

# NC DHHS K-12 COVID-19 Response Updates

**Monthly DPI/DHHS Updates**  
April 6, 2021



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**



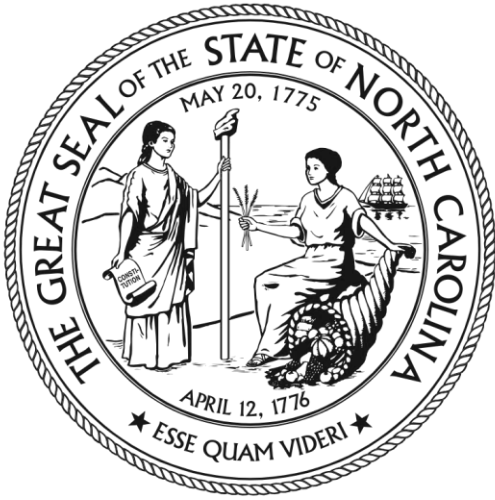
# Agenda

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- **Statewide COVID-19 Updates**
- **K-12 COVID-19 Testing – Updates and Further Expansion**
- **COVID Vaccine Distribution – Updates and Resources**
- **StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit Updates**

## **NCDHHS Team Members:**

- Dr. Betsey Tilson – State Health Director and Chief Medical Officer
- Rebecca Planchard, Senior Policy Advisor
- Natalie Ivanov– Director, COVID-19 Testing



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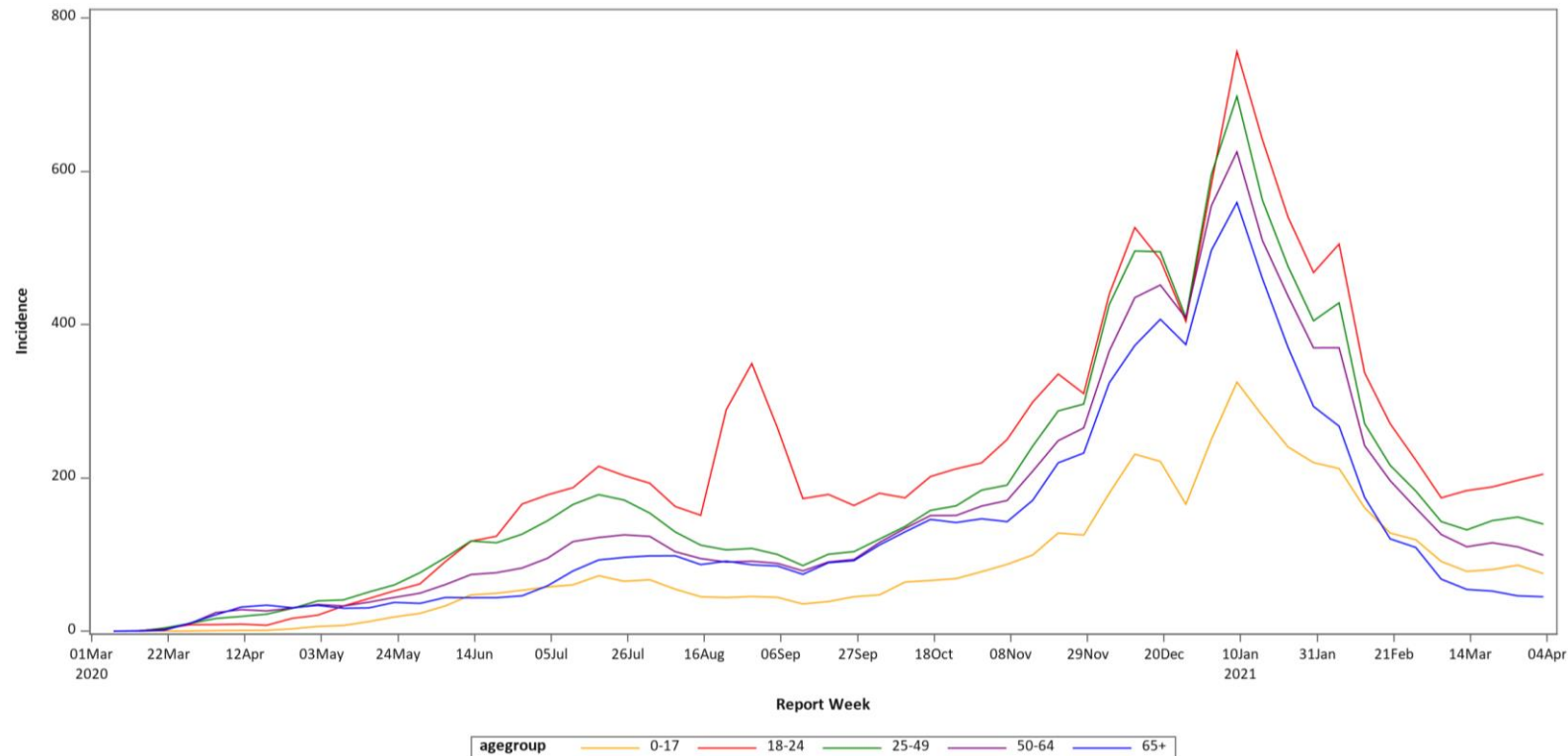
## **Statewide COVID-19 Updates**

