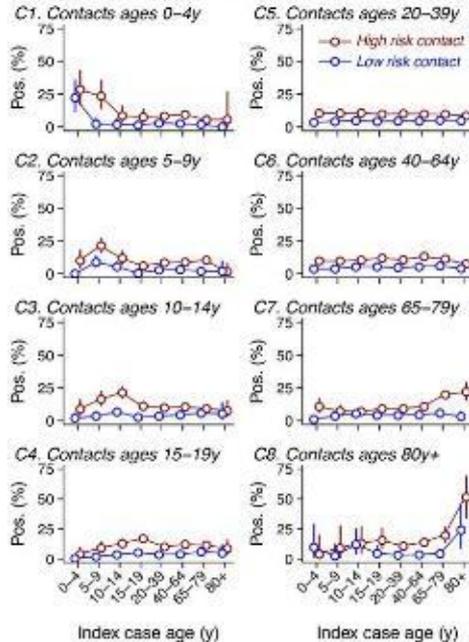
A) Population age distribution



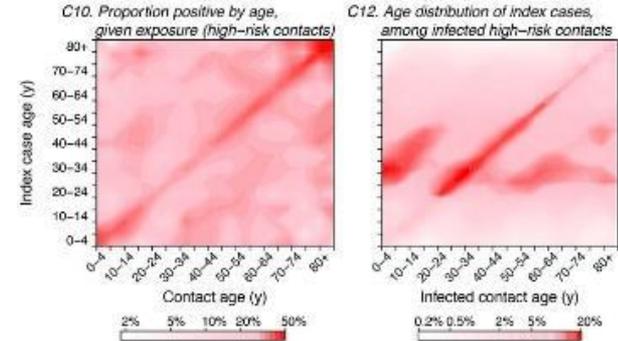
B) Reported case age distribution



C. Case and contact age



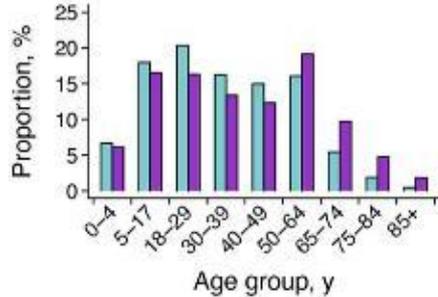
- Study in two Indian states
- 84,965 cases
- 575,071 contacts
- Community-based
- Schools closed
- Symptomatic testing only



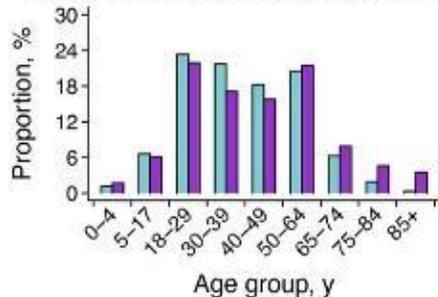
Laxminarayan et al. *Epidemiology and transmission dynamics of COVID-19 in two Indian states. Science. Sept 30 2020.*

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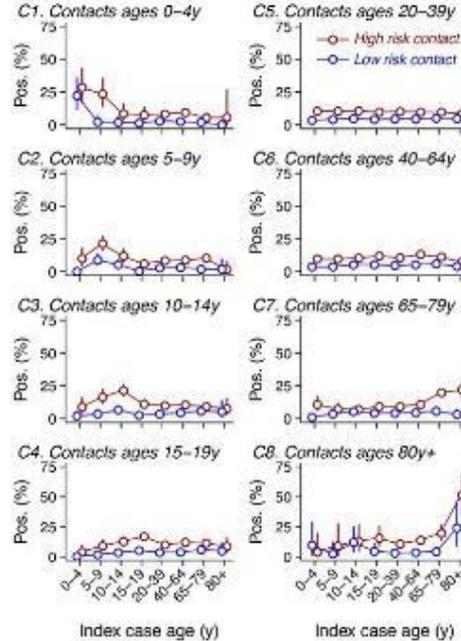
A) Population age distribution



