

Big spike seen in COVID cases among kids

3 November 2020



Girl in hospital bed

(HealthDay)—COVID-19 is surging among America's children, according to leading medical groups.

As of Oct. 29, more than 853,000 children in the United States had tested positive for the virus since the pandemic began—200,000 of them in October alone. In the week ending Oct. 29, an estimated 61,000 new cases in kids were reported—the most of any week in the pandemic, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Children's Hospital Association reported.

"This is a stark reminder of the impact this pandemic is having on everyone—including our children and adolescents," said AAP president Dr. Sally Goza. "This virus is highly contagious, and as we see spikes in many communities, children are more likely to be infected, too. We can help protect everyone in our communities by keeping our [physical distance](#), wearing masks, and following other recommendations from our doctors and public [health](#) experts."

Severe COVID-19 illness is rare among children,

but more data are needed on longer-term effects. Those include ways the virus may harm kids' long-term physical health as well as its emotional and mental health effects.

"Not only are children feeling the direct effects of the virus and becoming ill, but the pandemic has transformed their lives at critical stages of development and education," Goza said in an AAP news release. "I'm very concerned about the long-term harms that children may suffer, particularly Black and Hispanic children, who are suffering a higher number of infections."

Goza said this includes not only children who test positive for the SARS-CoV-2 [virus](#), but everyone in these communities who are suffering disproportionate mental health harms.

Dr. Yvonne Maldonado, chairwoman of the AAP Committee on Infectious Diseases, said the new numbers reflect a disturbing nationwide increase of COVID-19 cases in all groups, especially young adults.

"We are entering a heightened wave of infections around the country," Maldonado said. "We would encourage family holiday gatherings to be avoided if possible, especially if there are high-risk individuals in the household."

The number of reported COVID-19 cases in [children](#) is likely less than the true number because they often have mild symptoms and may not be tested, according to the AAP.

"On every measure—new infections, hospitalizations and deaths—the U.S. is headed in the wrong direction," Goza warned.

She called on policymakers to listen to doctors and public health experts, and not to level "baseless accusations" against them.

"Physicians, nurses and other [health care professionals](#) have put their lives on the line to

protect our communities," Goza said. "We can all do our part to protect them, and our communities by wearing masks, practicing physical distancing and getting our flu immunizations."

More information: For more about COVID-19, visit the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

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