Rebecca Planchard, Senior Policy Advisor

# Case Rates Plateau Across Most Age Groups

Case rates have plateaued or slightly increased across all age groups, except among the 65+ age group in which case rates continue to decline.

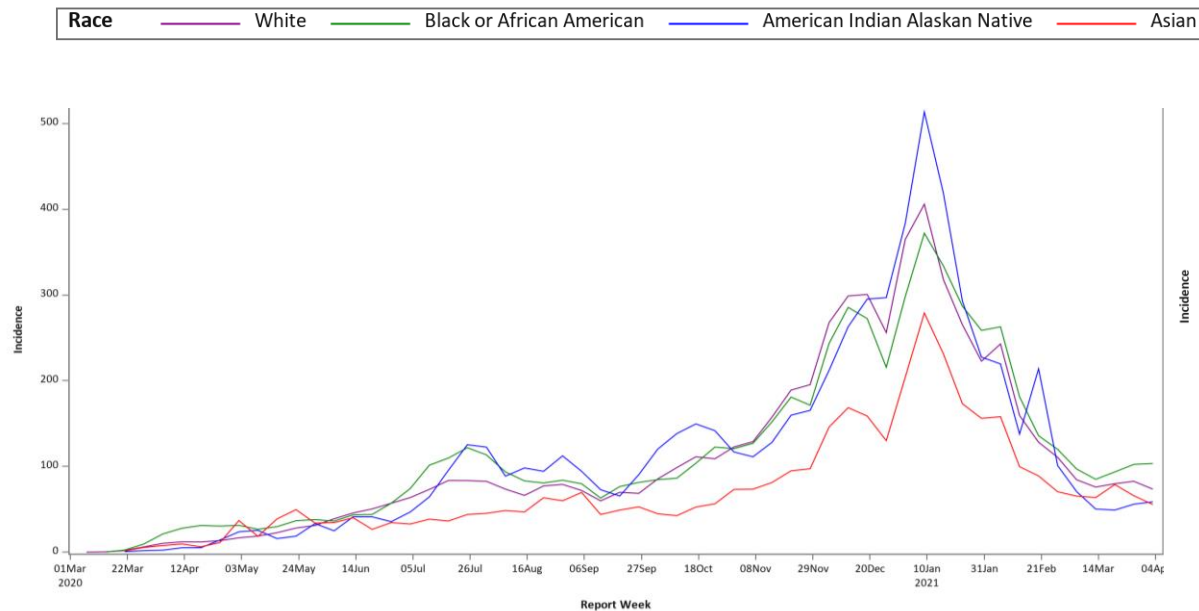
**NC COVID-19 Cases per 100,000 Population by Age**