B) Reported case age distribution

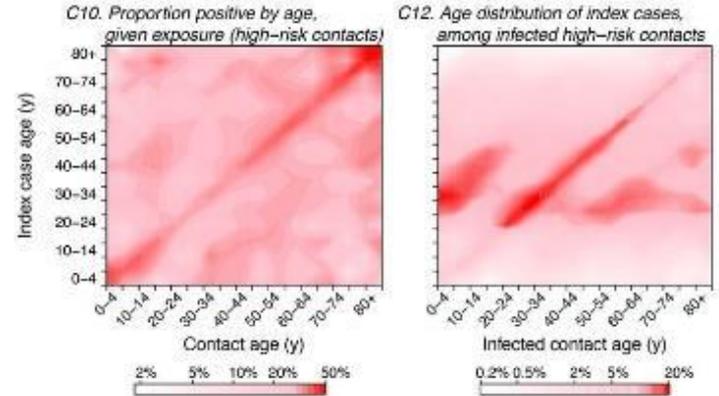


C. Case and contact age



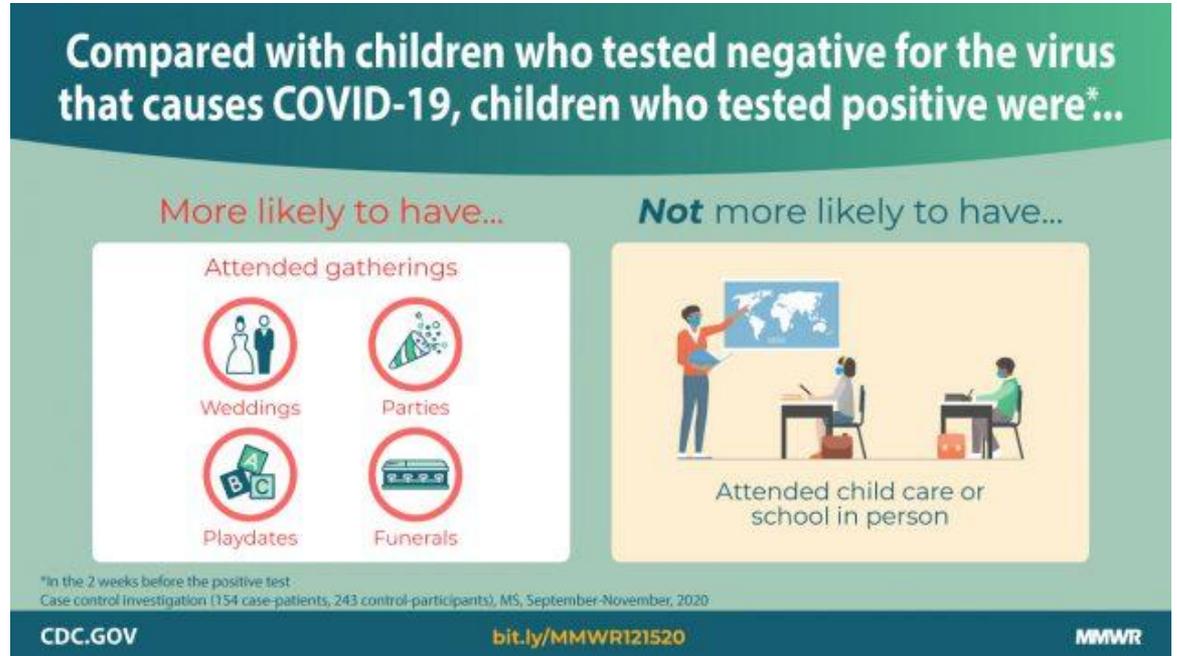
Implications:

- Likely household contact spread; symptom screening will prevent school-based child-to-child transmission



Laxminarayan et al. *Epidemiology and transmission dynamics of COVID-19 in two Indian states. Science. Sept 30 2020.*

Where are children getting COVID?



Hobbs, et al. Factors Associated with Positive SARS-CoV-2 Test Results in Outpatient Health Facilities and Emergency Departments Among Children and Adolescents Aged <18 Years — Mississippi, September–November 2020. MMWR 2020; ePub: 15 December 2020.

High Schools are Different from Elementary Schools

- Community prevalence: 9%
- No precautions
- High school: 43% of teachers and 38% of students infected
- Elementary schools: 7% of teachers, 9% students infected
- Implications: Transmission can occur in high schools; community prevalence reflected in elementary school cases



Fontanet et al. MedRxiv April 2020—High School
Fontanet et al. Pasteur.fr June 2020—Elementary Schools

National and international studies of educational closure effects

- Modeling study of the effects of US school closures in March in JAMA
- Modeling study of the effects of school closures in >100 countries
- Both combined the effects of university closures AND K-12 closures
- Both studies from early in the pandemic, before we knew the right mitigation layers

