

Back to School: Supporting Family Decisions

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues, families face many difficult decisions on how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They must weigh their physical and mental health in all of their decisions – a daunting task, even with the most current information. One of the most challenging decisions families may face is whether to send their child back to school in-person or virtually. Family's opinions have varied greatly depending on their perspectives of COVID-19, and their family's unique risk factors. COVID-19 may be a bigger concern for families who live with serious medical conditions as some schools return to in-person classes. While each family must decide what is best for them, sharing different tools and perspectives can help them feel supported and informed. Below are resources that can help you support their back to school decisions.



FROM FAMILIES

- **Center for Parent Information and Resources:** [Planning for When Workplaces and Schools Reopen](#)
- **Federation for Children with Special Needs:** [Fall Schools Reopening for 2020-2021](#)
- **Hands & Voices:** [COVID-19 Resources for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)
- **Maine Parent Federation:** [COVID-19 Key Questions to Ask Before Schools Reopen](#)
- **National Association for the Deaf:** [Advocacy Paper for Families Seeking Accessible PreK-12 Education](#)
- **SPAN Parent Advocacy Network**
 - [Remote Learning Fact Sheet](#)
 - [IEP Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Quick Facts on COVID-19 School Re-openings Questions \(available in Spanish\)](#)



FROM ORGANIZATIONS

- ***American Academy of Pediatrics:** [Guidance for School Re-entry](#)
- ***Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** [General Guidelines](#) and [Decision Making Tool](#)
- **Florida American Academy of Pediatrics:** [Back to School Checklist \(available in Spanish\)](#)
- **Johns Hopkins:** [Webinar Series on Returning to School](#)
- **Lurie Children:** [Guidance for Return to School for Transplant Families](#)
- **Office of Special Education Programs:** [Continuity of Learning During COVID-19](#)

**Some families did not find these guidelines inclusive of their perspective, so they should only be considered in partnership with family-centered resources.*

If you're making decisions or creating guidance documents, be sure to make room for special considerations for each of your target populations. Different groups have different needs, so accounting for special considerations is critical to meet the needs of all families. Families know what is best for them. Whether they decide to have their kids return to school in-person or virtually, they need resources and tools from both schools and their healthcare team to stay healthy while receiving an equitable education.

Interested in learning more? Visit [ExpectingHealth.org](https://www.ExpectingHealth.org)