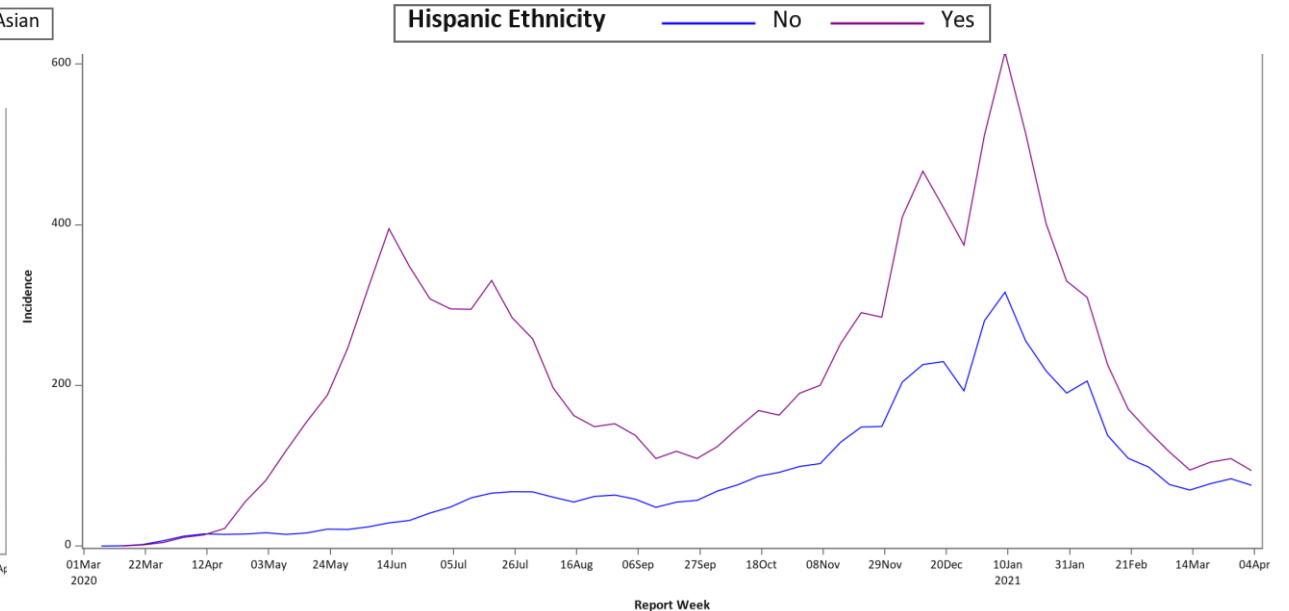
# Case Rates Decline Across Race/Ethnicity Categories

Racial and ethnic disparities have narrowed considerably since January but Black or African American rates increased in recent weeks.

## NC COVID-19 Cases per 100,000 Population by Race



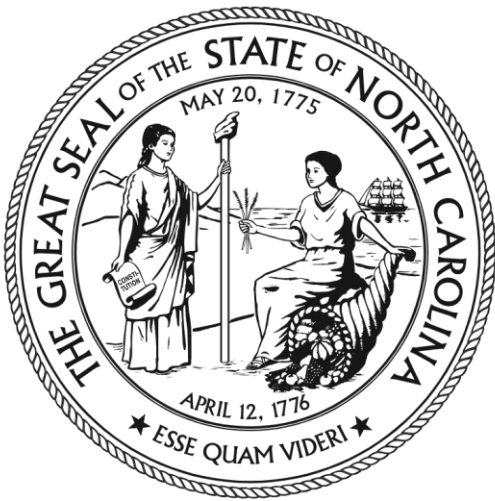
## NC COVID-19 Cases per 100,000 Population by Ethnicity



## K-12 Reported Clusters – as of 4/4/21

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- **206 total K-12 clusters since June 2020**
  - 129 at public schools, 77 at private schools
  - Remember: much smaller number of private schools versus public schools in the state
- **1,840 cases associated with all K-12 clusters**
  - 1,205 cases among students and 635 cases among staff
  - 1,003 cases among public schools, 837 among private schools
- **45 currently active clusters (approx. 30% decline from last month)**
  - 34 at public schools, 11 at private schools



