

Preparing for a Safe & Healthy Return to School

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Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health
Halton Region



We're here for you!

We've been **working together** with the board at every step of the way through this planning process and **we're confident** that we will be able to provide a safe and productive learning environment for students and staff.



Parents are facing difficult decisions



Remote education



Return to school

Children need to learn and socialize together...Safely



Think about **your child's needs**

Does your child have:

- Special learning needs?
- Any medical conditions that may make them prone to severe disease if they get COVID-19?

Talk with your child's doctor to discuss the risks.



Common symptoms of COVID-19 among children

So far, most children infected with the virus experience mild symptoms.

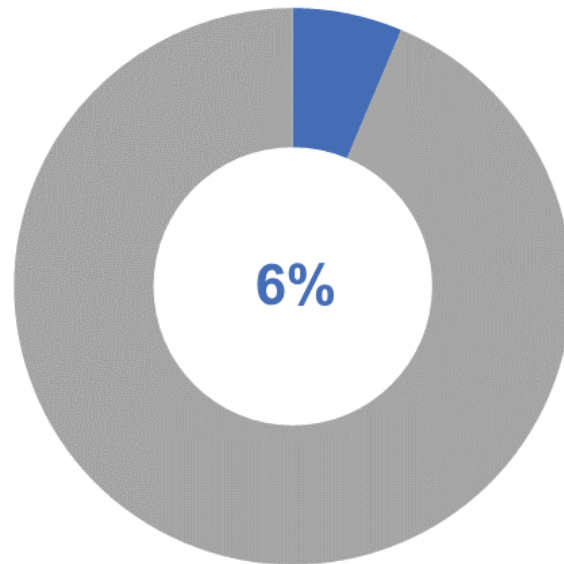


- Fever
- Cough
- Runny Nose
- Sore Throat
- Headache
- Body Ache
- Diarrhea

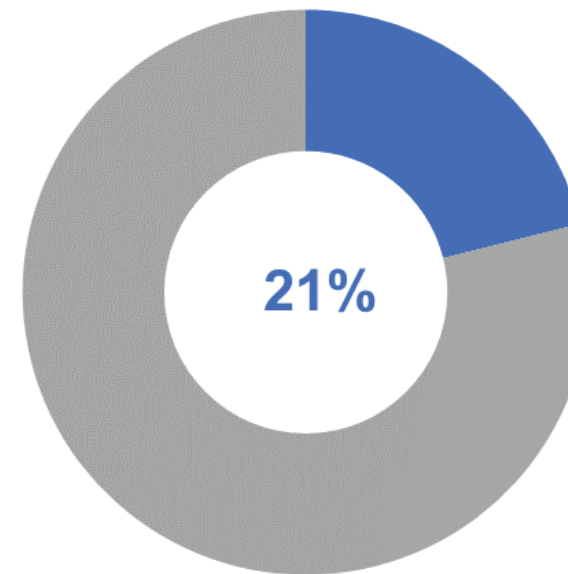
COVID-19 confirmed cases: Children in Ontario

Children account for a small portion of confirmed cases in Ontario

% of cases aged 0-19 (Ontario)



% of population aged 0-19 (Ontario)



Sources:

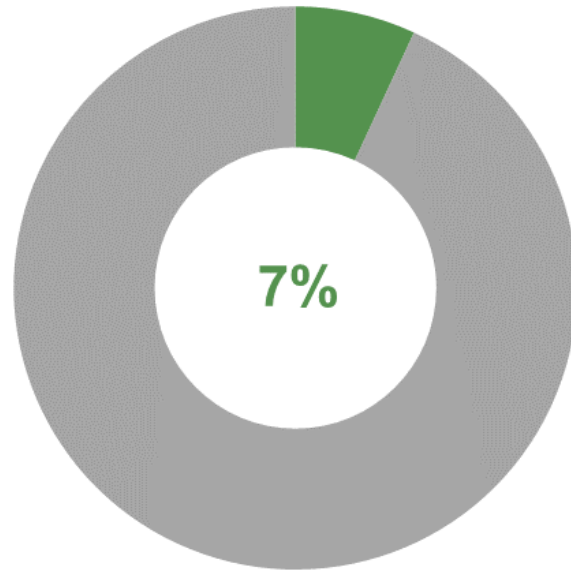
Public Health Ontario's Ontario COVID-19 Data Tool (extracted August 24, 2020)

Ministry of Health's population projections (extracted March 2020).

