

More than 200,000 children have been infected with COVID-19 in the US for five consecutive weeks

Benjamin Mateus
28 September 2021

Hundreds of thousands of children are being infected with COVID-19 every week in the United States, driven by the spread of the highly infectious Delta variant and the reopening of schools to in-person learning throughout the country.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), as of the week ending September 23, 2021, over 5.7 million children in the United States have tested positive for COVID-19 since the onset of the pandemic. The number of pediatric cases exceeded 200,000 for the fifth consecutive week.

Over the past week, the number of infections, according to official figures, was 206,864, bringing the total over the last five weeks to 1,131,958. In other words, nearly 20 percent of all childhood COVID-19 cases since the beginning of the pandemic have occurred in just the last five weeks. And though pediatric cases account for 16 percent of all infections in the US since the pandemic began, they accounted for 26.7 percent of all cases this week.

The AAP reports that 19 children died of COVID-19 over the past week, bringing the total death toll among children to 498. Nearly 20 percent of all child deaths, or 96 children, have occurred in the past five weeks.

Overall, the number of pediatric cases and hospitalizations appears to be slowly declining. In the South, the recent epicenter of the pandemic, schools have been opened for at least two months, and the reported incidence of COVID-19 among children has declined slightly.

However, the apparent decline is likely a consequence of how states are calculating pediatric cases in an effort to cover up the full extent of the pandemic among children to keep schools open.

Texas has provided an age distribution for only three percent of confirmed cases, and this only through August 26. The state of New York does not give an age distribution. Alabama, Rhode Island, Missouri, West Virginia, and Hawaii have revised the definition of child cases, reducing the age cutoff. Massachusetts has also changed its definition of probable child cases, leading to a reduction in total case counts. Florida has stopped reporting child hospitalizations, and Nebraska no longer has a COVID-19 dashboard.

The fact that the AAP is the only source of data on child infections is the product of a deliberate effort on the part of federal, state and local governments to cover up the true magnitude of the devastation caused by the pandemic, especially among children.

While the official figures of child cases are declining slightly, the number of hospital admissions is continuing to trend upwards or has stabilized at a very high rate, which provides a more accurate measure of infections.

Even though children make up a minority of those that die from COVID-19, the case fatality rate among those 16 years and younger has seen the highest jump during the Delta phase of the pandemic. As Dr. Eric Feigl-Ding, epidemiologist and advocate for bringing cases of COVID-19 down to zero, said, “When you compare it [case fatality rates among children in Florida] to the entire pandemic period, it is six to eight-fold higher in terms of actual deaths.”

Almost 20 children have died each week for the last five weeks. This would mean that, at the present trajectory, nearly 1,000 children will die over the course of one year. Though vaccinations are being touted as vital to opening society, most children are

unvaccinated, as the vaccine has yet to be approved for those under the age of 12.

As Feigl-Ding observed, exposing children to COVID-19 is “dangerous and morally reprehensible” under the present circumstances. In 2019, almost 3,400 children were killed with guns. A little more than half that number, or 1,780, died from cancer. The rate of COVID-19 deaths is comparable to these tragic figures.

The massive spread of the virus among children is being downplayed to ensure that schools remain open so that parents can continue to work and pump out profits for the ruling class. This policy is supported by the entire political establishment, along with the corporate media.

The Democrats under Biden are now spearheading the reopening of schools throughout the country, with the assistance of the trade unions. In particular, the teachers unions have campaigned aggressively for the full reopening of schools to in-person learning, endangering the health and lives of educators as well as students.

In the eight months of the Biden presidency, more than 280,000 people have died from COVID-19. As of July 2021, when Biden declared “independence” from the virus, 114,000 children in the US have been orphaned due to a caregiver’s death from COVID-19. What makes pediatric infections so concerning is that most of them are asymptomatic carriers and can readily transmit the disease to their families.

In addition to the immediate impact on the health of children, the long-term consequences of infection can be severe. In a recent study out of England, researchers found that one in seven children who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 continued to have symptoms for 15 weeks after their diagnosis. These symptoms include headaches and unusual tiredness.

There is growing opposition in the US and internationally to the homicidal policy of school reopenings. Last week, British parent Lisa Diaz issued a video statement via Twitter calling for a nationwide school strike in the UK on October 1. Nearly 60,000 British children have been infected with COVID-19 in just the first two weeks of school reopenings.

The call by Diaz has been supported by parents and educators in the UK, the US and internationally.

Teachers, parents and the entire working class must come to the defense of children. The growing

opposition in the international working class must be mobilized to oppose the homicidal policies of the ruling class and fight for the elimination and eradication of COVID-19.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact