



American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



American Academy of Pediatrics

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CALIFORNIA CHAPTER 2
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San Diego & Imperial Counties
INCORPORATED IN CALIFORNIA

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS - CALIFORNIA CHAPTER 3

American Academy of Pediatrics

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American Academy of Pediatrics
Orange County Chapter

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PEDIATRICIANS ACROSS CALIFORNIA UNITE TO CALL FOR URGENT AND SAFE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

*Organizations representing over 5,500 California Pediatricians outline
the irreversible damage continued school closures have on students*

February 9, 2021--Today, the California chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics joined together—representing over 5,500 pediatricians—urging collaboration for prompt and safe reopening of schools in [letters released this morning](#). Evidence has shown that **safe in-person education for grades TK-12th can be accomplished with properly implemented safety protocols even in areas of high community spread of COVID.**

“We know how to keep teachers, staff and children safe on school campuses. Hundreds of schools and school districts have been able to do this in other parts of the country.” Dr. Kenneth Zangwill, pediatric infectious diseases specialist at Harbor-UCLA.

Pediatricians strongly support the safe return of students to in-person education with appropriate mitigation measures in place such as mask wearing, hand washing, cohorting and social distancing as recommended by our trusted scientists in national, state and county public health. Elementary age students are facing a potentially staggering loss in [expected literacy, H.S. graduation rates and ultimately life expectancy](#). Our teens especially are suffering from the near year of social isolation resulting in a [31% increase in proportion of children ages 12 to 17 presenting with mental health emergencies](#). [Stories of communities](#) dealing with a staggering number of youth suicides likely related to social isolation are heartbreaking.

“Families rely on schools to provide equitable access to a safe stimulating space for all children to learn, opportunities for socialization, and access to school based mental, physical and nutritional health services. We urgently need to get students and teachers in school safely!” Yasuko Fukuda, MD FAAP, San Francisco Pediatrician and Chair of American Academy of Pediatrics, District IX.

Pediatricians urge action **NOW** to allow kids safely back to in-person school.

California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 are organizations of primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of all children and youth in California and to support the professional needs of our California Chapter member pediatricians. We are 501(c)3 nonprofits legally incorporated in California.



American Academy of Pediatrics

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Isra Uz-Zaman, MS

February 9, 2021

Safety protocols should determine school reopening, not community case rates.

California Pediatricians Urge Collaboration for Prompt Safe Return to In-Person Learning

The California Chapter 1, American Academy of Pediatrics (AAPCA1) representing over 2,000 pediatricians statewide strongly supports the safe return of students to in-person education with appropriate mitigation measures in place such as mask wearing, hand washing, cohorting and social distancing as recommended by our trusted scientists in national, state and county public health.

As physicians caring for children, we operate at the nexus of public health and individual health. The safety of children, educators, and staff is our utmost concern and priority and should be paramount in planning school-reopening. In chorus with our trusted scientists in public health at the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov), [Harvard Global Health Institute](https://www.hs-n.harvard.edu/global-health-institute/), and others, evidence has shown that safe in-person education for grades TK-12th can be accomplished with properly implemented safety protocols even in areas of high community spread of COVID. Recent studies from [North Carolina](https://www.northcarolina.gov) and [WI](https://www.wi.gov) showed zero in-school transmissions from students to staff even at a time when the community was experiencing high COVID prevalence. While teachers should be prioritized to receive COVID-19 vaccines, vaccine roll out should not prevent or delay a return to in-person instruction.

We urge all Californians, especially parents, teachers, local and state government to work together collaboratively to open schools safely as soon as possible. The negative impact on children's health of not having in-person instruction is already being felt across our state. School is the essential business of childhood. Schools provide our children safety, nutrition, mental health support, social and emotional skill-building. The services provided by schools are even more paramount for children with disabilities and other special needs. Since there is ample data showing that opening schools does not endanger children, educators and school staff or raise a community's risk factors, the adverse consequences for children far outweigh the benefits of keeping schools closed.

California Pediatricians are dedicated to collaborating with teachers, administrators, and public health officials to ensure that all appropriate mitigation strategies are implemented leading to a safe, happy and prompt return to in-person instruction for the children of California keeping the school community healthy so all can thrive.

Sincerely,

Isra Uz-Zaman, MS
Executive Director

American Academy of Pediatrics



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California Chapter 2 - Kern | Los Angeles | Riverside | San Bernardino
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February 9, 2021

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Safety protocols should determine school reopening, not community case rates. California Pediatricians Urge Collaboration for Prompt Safe Return to In-Person Learning

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 2 representing 1,550 pediatricians in Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties strongly supports the safe return of students to in-person education with appropriate mitigation measures in place such as mask wearing, hand washing, cohorting and social distancing as recommended by our trusted scientists in national, state and county public health.

