



Health Nexus Weekly Bulletin

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CHILDREN AND COVID-19



As children go back to school, many parents are worried about their kids' health and the possibility of contracting COVID-19 in the school environment.

To help parents and childcare providers better understand the relationships between children and COVID-19, below is the important resources and information which would be helpful:

- McMaster Children's Hospital has created a user-friendly video, which was shared by the Ontario Hospital Association, and reflected on the science supporting that "the risk to children from COVID-19 is comparable to that of the seasonal flu every year, and probably less than their annual risk from serious injury or death from the motorcycle crashes". Please watch the full "COVID-19 Risk to Children video" [here](#).
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- According to the latest cumulative Public Health Ontario weekly epidemiological summary report titled [COVID-19 in Ontario: Focus on August 30, 2020 to September 5, 2020](#), as of September 5th, 2020, children ages 0-19 years old have a cumulative death rate of 0.0 per 100,000 population.
 - The pediatric COVID-19 statistics in Ontario reflect that of the overall picture in Canada. Health Canada latest cumulative [COVID-19 Weekly Epidemiology Report](#) (covering the period of 30 August to 5 September 2020) states that less than 3% of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 are pediatric (<18 years), while the weekly number of pediatric patients (<18 years) hospitalized with COVID-19 have fluctuated slightly, it still has remained low throughout the pandemic. In the same report, Health Canada also notes that "since early May [2020], a steep decline in reported deaths has been observed, and the number of new deaths reported daily has remained low". To read the report, please go to [this](#) page and download [Detailed weekly epidemiological report \(PDF\)](#).
 - In its updated [COVID-19: Guidance to School Reopening Plan](#), SickKids (in partnership with CHEO, Holland Bloorview Kids rehabilitation hospital, Kingston Health Science Centre, Children's Hospital London Health Science Centre, McMaster Children's Hospital, and Unity Health Toronto) has stated that: "multiple reports from around the world indicate that children and youth account for less than 5-10% of SARS-CoV-2 symptomatic infections", "there is also strong evidence that the majority of children and youth who become infected with SARS-CoV-2 are either asymptomatic or have only mild symptoms, such as cough, fever and sore throat" and while "severe acute disease requiring intensive care admission has been described in a small minority of paediatric cases, particularly among those with certain underlying medical conditions, but
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the clinical course is much less severe than in adults, and deaths are extremely rare". To read the full report, please go [here.](#)

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY DURING THE PANDEMIC



In the report called [*Potential Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Youth Mental Health*](#), Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental health has mentioned that based on the recent Statistics Canada survey conducted between March 29 and April 3, 2020, women and young Canadians' self-perceived mental health has been impacted significantly, and only 42 percent of

young adults reported excellent or very good mental health during the pandemic compared to 62 percent in 2018.

Also, the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH) conducted a survey of 622 young people (aged 14 to 27 years) between April 10 and 24, 2020 to better understand how the COVID-19 pandemic had affected their mental health. The data is currently being peer-reviewed, but the preliminary results showed that:

- Sixty-eight percent of those youth who had previously sought mental health supports cited mental health challenges during the pandemic compared to 40 percent of those who had not previously sought support.
- 30 percent of those who had previously sought support for mental health issues cited suicidal thoughts compared to eight percent of those who had not previously sought support.
- Half of the respondents with pre-existing mental health challenges reported challenges or disruptions in their access to mental health services and supports during the pandemic.

The report also identifies youth as a vulnerable population at a higher risk of experiencing poor mental health. To read the full report, go [here](#).

For additional resources on how to support children and youth mental health, visit the centre's response resources to the COVID-19 pandemic [here](#).

Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children has issued a [Five-Step Plan for Better Governance for Children Across Canada](#). The plan mentions that "there will be no recovery for Canada without a recovery for children. Our well-being now and in the future depends on creating conditions that allow all children to develop their full potential" and that "realizing children's rights to develop their

potential and contribute to society is essential for recovery".

The Five Steps outlines in the document include:

1. Child-Centered Coherence: Council of Ministers for Children with Targets and Timelines.
2. Accountability that Shows the Best Interests of Children are Given Top Priority.
3. Deadline for Compliance on Actions to Fulfill the Rights of Indigenous Children.
4. Right to Healthy Environment: Youth Impacts Centered in Climate Change Policy.
5. Lower the Voting Age.

To access the details and read the full plan, please go [here](#).

SPECIAL AWARENESS CELEBRATION



This September, Health Nexus would like to join Canada in celebrating **Big Brothers Big Sisters Month**.

As per Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada, "most children and families served by Big Brother Big Sister agencies in Canada are facing increased anxiety, stress, and are most likely to bear the heaviest burdens of trauma and economic hardship due to the pandemic. By having a mentor involved, mentored youth are 50% more likely to have a strong social network. Mentoring relationships protect against harmful effects and help young people heal. Big Brothers Big Sisters continues to provide life-changing mentoring services across our network and help build resilience among children".

To join the celebration and to find out more about Big Brothers Big Sisters work during the pandemic, please visit their website

at <https://bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/big-brothers-big-sisters-month-2020/>.

Visit [our resources page](#) to discover all our many evidence-based, up-to-date resources!



We have moved! Our new location is:

Nous avons déménagé ! Notre nouvelle adresse :

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