

# Schools MUST go “Back to Normal” in the Fall—A Scientist’s Perspective

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by [Renata Dziak](#), sourced from [Children’s Health Defense](#)  
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*\*\*CHD Note: This is a letter from Renata Dziak, a Canadian forensic scientist trained in immunology and microbiology (and the mother of two children), explaining in detail, on the basis of (real) science, why schools should reopen as usual, without smaller classes, “social distancing” or face masks.*

*She wrote this letter to her representative in Parliament; and a group called Fearless Ontario has posted it on Facebook, as a template to be used by other parents who don’t want their children’s schooling to become the daily nightmare that the CDC is recommending here [in the United States].*

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

I am a scientist and mother of two children who attend Runnymede Junior and Senior PS in Toronto. I am writing to you in response to the Ontario Ministry of Education’s request for input on how schools should reopen in September.

The science does not support the need for reducing class sizes, social distancing in classrooms or at recess, or the wearing of masks or other PPE. It is deeply concerning that the federal and provincial governments, as well as public

health authorities appear not to have adjusted their COVID-19 strategies to take account of the large and growing body of scientific data that shows that COVID-19 is not the deadly threat that was originally thought.

There are thousands of scientists from around the world, including Nobel-Prize winners, doctors, virologists, immunologists, epidemiologists and molecular biologists who have spoken out against the lockdown and any forms of social distancing, with some even stating that these measures should never have been put in place for COVID-19.<sup>[1]</sup>

As you determine how schooling will work when the children return, I respectfully ask you to consider the following points – information based in real science.

## **Covid-19 is No More Infectious or Deadly Than a Seasonal Flu**

The lethality of COVID-19 has been massively overstated, especially when compared to the seasonal influenzas we face every year.<sup>[2][3][4][5]</sup> Recent data from the CDC suggests that COVID-19's lethality is about 15 times lower than originally assumed and stands at 0.26% in the US, one of the worst hit countries. For those aged under 50, the rate is even lower, at 0.05%.<sup>[6]</sup> The median or average age of the deceased in most countries (including Italy) is over 80 years and only about 1% of the deceased had no serious preconditions.<sup>[7][8][9]</sup>

In Canada “the combined influenza and pneumonia, which is a common complication of influenza, kills more than 8,000 people a year.”<sup>[10]</sup> At the time of writing, there have only been 7,717 COVID-19 deaths in Canada <sup>[11]</sup> – and this is despite the COVID-19 death toll being erroneously elevated by systematic over-reporting.<sup>[12][13][14]</sup>

Additionally, there is no scientific evidence that strict

'social distancing' measures are the reason why COVID-19 fatalities are lower than the regular flu.<sup>[15]</sup> Countries without contact bans, such as Japan, South Korea or Sweden (which kept restaurants, bars and grade schools open), have not experienced a more negative course of events than other countries.<sup>[16][17]</sup> The WHO even declared Sweden's response a model for the rest of the world.<sup>[18]</sup>

Science is emerging to show that COVID-19 is less infectious than previously thought. Epidemiologist Dr. Gerald Evans, the medical director of infection control at Kingston Health Sciences Centre, recently stated, "To get infected with this virus, you have to be in close contact with another person (and) that contact has to be for a significant amount of time. It's not 10 or 15 minutes, it's hours. It needs to be in a closed environment, a house, and in the environment, there has to be a significant amount of contamination. I'm describing exactly what you would see in a household."<sup>[19]</sup>

## **Children Not Seriously Affected by Covid-19**

When determining what the future of school looks like, please consider that children are the least affected by COVID-19 in both number and severity. Since January 15, 2020 Public Health Ontario has not recorded any COVID-19 deaths in anyone aged under 19 – that's zero deaths in a population of 3.14 million children and teenagers.<sup>[20]</sup>

The vast majority of people who do get COVID-19 experience no or very mild illness<sup>[21]</sup> and Ontario's Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Christine Elliott, said that data indicates the majority of COVID-19 infections in children are mild and do not require hospitalization.<sup>[22]</sup>

Many media reports of young and healthy people dying from COVID-19 have turned out to be false: many of these people

either did not die from COVID-19<sup>[23]</sup>, or they had already been seriously ill<sup>[24]</sup> (e.g. from undiagnosed leukemia).<sup>[25]</sup>

There's no scientific evidence to support recent news reports of a mysterious Kawasaki-like illness in children that "could" be linked to COVID-19. Of 20 pediatric cases in the UK, half tested negative for COVID-19.<sup>[26]</sup> Of 147 children with Kawasaki-like symptoms in New York City, only 69 (47%) tested positive for COVID-19 or the virus antibodies.<sup>[27]</sup> Kawasaki disease is a vasculitis that can be caused by any infection and last year, Canadian researchers identified Kawasaki disease as a condition of interest for pediatric vaccine safety surveillance. In fact, over 27 separate studies have identified a potential link between immunization and Kawasaki disease.<sup>[28]</sup>

## **Children Not Major Vectors of Covid-19 Transmission**

Studies show that children do not appear to spread the virus. A survey of Australian COVID-19 cases at schools shows almost no transmission to other children,<sup>[29]</sup> a result echoed by a study in France.<sup>[30]</sup> Furthermore, a Swiss study found that, "Children are very rarely infected and do not pass on the virus", and that children under 10 pose no risk of coronavirus infection because they do not have the receptors targeted by it.<sup>[31][32]</sup> A study in The Lancet shows that closing schools in order to manage the spread of coronavirus outbreaks including COVID-19 was never medically warranted.<sup>[33]</sup>

