

Safely Back to School - talking points with statistics

- **COVID has not been fatal for young children in Colorado.** Of the approximately (as of June 3 2020) reported COVID cases in children ages 0-9 on the [CDPHE site](#), no cases have been fatal. While these statistics are not static, we encourage you to remember how resilient children are—sickness is unavoidable in school settings, so the consistent hygiene practices we implement will help students remain healthy and bounce back quickly.
- **The normal seasonal flu poses increased risks for kids, and we can protect against the flu and COVID with safety measures.** The [CDC](#) estimates about 8% of the US population gets sick from the flu each season. Children are most likely to be affected, however, when the right hygiene practices are in place and the appropriate vaccine is given, the child can return to school in a matter of days. There is inherent risk for children to get infected by both the flu and COVID-19, but we believe it's important to maintain the best hygiene practices both in and out of the classroom so we can return to school full time.
- **COVID poses significantly fewer risks to children.** Scientists are discovering COVID-19 is less likely to take the life of children. Children ages 0-19 make up 1,736 of the total infected population according to the [CDPHE's site](#) on the COVID-19 data in Colorado. If we look at the total population of school-aged children in our state, estimated between 850,000-900,000 students, the percentage of a child getting COVID comes close to 0.03%—a small percentage to be keeping kids away from school.
- **The risks of COVID may not be fully known, but the risks to students missing school are well known.** Numbers only tell half the story, however, we can no longer live in the “What if” world and hold the parents and teachers hostage because there is a risk of our children infecting them or their teachers infecting kids with COVID.
- **Schools have been through outbreaks before, we can safely deal with this outbreak as well.** During the H1N1 outbreak in 2009, people ages 5-24 were more likely to get infected, because the [CDC](#) determined older people may have had a pre-existing immunity to the novel H1N1 flu virus. Epidemiological data suggests the number of cases per 100,000 reported in people ages 5-24 years was 26.7 per 100,000. The world did not stop and shut down for a virus that directly affected school-age children in 2009. We got through the H1N1 pandemic by working through the fear and keeping our hygiene practices in place. Just as we did then, we can do now.
- **Safely reopening schools requires smart strategies to protect adults who interact with children.** Governor Polis recently remarked to remember when we return to school those most at risk will be parents, teachers, and grandparents who interact with our kids daily. While that is true, the numbers tell us [15.7%](#) of teachers are over the age of 55 years old, which is about the age threshold for those most “at risk” of COVID-19. If most of our teachers are well below the age of 55 and 60 years old, the likelihood that they will be infected may be smaller than we think. Perhaps instead of part-time schooling, we equip the teachers, parents, and adults with the right kind of PPE, hygiene practices,

and most update statistics to combat the virus head on and return to full-time school in the fall.