What not to do: An Outbreak in a High School/ Middle School in Israel

- Re-open in mid-May
- Outbreak in late May
- >150 infections
- Heat wave a few days after re-opening
- Stopped masking
- Index cases present & symptomatic
- + Air conditioning, closed windows



Stein-Zamir et al. Eurosurveillance July 2020

What not to do: A High School/Middle School in Israel

Implications:

- Masks, physical distancing, ventilation are all key
- Symptom screening could have potentially helped

Stein-Zamir et al. Eurosurveillance July 2020



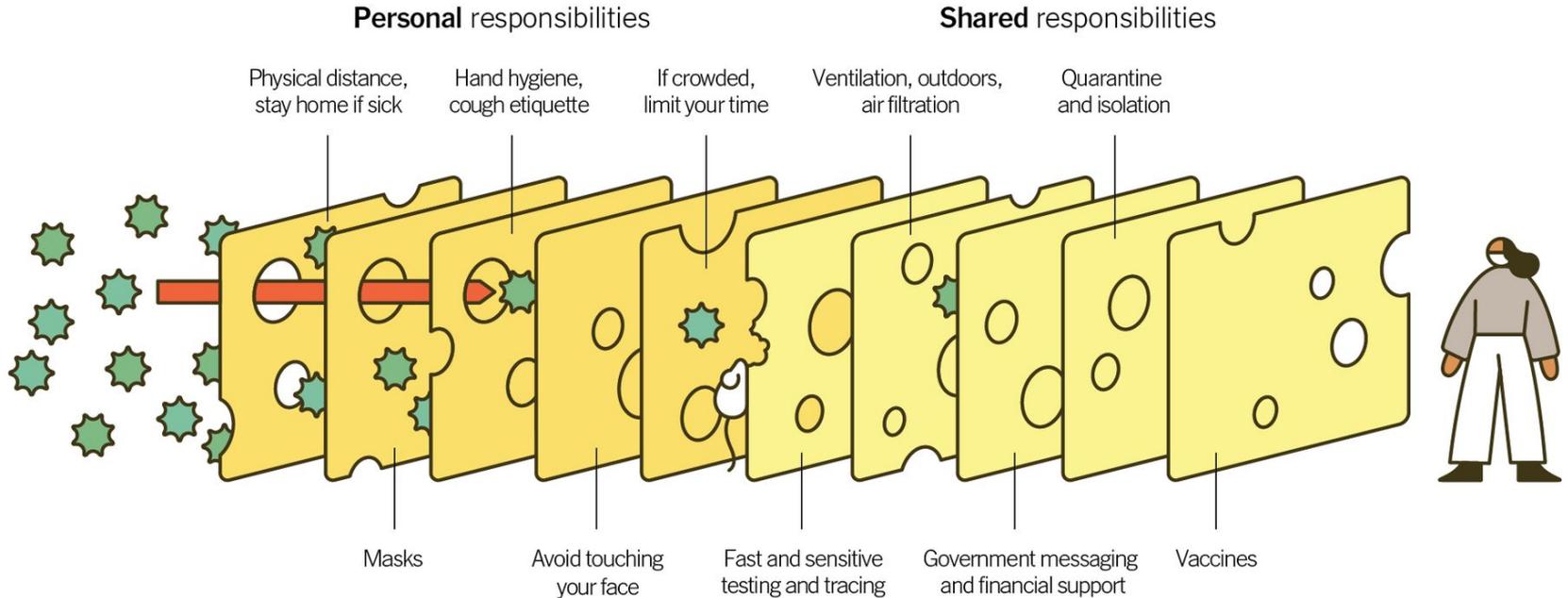
Number Of COVID-19 Cases Among Younger Children Remained Low Even After Schools Reopen

New CDC [report](#) “found that COVID-19 cases among younger children remained low even after schools restarted for in-person learning. To safely reopen schools, however, transmission in communities must be kept in check.” The report, “published Wednesday in the CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, considered more than 2.8 million laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in people ages zero to 24 from March 1 through December 12.”

“CDC recommends that K–12 schools be the last settings to close after all other mitigation measures have been employed and the first to reopen when they can do so safely.”

