

# ARIZONA PEDIATRIC PROVIDER TOOLKIT

*School Re-Entry and Children's Health in the Time of COVID-19*



*Resources for providers to work alongside school systems and provide guidance and resources to keep students, teachers, school administrators, staff, and families healthy, safe and secure.*

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## *Table of Contents*

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Sample Introduction Letter.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Patient Flyer .....</b>	<b>5-6</b>
<b>FAQ for Pediatricians .....</b>	<b>7-11</b>
<b>Resources.....</b>	<b>12-15</b>

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# School Re-Entry and Children's Health in the Time of COVID-19

## **Introduction**

COVID-19 has impacted the health, physical, mental, social, and economic aspects of the world. School re-openings will present challenges that pediatricians can help manage in their community. It will take the entire community, working alongside school systems, to provide guidance and resources to keep students, teachers, school administrators, staff, and families healthy, safe and secure. The pediatrician's role is critical in providing knowledge about the spread and symptomology of this virus, especially as it pertains to children, and in developing strategies to reduce transmission, monitor outbreaks, and minimize anxiety within the school setting.

Refer to:

**Redbook 2019 Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV- 2 that causes COVID-19) Pandemic**

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/>

The Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AzAAP) has developed this toolkit that can serve as a template for how the pediatrician can become involved in school re-openings. It includes:

- Sample introductory letter to send to your local school's leadership expressing an interest in participating in the planning and implementation of school re-openings.
- Sample handout for patients emphasizing the importance of reconnecting with pediatricians during this crisis.
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Resources for the pediatrician

We hope you find this toolkit helpful. Please contact us with suggestions or comments for future updates at [leadership@azaap.org](mailto:leadership@azaap.org).

Please note that we have endeavored to provide the most up-to-date information regarding the topics included in this handbook. Many, but not all, of the resources listed in this toolkit are regularly updated.

For the most recent updates you may also wish to check the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) website: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org).

Refer to:

**Critical Updates on COVID-19**

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/>

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# School Re-Entry and Children's Health in the Time of COVID-19

## Sample Introduction Letter

The letter below can be sent or emailed to the superintendent of schools in your practice's community. For further information on public and charter schools in your community go to:

### Public Schools

<https://www.azed.gov/districtwebsites/>

### Charter Schools

<http://www.ade.az.gov/charterschools/search/>

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a practicing pediatrician in \_\_\_\_\_.

The challenge of reopening schools during COVID-19 is a daunting task and requires the support of the entire community.

I am offering my support and would like to assist in the planning and implementation of school re-entry in your district. In addition to the many challenges you face in resuming educational instruction for your students, I know that your district will need to address many COVID-19 issues. You also will be tasked with addressing the physical, emotional and social needs of everyone in the schools, especially the students. I am offering my help in developing policies and procedures and providing resources for you, your staff and the families you serve.

In these difficult times, It is my intent to help lighten the load. Please let me know how I might be of assistance.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Patient Flier

### Why your child needs a visit to the doctor this summer!

Connecting with your pediatrician for a well check or sick visit may seem scary in a time when we are all trying to minimize risk of infection. But there are some very important reasons why it is vital to stay connected with us:

**1. The better your child's baseline health, the better they will be able to fight any infection or stressor during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Well child checks allow you to go over all aspects of your child's physical and emotional wellbeing. We have been working tirelessly to create ways to safely communicate with your family and minimize in-person time in the office. We have changed the office environment to comply with social distancing rules and are deep cleaning multiple times a day to keep you safe. Call us to find out your options.

**2. It is vital that your child's vaccines are up to date.**

Vaccine-preventable illnesses like flu and measles not only harm your child's health but also harm the health of everyone in your community who may come into contact with your child. These diseases can be deadly, may require hospitalizations which would increase your child's exposure to COVID-19. These infections which could be prevented by vaccination also rob your immune system of the ability to fight other infections, including COVID-19.

**3. Chronic medical conditions like asthma, allergies or diabetes must be optimally managed so that your child's baseline health is the best that it can be.**

If your child has a chronic illness, it is important to discuss with your pediatrician a management plan for them during this pandemic. This may include an adequate supply of medications and equipment that you should have at home, how and when to contact your pediatrician if your child becomes ill and what to do if your child is exposed to COVID-19.

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## *Patient Flier (contd.)*

**4. If your child has had difficulty learning while schools have been closed, your pediatrician can help you develop an action plan for your child and address these issues.**

Children with learning differences, focus-related issues or other disabilities miss services that help learning. Touching base with your pediatrician over the summer will allow you to create a plan with your child's school to best help them succeed.