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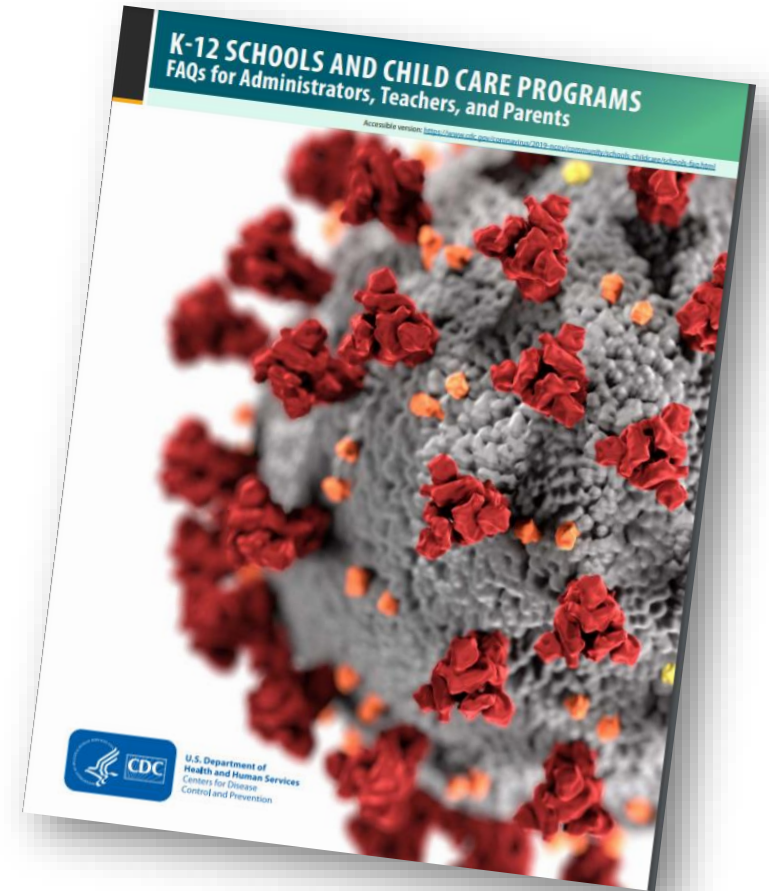
## **K-12 COVID-19 Testing – Updates and Further Expansion**

Natalie Ivanov— Director, COVID-19 Testing



# Review: CDC and NCDHHS recommends COVID-19 testing in K-12 schools

- **Testing should be combined with other key mitigation strategies (StrongSchoolsNC requirements)**, e.g., universal mask use, physical distancing, handwashing and maintaining clean facilities
- **Diagnostic testing** for individuals who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 at school or have recent known close contact to a person with COVID-19
- **Screening testing** for all K-12 staff (adults) on a regular, routine basis (e.g., weekly)





# Screening testing can help students and staff safely continue in-person learning

We all want kids to learn in person and school staff to have a safe work environment

NC pilot schools indicated that **testing at school** helped their **staff and students come back to school more quickly and confidently**



Evidence from national studies found that weekly testing of all students, teachers and staff can **reduce in-school infections by an estimated 50%**



Testing at school **increases access for students, families and staff** who may not be able to find a testing center or afford a test in their community



Source: [The Rockefeller Foundation](#)

# Example: Screening Testing in Action

Community  
Engagement

Testing

Results

Respond



Schools discuss testing program with caregivers and request consent



Students and staff arrive at school and are directed to testing location



Testing staff complete swab



Students and staff return to class



Results are received and reported to public health



Results are communicated and actions taken based on results

# Phases of NCDHHS COVID-19 Testing Program in NC K-12 Schools



- **Phase 1)** From December 2020 to February 2021, NC DHHS piloted diagnostic testing in K-12 schools
- **Phase 2)** In March, NC DHHS opened up this opportunity to all schools and expanded to include screening testing
- **\*NEW\* Phase 3)** Federal Funding has been made available for states upon application, specifically to facilitate end-to-end screening testing support for K-12 schools, further expanding testing to more schools across the state



# Phase 2 Screening Testing Statistics – As of 4/1/21

## Test Distributions (as of 4/1)

| School Type             | To Date       |            |           | Last week (3/26– 4/1) |            |           |
|-------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|-----------------------|------------|-----------|
|                         | Tests         | # of sites | New sites | Tests                 | # of sites | New sites |
| <i>School Districts</i> | 55,295        | 21         | -         | -                     | -          | -         |
| <i>Charter Schools</i>  | 7,600         | 20         | -         | -                     | -          | -         |
| <i>Private Schools</i>  | 360           | 2          | 1         | 320                   | 1          | 1         |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>63,255</b> | <b>43</b>  | <b>1</b>  | <b>320</b>            | <b>1</b>   | <b>1</b>  |

\*Includes distributions by both NC DHHS and redistributions by LHDs

## Results Reporting\* (as of 4/1)

| Month        | Total Tests  | Positive Tests | # of sites             |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| <i>Jan</i>   | 309          | 50             | 6                      |
| <i>Feb</i>   | 658          | 92             | 7                      |
| <i>Mar</i>   | 246          | 39             | 10                     |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1,213</b> | <b>181</b>     | <b>12 unique sites</b> |

