

Lessons from School Reopenings

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School Reopenings Around the world



1. No surges

- Countries that reopened schools
 - AFTER REDUCING THEIR LEVEL OF INFECTION
 - Have not seen surges of infection



2. Reopenings are exceptions

- Open schools are exceptions, not rule
- Open: 13 countries including:
 - Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Taiwan and Vietnam
- Closed: 143 countries



3. Staggering

- Successful reopenings:
 - Staggered with youngest children first
- Greatest failure:
 - Israel: all ages returned
 - Mask requirements dropped (as temperatures soared)
 - Outbreaks
 - 125 schools and 258 KG shut down again in May



4. Shifts / alternate days / smaller size

- Belgium's success:
 - Bring back in shifts
 - Or on alternate days
- Scandinavian nation:
 - Limit class size



5. Hand washing accessibility

- Schools where hand washing was more available
- Fared better than schools where hand washing was difficult to access.



6. What to do if case is detected?

- Some countries closed the entire school again.
- Other countries:
 - Students and teachers of affected classroom
 - Sent into home quarantine
 - For two weeks



7. Not understood

- Overall, at this point in time:
- The extent of the role of children and teens
- In the spread of the coronavirus is NOT really understood



Young Children MORE likely to spread the virus

- August 20, 2020:
 - New study published
 - From MassGeneral Hospital for Children
 - Journal of Pediatrics
- Children younger than five:
 - With mild or moderate illness
 - Have much HIGHER levels of virus in the nose

The logo for The Journal of Pediatrics, featuring the text "The JOURNAL of PEDIATRICS" in white serif font on a blue rectangular background.

The JOURNAL
of PEDIATRICS

School Reopenings During 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic



1. Invest in school nurses

- School nurses were vital:
 - Observed children's health
 - Educated parents
 - Commended by NYC Health Commissioner Royal Copeland
- Today:
 - only 60% of schools: full-time nurse
 - 25% of schools have no nurse at all



2. Partners

- “Planning that brings public health, education officials, and political leaders together”
 - Pivotal to successful responses in schools in 43 cities
- St Louis: best outcome in the country
 - Political, health and education leaders
 - Designed a staggered school reopening
 - With high school first.



3. Tie education to other priorities

- 1916 proclamation:
 - “School is important, but life and health are more important.”
 - Establishment of:
 - School lunch programs
 - Large, airy school buildings
 - Built playgrounds
 - Outdoor play areas
- Today: consider adding:
 - ventilation of all indoor spaces
 - Easy access to hand-washing for all



Level of Infection in Your State



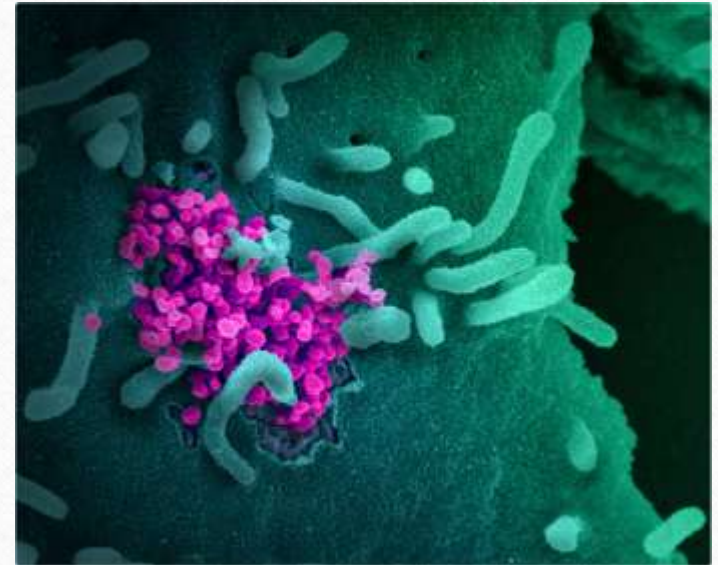
How to calculate it

- <https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases>
- Click on tab: Cases per 100,000
- Left-hand column: number per state
- Divide the number by 1,000 → percentage



How to use this number

- Rule of thumb:
 - If your school has 100 students
 - And your level of infection is 2.7%
 - Then assume that 2-3 of them are infected.
- Plan accordingly:
 - Probably asymptomatic



Thank you!

References

- Evidence grows that children may play larger role in transmission than previously believed:
 - <https://apple.news/Ahc4h3qGySYG1STC2zrq4PA>
- What do we know about children and coronavirus transmission?
 - <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/what-do-we-know-about-children-and-coronavirus-transmission/>

References -2

- How to Reopen Schools: What Science and Other Countries Teach Us
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/11/health/coronavirus-schools-reopen.html>
- Some Countries Reopened Schools. What Did They Learn About Kids and Covid?
 - <https://www.wired.com/story/some-countries-reopened-schools-what-did-they-learn-about-kids-and-covid/>

References -3

- This site has a Reading List: the University of Washington report on school openings in 15 foreign countries:
 - <https://www.wbur.org/onpoint/2020/07/22/classrooms-safe-for-pandemic>
- 2 in 5 schools around the world lacked basic handwashing facilities prior to Covid -19 – UNICEF, WHO
 - <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/13-08-2020-2-in-5-schools-around-the-world-lacked-basic-handwashing-facilities-prior-to-covid-19-pandemic-unicef-who>