

## COVID-19 Disease Risk for Children and Adolescents with Medical Complexity or Special Healthcare Needs

As we navigate the reintroduction of students into schools during the Coronavirus pandemic, it will be important to weigh the risks of infection, transmission, and illness with the physical, social, emotional, and educational needs of students; as well as the risks of teachers and school personnel who will be providing care.

The intent of this document is to help providers understand a student’s potential risk for severe coronavirus infection, and recognize conditions for which individuals are not recommended to wear a face mask.

It is important to remember that children with disabilities are guaranteed access to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.<sup>i</sup>

Student Risk for Disease <sup>ii,iii</sup>		
Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No underlying medical conditions</li> <li>Medical conditions not otherwise listed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asthma (moderate to severe)</li> <li>Cerebrovascular disease</li> <li>Cystic fibrosis</li> <li>Hypertension or high blood pressure</li> <li>Immunocompromised from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiency, HIV, use of corticosteroids or other medications that weaken the immune system</li> <li>Neurologic conditions</li> <li>Liver disease</li> <li>Obesity</li> <li>Pregnancy</li> <li>Pulmonary fibrosis</li> <li>Smoking</li> <li>Thalassemia</li> <li>Type 1 diabetes mellitus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cancer</li> <li>Chronic kidney disease</li> <li>COPD</li> <li>Immunocompromised from solid organ transplant</li> <li>Serious heart conditions (heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathy)</li> <li>Severe obesity</li> <li>Sickle cell disease</li> <li>Type 2 diabetes mellitus</li> </ul> <p><b>Additionally for children:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neurologic conditions</li> <li>Genetic conditions</li> <li>Metabolic conditions</li> <li>Congenital heart disease</li> </ul>

### Masking

The following individuals are excluded from wearing a mask<sup>iv</sup>:

- Age < 2 years
- Anyone with difficulty breathing
- Anyone unconscious, incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance

Other factors that may preclude a student from wearing a mask include sensory sensitivities and inability to understand the concept of mask wearing due to cognitive level.

<sup>i</sup> <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/about-idea/#IDEA-Purpose> Accessed 09/24/20

<sup>ii</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fgroups-at-higher-risk.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fgroups-at-higher-risk.html) Accessed 09/23/20

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-underlying-medical-conditions.html> Accessed 09/25/20

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html> Accessed 09/23/20