



Southern California Chapter 2 Kern - Los Angeles – Riverside - San Bernardino – San Luis Obispo - Santa Barbara - Ventura

Press release

## **Pediatricians emphasize importance of masks and vaccines for children during pandemic**

LOS ANGELES, CA (September 1, 2021)

Pediatricians are glad that children are back in school after a year of prolonged closures for many. While the COVID-19 pandemic continues in California, particularly with the current surge due to the delta variant, we reiterate the importance of a layered strategy to protect the youngest members of our communities.

Masks continue to be an important strategy to limit the spread of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. In a pre-published large, randomized controlled trial of 340,000 individuals, mask-wearing can have a significant impact on limiting the spread of symptomatic COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/09/01/masks-study-covid-bangladesh/>). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists about half a dozen studies which provide evidence for the effectiveness of mask wearing in school settings to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 among children ([https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/transmission\\_k\\_12\\_schools.html-in-person](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/transmission_k_12_schools.html-in-person)).

Vaccines against COVID-19 for all eligible individuals are another strategy and layer of protection to keep children safe. Research studies have demonstrated that currently authorized mRNA vaccines provide protection against coronavirus variants, including the delta variant (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/fully-vaccinated-people.html>). Getting to herd immunity on school campuses is an effective and important strategy to protect younger children who are unable to receive the vaccine at this time.

“Our priority should be to have children in person for school this fall and to keep them as safe as possible,” says Dr. Alice Kuo, Professor and Chief of Medicine-Pediatrics at UCLA and Past-President of the Southern California Chapter 2 of the American Academy of Pediatrics. “Masks and vaccines are important strategies to be able to keep children in school as we approach the winter months.”

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*The Southern California chapter 2 of the American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 1,500 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.*

AAP Southern California Chapter 2 (AAP-CA2)

[Chapter2@aapca2.org](mailto:Chapter2@aapca2.org)

(818) 422-9877 [www.aapca2.org](http://www.aapca2.org)