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COVID Update from Children's Mercy Kansas City

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COVID-19 UPDATES
News from the Children's Mercy School Task Force

 **Children's Mercy**
KANSAS CITY

childrensmercy.org/schools

Jan. 4, 2021

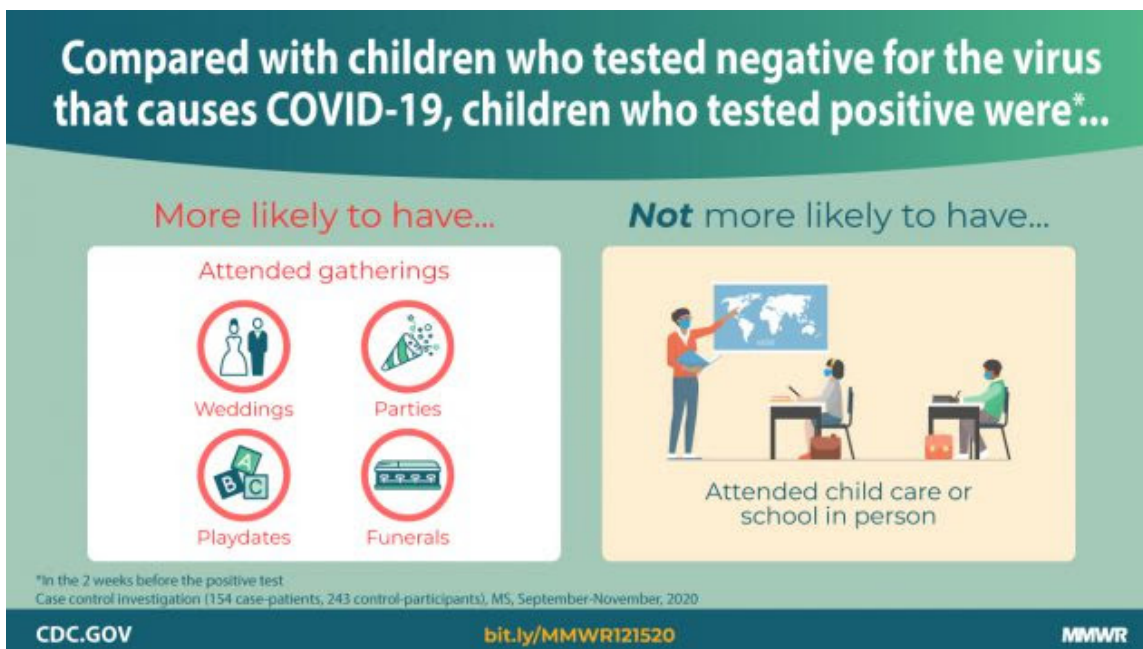
New Resource

There is a lot of information out there about the COVID-19 Vaccine. Get answers to frequently asked questions from our experts.

- [English Q&A](#)
- [Spanish Q&A](#)

Top Topic

This week, we are highlighting information about transmission of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) in schools.



As schools and school districts navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and determine when it is safe for their children and staff to return to school, it is important to understand risk of transmission in the schools.

The CDC conducted an important investigation to assess school, community and close contact exposure in children < 18 years of age. They compared children with a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection to those with negative SARS-CoV-2 testing (no infection).

In nearly 400 children evaluated, neither in-person school nor childcare attendance was associated with a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result. Activities associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection included: having a close contact with a person with known COVID-19, attending gatherings with persons outside the household, or having visitors in the home. Children exposed to a family member with COVID-19 were more likely to test positive. Children exposed to a school contact with COVID-19 were more likely to test negative, reflecting the finding that consistent mask wearing occurred much more frequently in schools than during social gatherings.

To learn more, click [here](#).

Key News and Research

Operating schools during COVID-19 requires increased resources.

- New research provides the estimated cost per student to implement 4 recommended mitigations strategies:
 1. consistent use of masks
 2. physical distancing to the extent possible
 3. hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 4. cleaning and disinfecting
- Estimated pandemic-related costs per student were:
 - \$55 (range \$47-\$109) for materials and consumables only
 - \$442 (range \$204-\$912) for all 4 mitigation strategies
 - Highest cost was related to employing additional custodians per school and additional transportation
- To learn more, click [here](#).

Local Highlights

Return to School Success

Like many schools, The Academy for Integrated Arts (AFIA) a Kansas City pre-k – 6th grade Charter School, started the school year remotely. About 20 students who were not able to be at home due to family work schedules and other circumstances participated in-person. In September, AFIA leadership established a Return to School Task Force that included staff and faculty, board members, parents and Children's Mercy representatives.

The Task Force fielded a parent survey to learn about comfort levels in returning to school. Over 38% of parents were interested in returning to in-person school and 45% preferred to wait until December to make a decision. The Return to School Task Force deployed the resources and training necessary to implement risk mitigation strategies, hired a school nurse, developed at-home screening guidelines, prepared parent guidance and student expectations and developed a protocol and contract with an outside laboratory to implement once a week staff and student COVID-19 saliva testing.

Once the measures were in place, 33 additional pre-K – 1st grade students returned to in-person school. After winter break an additional 28 students will return, bringing back a total of 28% of the student population. Since students returned to in-person learning, no positive COVID-19 cases were identified. Congratulations to the AFIA on your success!

Our Favorite Links

- Follow the delivery and doses of COVID-19 vaccines administered in the United States. Click [here](#).
- Learn more about how the COVID-19 vaccines are made. Click [here](#).
- Learn more about how the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines work. Click [here](#).
- Questions about mRNA vaccines? Click [here](#).

Have a question regarding COVID-19 and schools? Want to talk with our experts or have our experts come talk to your team? To make a request or share feedback, please click the button below.

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