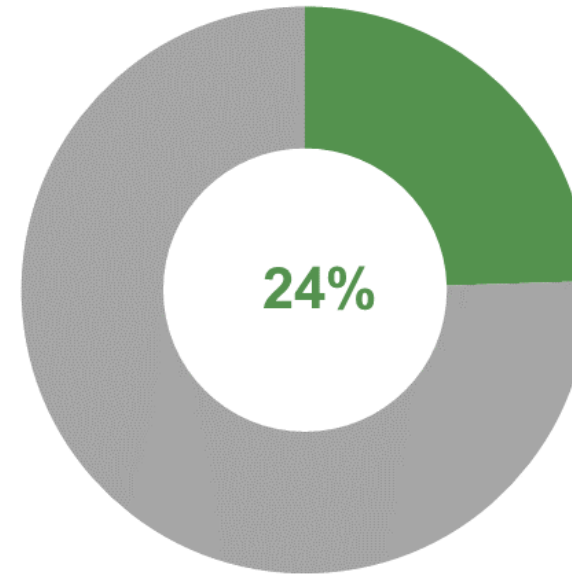
COVID-19 confirmed cases: Children in Halton

Children account for a small portion of confirmed cases in Halton

% of cases aged 0-19 (Halton)



% of population aged 0-19 (Halton)



Sources:

Public Health Ontario's Ontario COVID-19 Data Tool (extracted August 24, 2020)
Ministry of Health's population projections (extracted March 2020).

Think about the people with whom you live

Most people will develop minor symptoms and recover on their own.

The risk of severe illness and outcomes is higher for those who are over 70, or who have chronic diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease or cancer.



Every family is unique

Decisions around heading back to school will be **different for every family** depending on:

- your child's academic needs
- whether your child or household members are at increased risk of severe illness
- your family's unique situation








The role of Public Health

Work with the school board to ensure measures are in place to protect our students:

- active daily screening
- no mixing of cohorts (or classes) in the elementary years
- ensuring children understand how to properly wear face coverings or masks
- enhanced hand hygiene and cleaning



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Halton Region Public Health Recommendations for School Reopening 2020-2021

This resource is intended to support the safe reopening of schools and improve their overall preparedness and management of COVID-19. It includes considerations for the development of policies and procedures, adherence to infection prevention and control practices, and appropriate response planning to ensure the health and safety of school staff, students, parents/guardians and essential visitors.

This supplementary resource is to be used in conjunction with Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Public Health directives, guidelines, and recommendations as well as other guidance documents. This document does not replace guidance from the Province, and it is subject to the staged and regional approach to reopening in the [Framework for Reopening](#).

Please note that this resource was designed to support the conventional full day and the modified/adaptive school day reopening models. All items in this resource should be considered and discussed, but may not always be appropriate or applicable for your setting or school.

For additional information please refer to [Halton Region](#) website.

Adapted with Permission from Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

Updated: August 18, 2020



Support development of safe school reopening plans

Provide recommendations and resources to help school boards and private schools develop policies and procedures, adhere to infection prevention and control practices and plan measures to ensure the health and safety of staff, students, parents/guardians and visitors.

- Support training and educational opportunities
- Develop processes and protocols for managing sick students and staff
- Develop guidance around managing a confirmed case and an outbreak
- Ensure schools have child-friendly resources that support healthy behaviours

Announcement to hire additional nurses



NEWS
Office of the Premier

Ontario Releases Plan for Safe Reopening of Schools in September *Province Providing Critical Investments and Resources to Keep Students and Staff Safe* July 30, 2020 1:00 P.M.

TORONTO — The Ontario government is announcing the safe reopening of schools for in-class instruction beginning this September. The government has unveiled a [plan](#) that prioritizes the health and safety of students and staff, and provides school boards with unprecedented resources and flexibility, while accommodating regional differences in trends of key public health indicators. This plan was developed in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the COVID-19 Command Table and paediatric experts.

