



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ON RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

*INFORMATION AND PRESENTATION BY DEVELOPMENTAL PEDIATRICS
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AGENDA / GOALS

- Brief discussion on information that can be helpful to parents of children with special needs in return to school guidance/decision making. This includes:
 - Overview and stance on return to school
 - Program and IEP's
 - Safety
 - Resources(10 minutes)
- Questions and Answers from Developmental Pediatrics Nurse Practitioner staff
 - This will be done by parents submitting questions through the chat section. All attendees will remain muted throughout presentation.
 - NP's will answer questions sent in during the allotted time.(20 minutes)

RETURN TO SCHOOL

Complete safety from COVID-19 is **not possible**. However, reasonably SAFE return can occur, and there are many benefits of return to in-person learning, especially for children with special needs

- Rapid changes
- Child and family at low-risk
- Child and family at higher risk,

From the CDC: “Some children may be at increased risk of getting COVID-19 or may be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. For these children, parents and caregivers may need to take additional precautions with regard to school re-entry. There are more COVID-19 cases reported among children with intellectual and developmental disabilities than those without.”

RETURN TO SCHOOL

What puts children at higher risk?

From the CDC:

Children who are medically complex, who have serious genetic, neurologic, metabolic disorders, and with congenital (since birth) heart disease **might be** at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Similar to adults, children with obesity, diabetes, asthma and chronic lung disease, or immunosuppression **might be** at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

PROGRAMS AND IEP'S

- Case-By-Case Basis
- IEP's are individualized documents and each child will need their own consideration. The questions that should be considered include:
 - 1. Will it be safe for my child?
 - 2. Will my child's most pressing needs and their capabilities be supported?
 - 3. Recognizing that some services may not be available or modified, what are creative ways to supply support and encourage progress?
- In this exceptional time, close communication with school staff and family is critical.

SAFETY

- From NYS Education Department –
 - FACE COVERING AND PPE
 - *Cloth face coverings protect others if the wearer is infected with SARS CoV-2 and is not aware.*
 - *Cloth masks may offer some level of protection for the wearer. Evidence continues to mount on the importance of universal face coverings in interrupting the spread of SARS-CoV-2.*
 - *Although ideal, universal face covering use is not always possible in the school setting for many reasons.*

SAFETY

- What about Individuals who have difficulties with masks?
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html>
- Social Story link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnP-uMn6q_U
- Mask Wearing Toolkit:
 - <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/MediaLibraries/URMCMedia/s trong-center-developmental-disabilities/documents/Mask-Wearing-Toolkit.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0tluBK6iTbA830O4ZOFDLkwpkg6lXEGW2rly8AKYJdKIkIBI4rLTfHpI4>

QUESTIONS TO HELP GUIDE YOUR DECISION

- Your child
 - Does my child have any health conditions that would make them high risk?
 - What are their learning needs? How would they be met in the different school options?
 - Can my child tolerate the masking and social distancing requirements of in-person school?
- Your family
 - Are there high risk family members or care providers?
 - Is your family able to accommodate distance learning?
 - Who would supervise your child during the school day? How does it impact caregivers work schedules? What would you do about transportation to and from school?
- Your school
 - What are the options being offered?
 - What precautions are being taken?
 - How will the school to addressing each part of my child's IEP?

RESOURCES

- Here is some general guidance on return to school:
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Return-to-School-During-COVID-19.aspx>
- American Academy of Pediatrics 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/>
- Here is a tool for families to use to help with the decision to return to school for a child with special needs. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/decision-tool.html>
- New York State Education Department School Reopening Guidance
<http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/reopening-schools/nys-p12-school-reopening-guidance.pdf> (special education begins on page 112)
- This is a good website for social stories and the virus as well as other resources: <https://familiestogetherinc.org/coronavirus-covid-19/#kids>
- Considerations and Ideas to help your child with the transition back to school....