Multiple Layers Improve Success

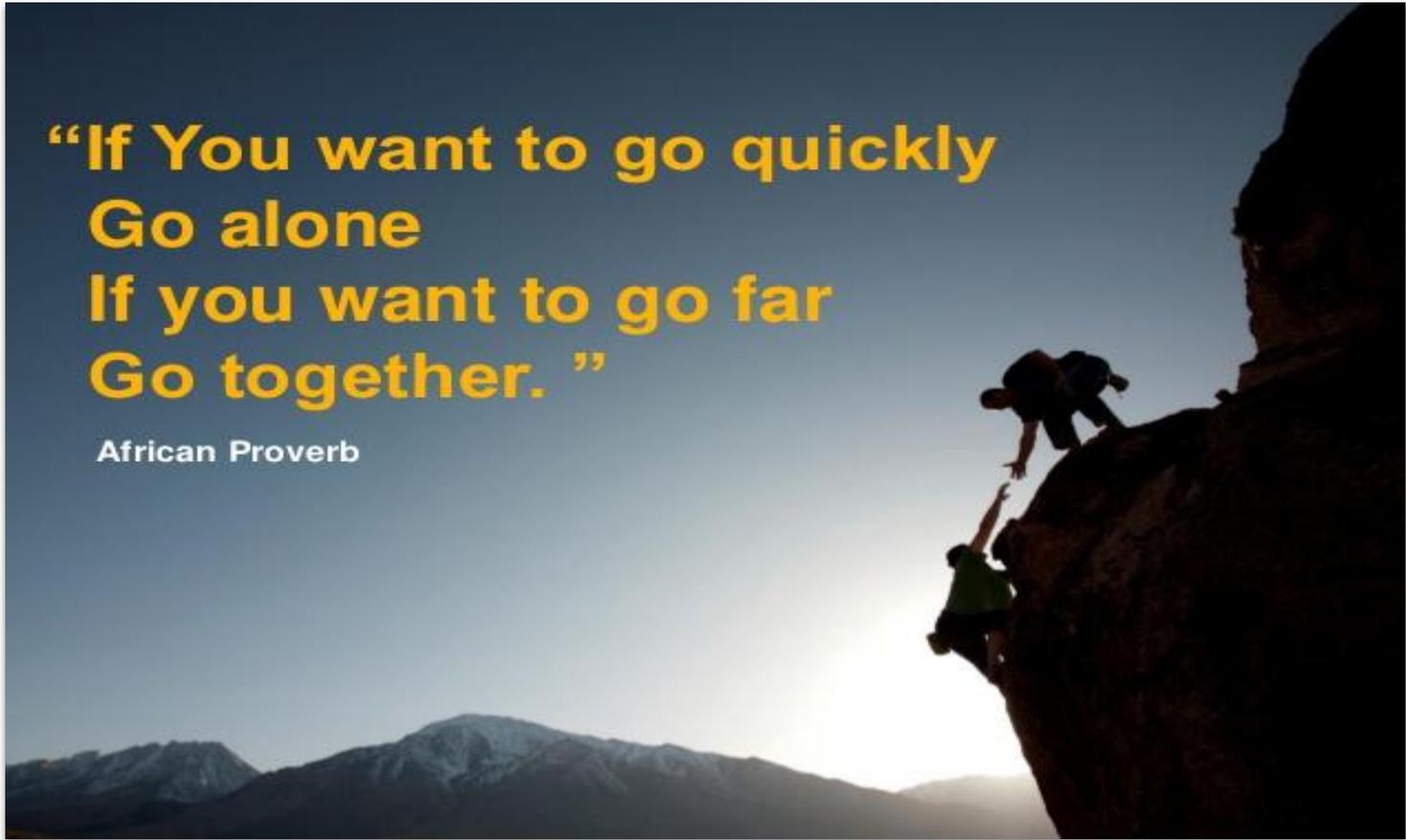
The Swiss Cheese Respiratory Pandemic Defense recognizes that no single intervention is perfect at preventing the spread of the coronavirus. Each intervention (layer) has holes.



Source: Adapted from Ian M. Mackay (virologydownunder.com) and James T. Reason. Illustration by Rose Wong

**“If You want to go quickly
Go alone
If you want to go far
Go together. ”**

African Proverb



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Consolidation of Guidance and Resources

- [Safe Schools For All Hub](#)
 - Technical assistance
 - Transparency and accountability
- [COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year](#)
- [All-county Letter](#)
- [Public health directive to report school-based cases](#)
- [Public health directive to report school status regarding in-person instruction](#)

Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Guidance

In-Person School Reopening Criteria and Guidance:

- COVID-19 Safety Plan (CSP) for In-Person Instruction
- COVID-19 School Guidance Checklist
- Rationale for a case rate of 25 per 100K per day as the line above which schools cannot open
- [Harvard Global Health Institute analysis: "Path to Zero & Schools: Achieving Pandemic Resilient Teaching and Learning Spaces"](#)