Details on the safe restart of the 2020-2021 school year were provided today by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, and Dr. Barbara Yaffe, Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Elementary schools (Kindergarten to Grade 8) will reopen provincewide, with in-class instruction five days a week. Secondary schools with lower risk will reopen with a normal daily schedule, five days a week, while most secondary schools will start the school year in an adapted model.

- \$60 million in procurement of medical and cloth masks for students and staff, with direction to boards to ensure that students who cannot afford a mask are provided one;
- \$30 million for teacher staffing to support supervision, keeping classes small and other safety related measures;
- \$50 million to hire up to 500 additional school-focused nurses in public health units to provide rapid-response support to schools and boards in facilitating public health and preventative measures, including screening, testing, tracing and mitigation strategies;
- Over \$23 million to provide testing capacity to help keep schools safe;
- \$75 million in funding to hire over 900 additional custodians and purchase cleaning supplies for schools;
- \$40 million to clean school buses, to ensure that students are in a thoroughly cleaned transportation environment;
- \$10 million for health and safety training for occasional teachers, who have historically not been covered by professional development that is offered to permanent teachers;
- \$10 million to support special needs students in the classroom; and
- \$10 million to support student mental health.

This funding is in addition to a \$25 million investment in mental health and technology, which will see an additional \$10 million dedicated to mental health staff, resources, and programs, as well as \$15 million in technology funding to support the procurement of over 35,000 devices for Ontario's students to support their synchronous learning in-school and beyond.

"This plan reflects the best medical and scientific advice with a single aim: to keep your child safe," added Minister Lecce. "While this plan will continue to evolve to respond to the changing threat of COVID-19, we will remain constant and consistent in investing in the resources, staffing, and cleaning supports, and strict health and safety protocols to keep our communities and our classrooms safe."



Expected roles for School Health Nurses

Support existing school health and communicable disease control programs in public health by:

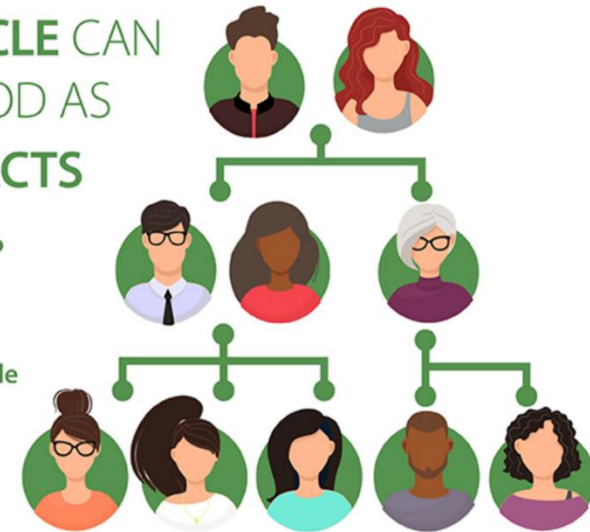
- Providing support to school boards and schools in the development and implementation of COVID-19 health and safety plans
- Providing sector specific support for:
 - Infection prevention and control
 - Surveillance, screening and testing
 - Outbreak management; and
 - Case and contact management
- Supporting communication and engagement with parents and local communities, as well as the broader health care sector.

Returning to school is a community effort

- Tighten up social circles
- Practice physical distancing
- Follow good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Wear face coverings in indoor public places and when physical distancing cannot be maintained
- Get tested if you have one or more symptoms of COVID-19
- Stay home when ill, even if you have very mild symptoms

A SOCIAL CIRCLE CAN BE UNDERSTOOD AS CLOSE CONTACTS

- Social circles are limited to 10 individuals
- Remember you can only be part of one social circle



• Your circle will include those you live with

• Your circle will include those you choose to be part of the circle

• And your circle will include anyone those individuals come into close contact with

COVID Alert app

Stay informed by downloading the government's **free COVID Alert app** from the Google or Apple store.