**5. Physical distancing, social isolation, and other stressors during this crisis are greatly affecting the mental health of children and their caretakers.**

Loss of caretaker jobs and income, lack of food, unstable housing and other stressors have impacted the social and emotional health of children. Many families are on edge. Children need mental health screenings and treatment in order to address all the factors affecting their overall well-being.

We want to help your child thrive. Call us @ (phone number here) to make a plan that works for your family!

More great information is available at [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Return-to-School-During-COVID-19.aspx)  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Return-to-School-During-COVID-19.aspx>

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Pediatricians

### What might my role be as a pediatrician in school re-openings?

- \* Serve as COVID-19 content experts
- \* Communicate school re-entry best practices to families and school districts
- \* Help families keep up to date on immunizations
- \* Assist in preparing children with special needs to return to school or obtain school services
- \* Provide surveillance and treatment of child/adolescent illness
- \* Provide or refer for COVID-19 testing
- \* Assist with information about PPE
- \* Provide information about cleaning and disinfecting in the school setting
- \* Provide mental health screenings/treatment/referrals

### Is it safe to send a child back to school?

There are national and state guidelines on how to safely reopen schools that minimize health threats to students and school staff. There is always a risk for contracting and spreading the virus once you engage with others within the community. Risks can be minimized by having safeguards in place in schools (e.g. physical distancing, good hand hygiene, wearing masks when feasible, monitoring for illness, adequate testing available in your community, sufficient contact tracing). The prevalence of COVID-19 in a community, the availability of these and other safeguards in each school, and the educational needs of the children are important factors in re-opening decisions. We have listed below some resources that can help with this decision-making.

Refer to:

#### **AAP COVID -19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for school re-entry**

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

#### **HealthyChildren.org Information for Parents on Return to School**

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Return-to-School-During-COVID-19.aspx>

#### **CDC School Reopening Decision Tree**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/Schools-Decision-Tree.pdf>

#### **CDC updated guidelines for school re-openings**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

#### **CDC guidelines on disinfecting**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Pediatricians (contd.)

### Does a child need to wear a mask at school?

The decision to require masks for students and staff needs to be addressed by every school. Factors to consider are community prevalence of COVID-19, age, location of activity (e.g. indoor, outdoor, is there sufficient space for social distancing). The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) has a dashboard that is updated regularly and provides data by zip code on COVID-19. This site can be helpful in determining the prevalence of COVID-19 in your community.

### On June 23, 2020, Governor Ducey issued Executive Orders regarding school re-opening. In response to these executive orders, the Arizona Department of Education issued the following statement regarding masks:

*All school districts and charters must develop and implement policies requiring face coverings, such as face masks or face shields, for all staff and students over the age of five until ADHS determines that face coverings are no longer necessary or recommended to contain the spread of the virus. The Executive Order makes exceptions for certain cases and individuals. For example, students may not need to wear masks when social distancing can be appropriately maintained at recess.*

A full list of exceptions is available within the Executive Order. For specific information on the policies of school districts and charter schools in your community, please contact the districts and charter schools.

Here are some resources for you on recommendations about children wearing masks at school change.

Refer to:

**Arizona Department of Education Responses to Frequently Asked Questions:** [https://files.constantcontact.com/cbebfe4e101/c2bf57c4-4405-4141-b268-5e3117e2efc8.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3pOBf0tcO-JZEbx0Y3HnWWJ9CSp-8\\_RADOOwCPuTn15SBYv\\_JZ93S1OG0](https://files.constantcontact.com/cbebfe4e101/c2bf57c4-4405-4141-b268-5e3117e2efc8.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3pOBf0tcO-JZEbx0Y3HnWWJ9CSp-8_RADOOwCPuTn15SBYv_JZ93S1OG0)

**Governor's Executive Order: Arizona Open for Learning June 23, 2020:** [https://azgovernor.gov/sites/default/files/open\\_for\\_learning.pdf](https://azgovernor.gov/sites/default/files/open_for_learning.pdf)

**ADHS Daily Data Dashboard:** <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/covid-19/dashboards/index.php>

**HealthyChildren.org Cloth Face Coverings for Children during Covid 19:** <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Cloth-Face-Coverings-for-Children-During-COVID-19.aspx>

**CDC guidelines K-12 and childcare:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-faq.html>

**COVID – 19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for school re-entry:** <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Pediatricians (contd.)