\*Limited due to many schools reporting using LHD CLIA ID – unable to determine LHD results from school vs other settings

## Program Updates

- Extended testing option to **non-public schools** as of 3/18 and hosted webinar 3/26 attended by 60 individuals
- Most interest expressed for testing related to **athletics, Spring Break and special events**
- Shared **funding resources** available to support public and non-public schools in setting up a testing program

## Outreach

- Since 3/26, 1 non-pilot charter schools (Franklin School of Innovation) and 1 non-pilot private school (Greensboro Day School) expressed interest via StrongSchoolsNC inbox
- 5 individuals (2 pilot sites, 2 non-pilot sites) attended 3/26 office hours
- 5 individuals (1 pilot sites, 3 non-pilot school) attended 3/31 week reporting training session

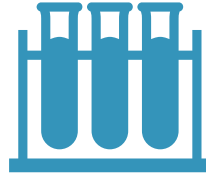
# NCDHHS is expanding state-wide screening testing support for all K-12 schools

The CDC has announced the ELC Reopening Schools award, which provides \$10 billion dollars in allocated funding to states, available in early April through July 2022

- 85% of the award must be used to **fund schools and the procurement or provision of testing supplies or services**
- NC DHHS is applying to utilize the award to **further support schools in their efforts to continue in-person learning by providing and funding resources for screening of students, teachers and staff**
- Schools may choose opt-in to testing and choose a testing plan from the **menu of options** to utilize the best fit for their community



# NC DHHS Screening Testing Options for K-12 Schools



| State Contracted Vendor   | State Supplied Tests   | Other Local Approaches  |
|---|--|---|
| NCDHHS vendor available to support LEA/school screening testing program | NCDHHS provides free tests that schools may request to perform screening and/or diagnostic testing | Districts, schools and/ or LHDs define their own approach without state involvement |
| Under development<br><i>Goal: available by Fall 2021</i>                | Available now<br>Request tests via online form   | Available now   |

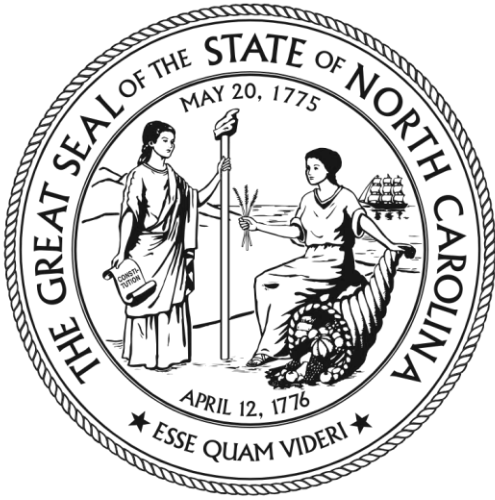
- Screening testing is an **opt-in, recommended** mitigation strategy for schools across NC
- All testing options require **parental or guardian consent** and protection of student and staff privacy



## Next steps to expand screening testing in schools

- NCDHHS submitting funding request and plan to CDC for state-wide vendor to support screening testing in schools
- For remainder of 2020-21 school year, tests will continue to be available at no cost to schools from NCDHHS
  - Tests can be used for diagnostic testing, serial screening testing of staff, older students and athletes, and screening around holidays and special events
  - Weekly office hours and reporting training sessions open to all needing support in implementing or improving their program
- As schools make plans for summer school and fall semester, consider how to incorporate screening and diagnostic testing





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## **COVID Vaccine Distribution – Updates and Resources**