Stay informed and invite questions



Stay informed about your school's plans



Talk to your children about the school year



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Tips



Remind children how to properly wash their hands and give them hand sanitizer



Tell them how important it is that they not touch their face or their friends' faces and not put objects into their mouths



Make sure they understand the importance of not sharing food or personal items (e.g. toys and for older children, cell phones)

Tips continued



Explain what
“physical distancing”
really means



Encourage them
to greet each
other using non-
physical gestures



Go to the mall
and practice
following
directional signs



Make sure that your
children are up-to-
date with all
recommended
vaccines, including
the vaccine for flu

Masks and face coverings



[Video](#)



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Listen to your child and encourage kindness



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What happens if a student/staff becomes sick?



Separate from other students and supervise in a designated room



Disinfect the room once the student leaves



Contact student's parent or guardian for immediate pick up from school

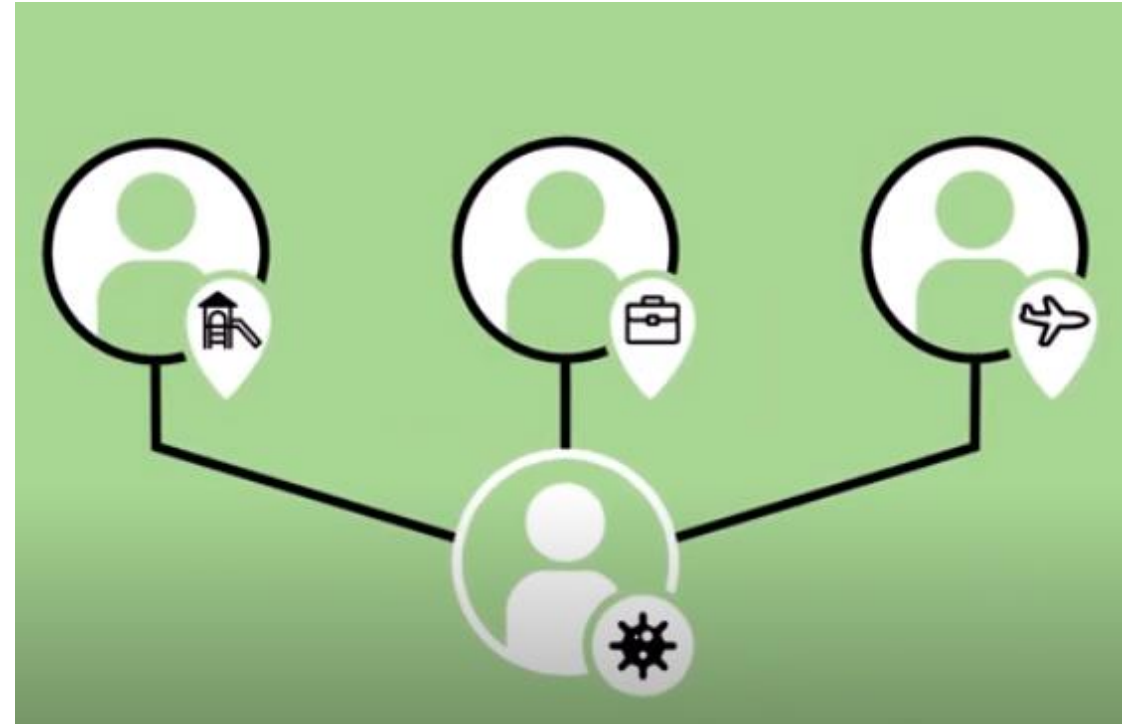
Isolate and test

- Students with symptoms and siblings of symptomatic students must also be picked up and taken home.
- Students with symptoms must self-isolate at home and be referred for testing.
- Household members must also self-isolate at home.
- Anyone with a confirmed positive test result must have clearance from public health to return to school.



Investigate, contact, trace and test

If an outbreak is declared at a school, **we will investigate** to see whether others are impacted, **define the outbreak area** and **identify any others who will need to be contacted and tested**.



Decide what is right for your child and your family

- Be vigilant
- Stay informed
- Be kind to one another



Connect with our HaltonParents team of experts, available Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.:

- On social media @HaltonParents
- Email haltonparents@halton.ca
- Call 311
- Visit halton.ca/haltonparents for more info



Questions?