In fact, emerging science shows that asymptomatic carriers of any age do not transmit the disease. When 455 individuals who had close contact with an adult asymptomatic COVID-19 patient were tested, none of them were positive for the virus, despite the median contact time being between four and five days.<sup>[34]</sup> The government of India has stated that COVID-19 cases

with mild symptoms and no fever do not spread infection.<sup>[35]</sup>

## **Covid-19 Responses Causing A Mental Health Crisis**

Over 120 experts, including Nobel Prize winners, scientists and doctors have criticized the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>[36]</sup> The Ontario Civil Liberties Association has called the government's approach unscientific, unnecessary and unconstitutional.<sup>[37]</sup> Researchers have warned that the COVID-19 lockdown has created a mental health crisis,<sup>[38]</sup> and children are suffering too.

Save the Children surveyed over 6,000 children and parents in the US, Germany, Finland, Spain and the UK, and found that almost one in four children living under COVID-19 lockdowns, social restrictions and school closures are dealing with feelings of anxiety, with many at risk of lasting psychological distress, including depression.<sup>[39]</sup>

We should not inflict further psychological damage on our children with unnecessary and unscientific social restrictions and forced separation when school finally reopens.

## **Social Distancing and Mask Wearing Ineffective**

There is no peer reviewed scientific literature that proves the 'six feet' rule stops the spread of viruses like COVID-19. In fact, the concept of forced human separation or 'social distancing' comes from a 14-year-old student's high school science project, which was based on a simplistic computer simulation.<sup>[40][41]</sup>

Many scientists, including the highly esteemed Prof. Dolores Cahill, Vice Chair European Union Innovative Medicines Initiative Scientific Committee, argue that social distancing is unnecessary and should stop immediately.

Nobel Prize-winning professor Michael Levitt from Stanford

School of Medicine has been statistically analyzing the COVID-19 outbreak and declared that strict lockdowns are a huge mistake and that developing herd immunity is a better strategy.<sup>[42]</sup>

Studies have shown that the COVID-19 virus is primarily transmitted between people through respiratory droplets, not through airborne transmission<sup>[43]</sup> or smear infections (e.g. on door handles).<sup>[44]</sup>

Additionally, the latest studies show that masks “do not work to prevent respiratory influenza-like illnesses.”<sup>[45]</sup> In fact, wearing a mask may even be harmful, causing problems from “headaches, to increased airway resistance, carbon dioxide accumulation, to hypoxia, all the way to serious life-threatening complications.”<sup>[46]</sup>

## **Excessive and Harmful Sanitization Methods**

The CDC has recently updated its guidelines to note that touching contaminated objects or surfaces does not appear to be a significant mode of transmission.<sup>[47][48]</sup> This means that the over sanitization of school surfaces and objects with harsh chemical cleaners is not necessary and actually poses serious and potentially long-lasting health effects, especially for the young and those with pre-existing conditions.

According to the Environmental Working Group, “Cleaning products can release a plethora of chemicals into the air including ones linked to asthma, developmental harm and cancer.” For example, it rates Lysol IC brand disinfectant spray as posing “potentially significant hazards to health or the environment,” because it contains “ingredients with potential for developmental/endocrine/reproductive effects; damage to DNA.”<sup>[49]</sup>

Any cleaners that use ammonia and chlorine bleach are highly

toxic. Those containing hydrochloric acid, phosphoric acid, sodium or potassium hydroxide, or ethanolamine can cause skin burns, blindness and lung irritation. Air fresheners and scented products can trigger allergies and often contain suspected endocrine disruptors, such as phthalates. The antimicrobial Triclosan has been linked to increased allergen sensitivity and disruption of thyroid function even at low levels.<sup>[50]</sup>

However, natural cleaners with active ingredients like thyme oil and citric acid have been approved for use as disinfectants against SARS-CoV-2 by both Health Canada<sup>[51]</sup> and the US Environmental Protection Agency<sup>[52]</sup> and pose significantly less health risks than chemical cleaners.

## **The Recommendation of Flu Vaccines**

In a letter from Dr Eileen De Villa, City of Toronto Medical Officer of Health, dated February 28th, 2020 it was recommended that all school-age children and their families should get an annual flu vaccination in order to protect themselves from COVID-19. However, a number of peer reviewed studies indicate that flu vaccination actually raises the risk of coronavirus by 36%<sup>[53]</sup> and of other non-influenza viral respiratory infections in both adults and children.<sup>[54][55][56][57]</sup>

## **Give Education A Scientific, Data-Driven Way Forward**

We have never closed schools or imposed social restrictions for influenza in the past, and the science shows COVID-19 is no more dangerous for the majority of children or staff than a seasonal influenza.

There are three simple, scientifically proven strategies to prevent the spread of any infectious illness, including COVID-19, that will allow our children to return to school without measures like social distancing and compulsory mask wearing:

- The thorough and frequent washing of hands with soap.
- Staying home from school when showing symptoms of any sickness.
- Protecting the very small group of the most vulnerable people (the elderly and those with serious pre-existing conditions).

School is vital to our children's intellectual and social development, and to the future health and success of our economy and society. Let's ensure that this generation of students get the educational experience they deserve – and on which the future of our country depends.

Yours sincerely,

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