

Oregon Legislators:

I am writing to express my concerns about reopening schools. I have provided links to the news articles, CDC, the Mayo Clinic, and other sources backing my statements after my signature line.

I am concerned that our state is making a giant error in reasoning when it comes to re-opening schools. Those in favor of opening schools maintain that children rarely get Covid-19 or have symptoms. It is clear that children can indeed get Covid and become an asymptomatic carrier or suffer from a mild to severe case of Covid. The fact is that an asymptomatic child is unlikely to be tested for Covid. Why wouldn't we expect children to make up fewer cases? Schools closed in March and many have not reopened. Children staying at home are unlikely to get sick. In fact, the most recent numbers show that since schools have begun reopening the number of children getting sick has skyrocketed.

In April 2020, children accounted for 2% of Covid-19 cases; they now account for 11% of cases (A). Over 1 million children are known to have had Covid-19. These children have experienced MIS-C, strokes, heart failure, and death. Some studies have indicated that children do not spread Covid, more recent studies have determined that children do spread Covid, at a reduced rate (B, C, G, H). Opening schools increases community and building spread (D, E, F). Covid appears harmless to children at first glance, but it is not harmless. A recent study from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia looked at children who tested positive with Covid and ranged from asymptomatic to having had MIS-C (I). Every single child in the study had blood vessel damage. Every child. Many of the children had significant enough damage to fit diagnostic criteria for thrombotic microangiopathy

Changing the metrics for opening schools does not make them safe. Making Oregon's metrics less stringent than those set forth by the CDC does not make sense (J). I am a parent and nearly a year at home has been hard on my children, especially my 10 year old. I can get him through a lost year of regular socialization and typical schooling. I don't know that I can get him through the loss of a friend or teacher, much less one of his parents should he or a community member unknowingly pass it on to one of us. Why would you sacrifice our children and communities when there is a vaccine in the wings? Children and educators have died. Make no mistake, opening schools will increase community spread and kill people.

Sincerely,

Veronica Stewart
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- A. <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/more-61-000-children-got-covid-19-last-week-record-n1245851>
- B. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/12/we-now-know-how-much-children-spread-coronavirus/#close>

- a. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mis-c-in-kids-covid-19/symptoms-causes/syc-20502550>
- C. <https://www.medpagetoday.com/infectiousdisease/covid19/87823#:~:text=Young%20children%20under%20age%205,or%20older%20children%2C%20researchers%20found>
- D. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/coronavirus-r-rate-school-closures-lockdown-lancet-study-b1251617.html?fbclid=IwAR00jqJAJ7f-6x3Fj2F6N1yQMJOOrN_goiHtbkIJ59ffw5rHswAuN76lnBq0
- E. <https://fox17.com/news/local/covid-19infection-rates-among-tennessee-educators-higher-than-rate-of-communities-they-serve-tea-teachers-education-association?fbclid=IwAR3tbYtzHgJk4sof5uue8iyRhFZO0Vrwgj9Kh9AbpYBWbZV2mfkhpvg8zxY>
- F. https://www.tes.com/news/exclusive-coronavirus-schools-teacher-covid-rates-333-above-average?fbclid=IwAR00jqJAJ7f-6x3Fj2F6N1yQMJOOrN_goiHtbkIJ59ffw5rHswAuN76lnBq0
- G. <https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20201229/3-year-old-covid-patient-recovering-from-stroke>
- H. <https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20201203/covid-can-harm-the-infant-heart>
 - a. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2021/01/01/covid-symptoms-complications-kids-heart-failure/3924481001/>
- I. <https://www.chop.edu/news/chop-researchers-find-elevated-biomarker-related-blood-vessel-damage-all-children-sars-cov-2>
- J. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/indicators.html?fbclid=IwAR2DCWReWqsjCGz8zRm15Mqm4BxUyutmzlpkZzUyE-mbgjKRfuzw0FXHcUY#thresholds>
- K.