Dr. Betsey Tilson – State Health Director  
and Chief Medical Officer

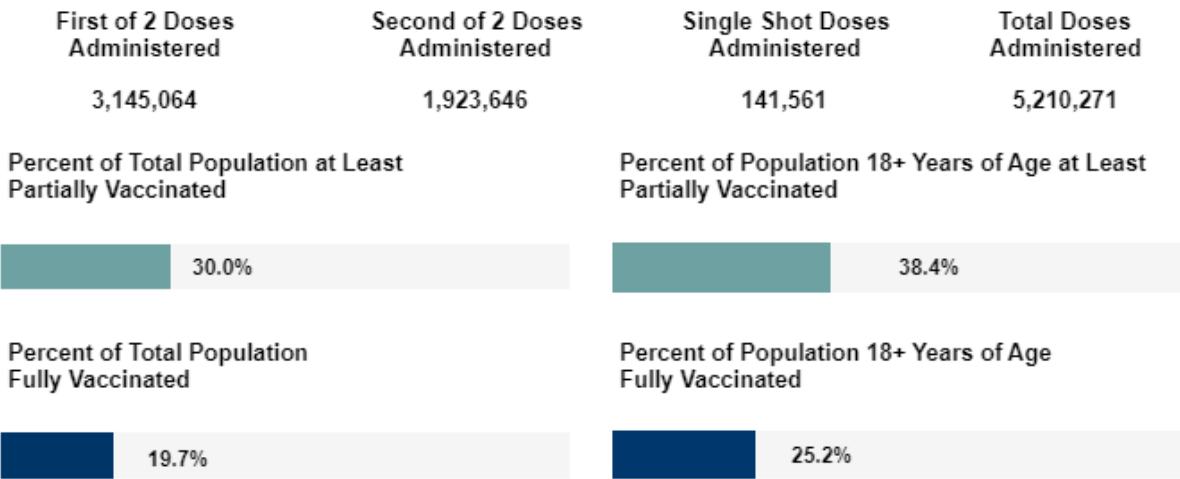
# Your best shot at stopping COVID-19

YOU HAVE A **SPOT.** | TAKE YOUR **SHOT.**

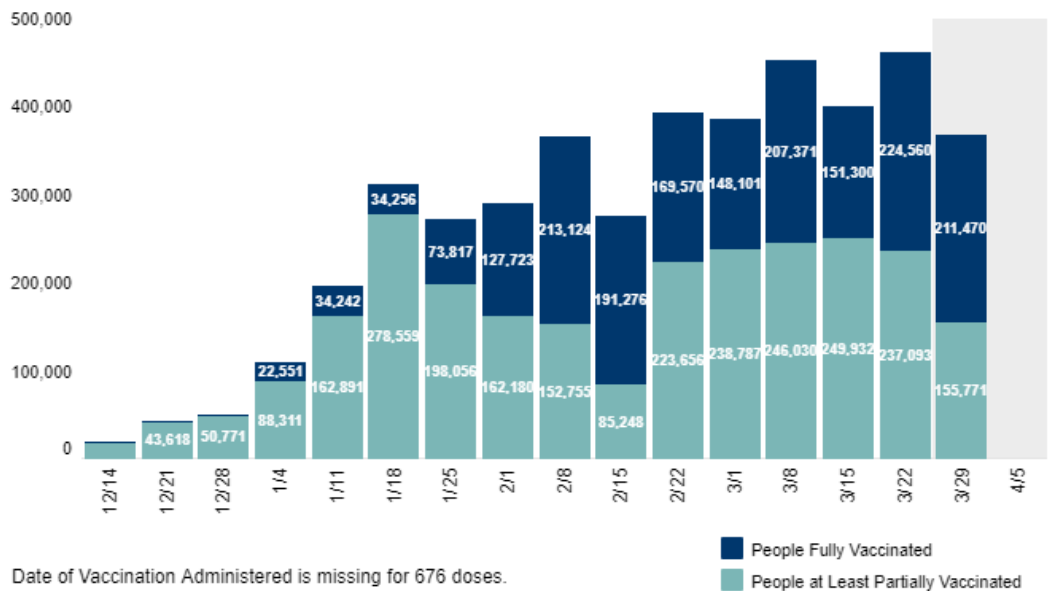
- 1 Health Care Workers and Long-term Care Staff and Residents **ACTIVE GROUP**
- 2 Older Adults **ACTIVE GROUP**
- 3 Frontline Essential Workers **ACTIVE GROUP**
- 4 Adults at Higher Risk for Exposure and Increased Risk of Severe Illness **ACTIVE GROUP**
- 5 Everyone Age 16 + **Open April 7th**

# VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

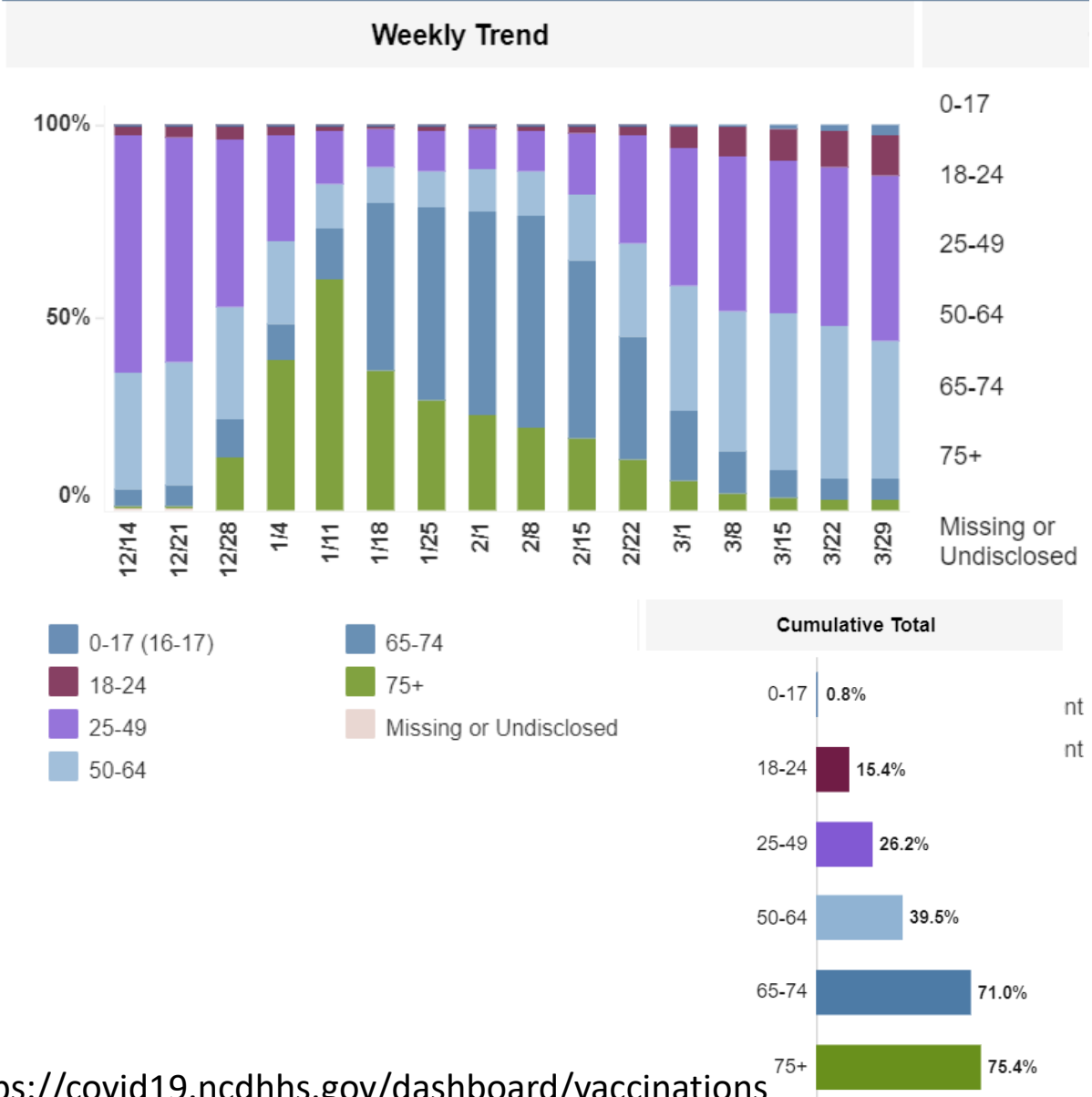
Data: December 14, 2020 – April 4, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.