Safety and Mitigation Measures for Classroom:

- Face Coverings
- Stable Groups
- Distancing
- Ventilation
- Hand Washing
- Cleaning and Disinfection
- Check for Signs and Symptoms

Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Guidance

- Confirmed or Suspected Case of COVID
 - Local Health Department Actions
 - School Actions
- School Closure Determinations
 - Indicators of ongoing in-person transmission in the school
 - Indicate safety protocols need to be changed before in-person instruction can resume

Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Guidance

- K-12 COVID-19 Testing
 - Symptomatic testing
 - Response testing
 - Asymptomatic testing
 - *Surveillance*: testing can be used for surveillance, usually at a cadence of every 2 weeks or less frequently, to understand whether schools have higher or lower rates of COVID19 rates than the community, to guide decisions about safety for schools and school administrators, and to inform local health departments about district level in-school rates.
 - *Screening*: testing can also be used for screening, usually at a higher cadence (weekly or twice weekly) than surveillance testing, to identify asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic cases, in order to exclude cases that might otherwise contribute to in-school transmission.

Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Guidance



Vaccinate ALL 58

Together we can end the pandemic.

- [Vaccines for K-12 Schools](#)
- [CDPH COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- Vaccine guidance document that will be available on the [Safe Schools for All Hub](#)

Transparency and Accountability

Communications with County Health and Education

- [All-county Letter on Reopening](#)
- [Public health directive to report school-based cases](#) (Appendix 3 in Guidance)
- [Public health directive to report school status regarding in-person instruction](#) (Appendix 4 in Guidance)

Technical Assistance

- Web-based hotline for school staff and parents to [report concerns](#) and ask questions
- Initiate levels of intervention

Reporting Status of In-Person Instruction

Beginning January 25, 2021, every local educational agency (school district, county office of education, and charter school) and private school in California shall notify the California Department of Public Health whether it is serving students in-person. Specifically, the local educational agency or private school shall report the following information:

- In-person instruction is provided full-time, including whether provided for all grades served by the local educational agency or private school or only certain grade spans.
- In-person instruction is provided only part-time (hybrid model), including whether provided for all grades served by the local educational agency or private school or only certain grade spans.
- In-person instruction and services are provided only pursuant to the Guidance Related to Cohorts issued by the California Department of Public Health.
- No in-person instruction and services are provided (distance learning only).

Safe Schools for All Hub

State of California Safe Schools For All Hub

California's Safe Schools for All Plan provides the support and accountability to establish a clear path to minimize in-school transmissions and enable, first, a phased return to in-person instruction, and then ongoing safe in-person instruction.

The Safe Schools For All Hub consolidates key resources and information related to COVID-19 and schools. New resources will be added to the Hub on a routine basis.

School Administrators

Portal for School Leaders to Request Technical Assistance from the State Safe Schools For All Team.

[Start Your Request](#) →

School Staff & Parents

Portal for School Staff and Parents to Report Concerns for Potential State Intervention and Enforcement.

[Provide Your Feedback](#) →

Resources

<h3>Contact Tracing</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the state supporting schools with contact tracing • Quarantine Guidance 	<h3>Testing</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing Resources for Schools 	<h3>Health and Safety</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California's Safe Schools for All Plan • Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards • CA COVID-19 Face Covering/Mask Guidance • Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings • California's Safe Schools For All Hub • Safety Guidance • CDPH Guidance Related to Cohorts • Cohort FAQ for Providing Targeted, Specialized Support and Services at School • Reminders for Using Disinfectants at Schools and Child Cares • Asthma-Safer Cleaning and Disinfecting • Finding EPA Registered Disinfectants Effective Against SARS-CoV-2
<h3>Accessing Local Resources</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Websites for Local Public Health Departments • Directory of Local Health Departments 	<h3>General</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division of the State Architect [Design & construction oversight for schools] • AB 685 COVID-19 Workplace Outbreak Reporting Requirements 	
<h3>Vaccines</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccinate All 58 	<h3>Ventilation</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ventilation Guidance 	

Coming Soon!

Interactive Map

- The map will show each school district's status on reopening, safety planning, and COVID-19 cases.

Student COVID-19 Testing

- In December 2020, CA submitted a federal application for Medicaid to cover student COVID-19 testing.

Virtual Training Academy

- In partnership with UCSF and UCLA, video resources will help schools implement safety guidance.

Question & Answer

Submit Questions

Upcoming Webinar to Respond to Questions and Feedback from the Field

Thank You