### When should a child be tested for COVID-19?

Refer to:

[https://redbook.solutions.aap.org/selfserve/ssPage.aspx?SelfServeContentId=rbo\\_outbreaks\\_page\\_3](https://redbook.solutions.aap.org/selfserve/ssPage.aspx?SelfServeContentId=rbo_outbreaks_page_3)

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Should-Your-Child-Be-Tested-for-COVID-19.aspx>

<https://www.aappublications.org/news/2020/06/23/parentplus061820>

### General Testing Information:

- \* Remember: No COVID-19 diagnostics are FDA-approved: Only Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) Policy for Diagnostic Tests for COVID-19
- \* RT-PCR tests- assesses for active disease (preferred test for COVID-19 diagnosis)
- \* No serology tests (Antibody) have been approved by FDA for diagnostic purposes; generally reserved for assessing prevalence
- \* Supplies of tests increasing, but testing still limited, and in many areas, still prioritizing (not widespread or universal)
- \* Although not all kits have same specificity and sensitivity, please keep the following in mind:
  - \* Rapid tests (POC) are generally not reliable due to higher than acceptable false positive/negative rates
  - \* RT-PCR (through LabCorp and Quest) –involving nasal route (not saliva) are generally reliable and have been validated

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Pediatricians (contd.)

### What should I tell parents about the Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children?

Refer to:

**AAP Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children Interim Guidance:** <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/multisystem-inflammatory-syndrome-in-children-mis-c-interim-guidance/>

**Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children: MIS-C – CDC guidelines for parents:**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/children/mis-c.html>

### What should I tell parents about activities such as athletics, marching band and chorus in school?

Refer to:

**AAP Interim Guidance Return to Sports:**

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-interim-guidance-return-to-sports/>

**HeathyChildren.org Youth Sports Participation during Covid 19 A Safety Checklist:**

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Youth-Sports-Participation-During-COVID-19-A-Safety-Checklist.aspx>

**HealthyChildren.org Youth Sports and Covid 19 Understanding the Risks:**

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Youth-Sports-and-COVID-19-Understanding-the-Risks.aspx>

**Guidelines for Opening up School Athletics, NFHS:**

[https://nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15\\_2020-final.pdf](https://nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf)

**Guidelines for Marching Bands: NFHS:**

<https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812337/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-returning-to-high-school-marching-band-activities.pdf>

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Pediatricians (contd.)

### **What should I tell parents about children with chronic diseases in school?**

Plans should be based on individual circumstances and discussed with the pediatrician/specialists involved in daily care.

Refer to:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/groups-at-higher-risk.html#immunocompromised>

### **What are the resources for stress and trauma management for children and families during this pandemic?**

Refer to:

**CDC's guideline for Helping Children Cope**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/for-parents.html>

**Children's Hospital of Atlanta's guideline for coping:**

<https://www.strong4life.com/en/news/figuring-out-your-familys-covid-19-reentry-plan>

**An autism resource that has helpful interventions for all children and young adults** <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/sites/afirm.fpg.unc.edu/files/covid-resources/Supporting%20Individuals%20with%20Autism%20through%20Uncertian%20Times%20Article%20Only.pdf>

### **Behavioral Health Impacts after COVID-19 Shelter-at-Home Orders: What to Expect and Ways to Prepare for the Return to School (Teacher and Administrative levels):**

Refer to:

<https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/workgroups/SMART%20Center%20Return%20to%20School%206.2.20%20final.pdf>

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# School Re-Entry and Children's Health in the Time of COVID-19

## Resources

The following listing was compiled by the Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AzAAP) to provide resources about school re-entry and at-home learning for families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*These links are being provided for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement or an approval by the AzAAP of any of the products, services or opinions of the corporation or organization or individual. The AzAAP bears no responsibility for the accuracy, legality or content of the external site or for that of subsequent links. Contact the external site for answers to questions regarding its content.*

We hope the resources will allow you to provide families with information they need in order to better understand and prepare them for school re-entry and virtual learning options for their children as well as to support learning, mental health, and positive parenting during this time and beyond.

We encourage you to share the information with patients and families when they visit your office, on social media, or other communication channels.

### Returning to School

- [Healthy Children Returning to School Safely During COVID-19](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#)
- [CDC Back to School Decision Making Tool](#)
- [Arizona Department of Education COVID-19 Guidance and Suggestions](#) – includes resources for families including school reopening considerations, WIFI and broadband resources, child care options, and more

### Virtual Learning

- [Wide Open School](#) - Free resources from education organizations to help students learn during the pandemic
- [Healthy Children Working and Learning from Home](#)
- [Parents' Ultimate Guide to Zoom](#)
- [Parents' Ultimate Guide to Google Classroom](#)
- [How to Get Kids Ready to Video-Chat for Online Classes](#)
- [Common Sense Media How to Keep Kids Learning When They're at Home](#)
- [How Parents Can Support College Students' Online Learning](#)
- [CDC Help Children Learn at Home](#)
- [Weekly at Home Learning Curriculum](#)
- [ASU Teaching Resources for K-12 Families](#)

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## Resources (contd.)

### Virtual Learning

- [Free Computer Science and Coding Courses](#)
- [Second Language Courses](#)
- [Family Media Plan](#)
- [Time Management Apps](#)
- [Educational Apps That Don't Need WIFI](#)
- [Article: What if E-Learning Didn't Work for your Kid?](#)
- [Article: 9 tips for parents navigating online learning with their children due to Coronavirus](#)
- [Article: 22 Remote Learning Tips For Parents Helping At Home](#)
- [Article: Distance Learning: 8 Tips to Help Your Child Learn at Home](#)
- [Article: Developing Independence as an Online Learner](#)
- [Article: How to Oversee Your Child's Online Learning](#)
- [Learning From Home \(Arizona Game & Fish\)](#)

### Early Literacy and Learning Resources

- [Reach Out and Read Literacy Resources for Families](#) - A compilation of resources for children including e-books, books for understanding Coronavirus, at home learning, virtual entertainment, and screen free activities.
- [Unite for Literacy Free Online Books](#)
- [Children's Library Free Online Books](#)
- [Storyline Online Reading Books Aloud Videos](#)
- [Getting Children and Teens Outside While Social Distancing for COVID-19](#)
- [Commonsense Media Free Online Events and Activities for Kids at Home](#)
- [Read on Arizona Early Literacy Resource Toolkit](#)
- [At Home Reading, Math, Critical Thinking Activities for PreK-8<sup>th</sup> Grade](#)
- [Make Way for Books Free Book App](#)
- [Coronavirus Book for Children](#)
- [Free eBooks for 3 - 5 Years Old](#)
- [Free eBooks for 6 - 8 Years Old](#)

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# School Re-Entry and Children's Health in the Time of COVID-19

## Resources (contd.)

### Early Literacy and Learning Resources cont'd

- [Free eBooks for 9 - 12 Years Old](#)
- [Free E-Books for Teens](#)

### Parenting Resources

- [Parents as Teachers Home Visitor Program](#)
- [Birth to Five Helpline](#)
- [Age Based Tips to Help Juggle Parenting and Working at Home During COVID-19](#)
- [Tips for Coping with a New Baby During COVID-19](#)
- [Parenting in a Pandemic: Tips to keep the Calm at Home](#)
- [Helping Your Family Distress During Coronavirus Uncertainty](#)
- ['Navigating the New Normal': Parents and experts on helping kids through the pandemic](#)
- [Co-Parenting Through COVID-19: Putting Your Children First](#)
- [Teens & COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities During the Outbreak](#)
- [Article: How Are You Telling Children the Story of the Pandemic?](#)
- [How to Talk to Your Child About COVID-19](#)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bw1BbXJjXPHLr4cuLHYa3CZOx8TR-8f2/view>

### Mental Health Resources: Coping with Stress and Anxiety

- [Mental Health During COVID-19: Signs Your Teen May Need Support](#)
- [How to Help Children Build Resilience in Uncertain Times](#)
- [CDC Helping Children Cope](#)
- [Apps to Help with Mental Health](#)
- [Meditation Apps for Kids](#)
- [Stress Busters Activity Book](#)

### Preventing Spread

- [Healthy Children Cloth Face Coverings for Children During COVID-19](#)
- [Healthy Children Handwashing Tips](#)

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## Resources (contd.)

### Seeking Care

- [Should Your Child be Tested for COVID-19?](#)
- [Is it OK to call my pediatrician during COVID-19?](#)
- [Find a Reach Out and Read Provider Near Me](#)
- [What to Do if Your Child is Sick](#)

### Video Library

- [General COVID Videos and what to expect at virtual visits](#)
- [Virtual Learning and Screen Time Balance](#)

### Managing Stress and Stressful Situations

- [Sesame Street Comforting Children Through Stressful Times](#)
- [Sesame Street Feeling Separation Anxiety](#)

### Preventing Spread of Germs

- [Sesame Street All About Masks](#)
- [Sesame Street Wash Your Hands!](#)

### Calming Activities and Exercises

- [Sesame Street Calm Bodies Exercise](#)
- [Mind Yeti Digital Library of Guided Mindfulness Sessions for Children and Adults](#)
- [Cosmic Kids Yoga](#)

### Noggin Breathing Exercises

- <https://www.noggin.com/smart-activities-hero-breathing/>
- <https://www.noggin.com/smart-activities-just-breathe/>

### Early Literacy and Reading Aloud Videos

- <https://www.indypl.org/blog/for-parents/free-video-read-alouds>
- <https://www.storylineonline.net/>

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*Thank you Arizona Providers!*



*The Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AzAAP) would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to the Georgia AAP Chapter for sharing their toolkit and resources and allowing us to adapt them for Arizona providers.*

**For questions, please contact**

**[leadership@azaap.org](mailto:leadership@azaap.org)**

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