As physicians caring for children, we operate at the nexus of public health and individual health. The safety of children, educators, and staff is our utmost concern and priority and should be paramount in planning school-reopening. In chorus with our trusted scientists in public health at the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov), [Harvard Global Health Institute](https://www.hs-ni.ch), and others, evidence has shown that **safe in-person education for grades TK-12th can be accomplished with properly implemented safety protocols even in areas of high community spread of COVID**. Recent studies from [North Carolina](https://www.northcarolina.gov) and [WI](https://www.wisconsin.gov) showed zero in-school transmissions from students to staff even at a time when the community was experiencing high COVID prevalence. While teachers should be prioritized to receive COVID-19 vaccines, vaccine roll out should not prevent or delay a return to in-person instruction.

We urge all Californians, especially parents, teachers, local and state government to work together collaboratively to open schools safely as soon as possible. The negative impact on children's health of not having in-person instruction is already being felt across our state. School is the essential business of childhood. Schools provide our children safety, nutrition, mental health support, social and emotional skill-building. The services provided by schools are even more paramount for children with disabilities and other special needs. Since there is ample data showing that opening schools does not endanger children, educators and school staff or raise a community's risk factors, the adverse consequences for children far outweigh the benefits of keeping schools closed.

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Sincerely,

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American Academy of Pediatrics

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Celebrating 60 years
OF CARING FOR CHILDREN
FOUNDED IN 1961

February 9, 2021

Safety protocols should determine school reopening, not community case rates. California Pediatricians Urge Collaboration for Prompt Safe Return to In-Person Learning

The leadership of AAP, California Chapter 3 (AAP-CA3), representing over 500 pediatricians in San Diego and Imperial Counties, strongly supports the safe return of students to in-person education with appropriate mitigation measures in place such as mask wearing, hand washing, cohorting and social distancing as recommended by our trusted scientists in national, state and county public health.

As physicians caring for children, we operate at the nexus of public health and individual health. The safety of children, educators, and staff is our utmost concern and priority and should be paramount in planning school-reopening. In chorus with our trusted scientists in public health at the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov), [Harvard Global Health Institute](https://www.harvard.edu/global-health-institute), and others, evidence has shown that safe in-person education for grades TK-12th can be accomplished with properly implemented safety protocols even in areas of high community spread of COVID. Recent studies from [North Carolina](https://www.northcarolina.gov) and [WI](https://www.wi.gov) showed zero in-school transmissions from students to staff even at a time when the community was experiencing high COVID prevalence. While teachers should be prioritized to receive COVID-19 vaccines, vaccine roll out should not prevent or delay a return to in-person instruction.

We urge all Californians, especially parents, teachers, local and state government to work together collaboratively to open schools safely as soon as possible. The negative impact on children's health of not having in-person instruction is already being felt across our state. School is the essential business of childhood. Schools provide our children safety, nutrition, mental health support, social and emotional skill-building. The services provided by schools are even more paramount for children with disabilities and other special needs. Since there is ample data showing that opening schools does not endanger children, educators and school staff or raise a community's risk factors, the adverse consequences for children far outweigh the benefits of keeping schools closed.

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Thank you,

Michelle Dern

Michelle Dern, MD, FAAP
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American Academy of Pediatrics Orange County Chapter

INCORPORATED IN CALIFORNIA

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2019-2021

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***"To ensure optimal health for
all Orange County children by
promoting pediatric
excellence."***

February 9, 2021

Safety protocols should determine school reopening, not community case rates. California Pediatricians Urge Collaboration for Prompt Safe Return to In-Person Learning

The American Academy of Pediatrics – Orange County Chapter, representing nearly 500 pediatricians and pediatric subspecialists practicing in Orange County, CA strongly supports the safe return of students to in-person education with appropriate mitigation measures in place such as mask wearing, hand washing, cohorting and social distancing as recommended by our trusted scientists in national, state and county public health.

As physicians caring for children, we operate at the nexus of public health and individual health. The safety of children, educators, and staff is our utmost concern and priority and should be paramount in planning school-reopening. In chorus with our trusted scientists in public health at the [CDC](#), [Harvard Global Health Institute](#), and others, evidence has shown that **safe in-person education for grades TK-12th can be accomplished with properly implemented safety protocols even in areas of high community spread of COVID**. Recent studies from [North Carolina](#) and [WI](#) showed zero in-school transmissions from students to staff even at a time when the community was experiencing high COVID prevalence. While teachers should be prioritized to receive COVID-19 vaccines, vaccine roll out should not prevent or delay a return to in-person instruction.

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Sincerely,

Katherine Williamson, MD, FAAP
President, AAP-Orange County Chapter