

Over 1,000 children have died from COVID-19 in the United States

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At least 1,015 children ages 0–17 have died from COVID-19 in the United States, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The majority of these deaths, 515, have occurred in the past three and a half months since September 1, 2021, as a direct result of the Biden administration's homicidal school reopening campaign this fall.

The breakdown of the data as of December 18 shows that 323 children ages 0–4, 215 ages 5–11, 243 ages 12–15 and 234 ages 16–17 have died from COVID-19. Additionally, the severe multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) is also still rising, with the CDC now reporting 5,937 total cases and 52 total deaths.

The weekly COVID-19 report from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) notes an additional 11 new child deaths recorded during the week ending December 16. Weekly new cases among children continue to rise, with 169,964 new cases recorded in the latest report, making it 19 consecutive weeks that well over 100,000 new cases were reported. As of December 16, the AAP notes that at least 7.4 million children have been infected with COVID-19 since the onset of the pandemic.

Despite such staggering numbers, the data is still a vast undercount of the real spread of COVID-19 among children in the US due to a lack of robust and systematic testing, contact tracing and reporting across the country, as well as other reported limitations of the CDC and AAP data.

Notably, of the 802,969 reported total COVID-19 deaths in the US, 120,948 do not indicate the age of the individual. The CDC also notes a potential six-week delay in their case and death reporting due to a number of factors, including delays from processing death certificates and reports from states.

Also worth noting are the limitations of the AAP report, which does not include data from four states in their cumulative death toll. Montana, New York (excluding New York City), Rhode Island and West Virginia do not release age distribution of deaths in their state reports. Michigan only recently began publicly reporting age distribution of

deaths, adding a total of 29 child deaths in the state to the cumulative national death toll among children in the AAP report.

The rapid spread of the Omicron variant throughout the US and internationally is fueling an already accelerating surge of infections from the Delta variant. The exponential rise in cases and hospitalizations by Omicron in South Africa, Denmark and the UK threatens to unfold in countries across the world due to the variant's high transmissibility and ability to evade vaccines. The further spread of infection will continue to compromise patient care as hospitals reach or exceed capacity.

The response of the political establishment, the corporations and the mainstream media has focused entirely on downplaying the devastating impacts of the virus, while promoting efforts to keep schools and workplaces open amid an intensifying winter surge.

In schools across the US, cases have exploded in the past week, prompting temporary school closures due to large outbreaks. Burbio.com, a national school closures tracker, indicates that at least 1,338 schools have closed this month due to COVID-19 outbreaks. So far, at least 421 schools will be closed at the start of their spring semester in early January.

According to an unofficial compilation on Twitter, at least 2,101 educators and school staff have died from COVID-19, in addition to the 1,015 children who have succumbed to the virus. In the past two weeks alone, these include Alayna Thach, a 17-year-old high school student in Pennsylvania; Jane Jones, a 44-year-old special education teacher in Illinois; and Pam Brock, a 50-year-old pre-K teacher and high school cheer coach in Alabama. The vast majority of school staff and student deaths have not been reported in the media.

The very real dangers of Omicron and the possible development of further variants of concern showcases the ineffectiveness of a vaccine-only approach, a policy which has been ruthlessly carried out by the Biden administration. In reality, this is a policy of mass infection which has been

forced on the population, epitomized by the efforts to keep schools and workplaces open despite the clear and present dangers of Omicron.

As school districts and states engage in bitter conflict over vaccine and mask mandates, the alarming developments with Omicron show once again the entirely inadequate mitigation measures in place in schools across the country and the dire necessity to halt in-person instruction.

Recent studies have shown that boosters are necessary to protect against Omicron infection. However, the CDC data shows that as of December 15, only 5.6 million US children ages 5–11, or 20 percent of this age group, have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Roughly 12.9 million US children and adolescents ages 12–17, or 52 percent of this age group, have received two doses of the vaccine.

On December 9, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the Pfizer vaccine for use as a booster in children ages 16 and 17. However, adolescents in this age group can only receive a booster six months after they have had their second dose, which means that nearly the entire population of children and adolescents ages 0–17 has reduced protection from Omicron through vaccination.

Doubling down on the argument that schools must remain open at all costs, Biden’s chief medical adviser, Dr. Anthony Fauci, said during a Monday interview on *Morning Edition*, “The best way to protect them is to surround the children with people who are vaccinated and boosted. That’s the best way to protect them. Keep them in an environment where the people around them are very unlikely to be infected.”

Other protections for students and staff in schools across the US remain entirely inadequate, with poor ventilation and filtration, as well as a lack of robust testing, contact tracing and quarantining of infected or exposed individuals. A recent report from *Education Week* notes that as of December 10, nine states have banned school districts from setting universal mask mandates, and only 16 states and the District of Columbia require masks to be worn in schools.

All districts across the country lack adequate guidance on the necessary use of high-quality masks, with an N95 rating or higher, in high-risk indoor settings such as schools. As a result, the majority of students and staff in schools with mask policies wear cloth or surgical masks that offer minimal protection from infection. Keeping schools open for the start of the spring semester in January after the winter holiday is a recipe for further unnecessary mass infection, death and long-term illness among children, all school staff and their families.

Despite these alarming developments and data pointing to the dangers of the winter surge and the immense threat of Omicron, schools are being kept open. The Biden

administration’s announcement of a “Test to Stay” policy in schools, which has recently been endorsed by the CDC, expresses the growing adoption of an openly “herd immunity” perspective by the White House. According to the policy, unvaccinated students identified as “close contacts” of a COVID-19-positive peer will no longer have to quarantine, but will remain in school unless they test positive during the week after an exposure.

This policy is totally unscientific, as it ignores the airborne nature of the virus as well as the highly transmissible character of the Omicron variant. A “close contact” is identified as a student who has been within six feet of an infected individual for more than 15 minutes. Yet an infected student who sits in a poorly ventilated and packed classroom can potentially expose everyone in the room. Additionally, under the policy, vaccinated students who are asymptomatic do not need to test, even if exposed. With a highly transmissible variant such as Omicron, such a policy risks allowing for major outbreaks among a vulnerable student population.

The “Test to Stay” program is anticipated to be implemented in New York City Public Schools and Los Angeles Unified School District, the two largest US public school districts with a combined student population of over 1.6 million students, by February 2022.

The fact that over 1,000 children have lost their lives to COVID-19 in the US has gone almost entirely unmentioned by the corporate media, while the teachers unions have remained totally silent on this horrific fact. Their silence is a damning indictment of their complicity in the school reopening campaign, which was always meant solely to send parents back to work producing profits.

The indifference of the ruling class shows there is no level of mass infection or number of childhood deaths that they are not prepared to accept, as they repeat the mantra that society must “learn to live with the virus.” The independent mobilization of the working class is necessary to fight against these criminal herd immunity policies and demand a globally coordinated strategy to eliminate COVID-19.



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