## People Vaccinated by Week - NC Providers



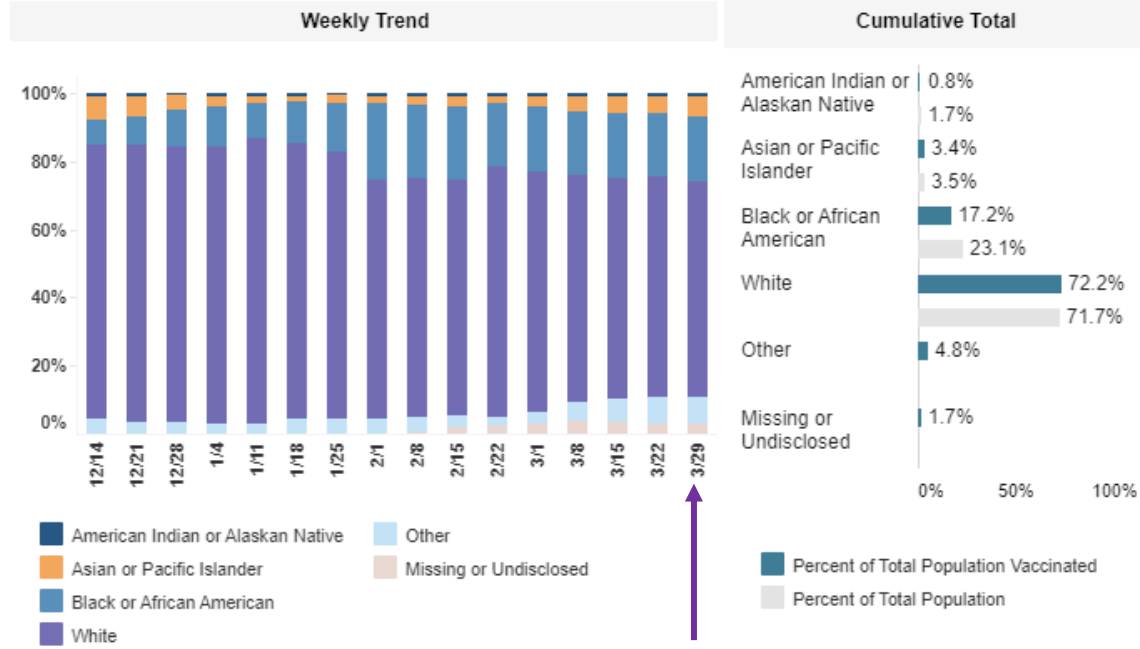
# Percent of People at Least Partially Vaccinated by Age



<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/vaccinations>

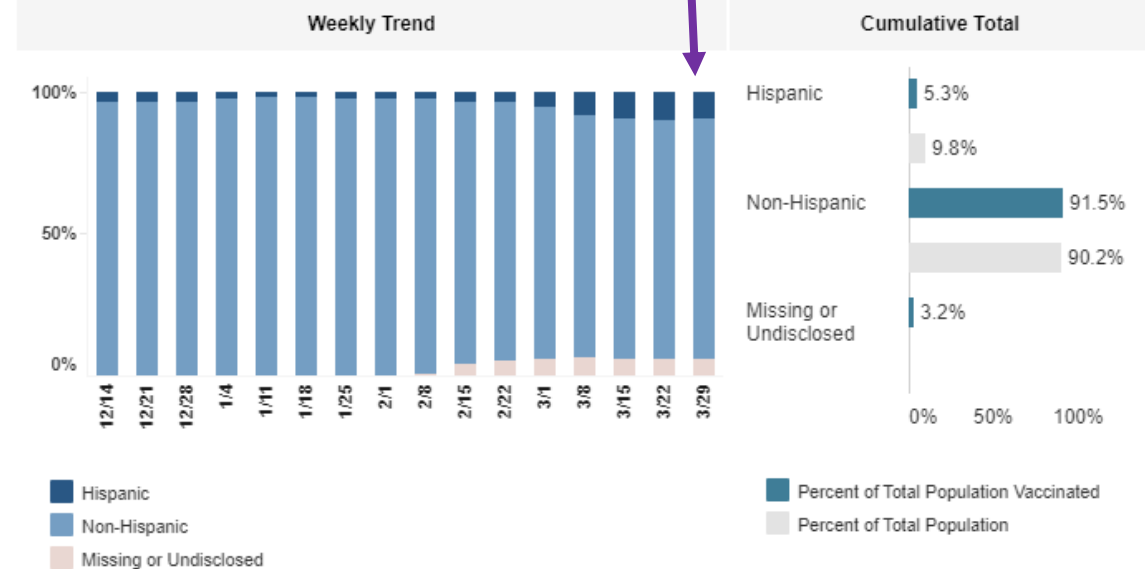
# EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

Percent of People at Least Partially Vaccinated by Race - North Carolina



## MORE TO DO; BUT MAKING PROGRESS

Percent of People at Least Partially Vaccinated by Ethnicity - North Carolina



## Vaccine updates for K-12 and child care staff – as of 4/5/21

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- **Almost 76, 189 individuals** who self-identify as being a frontline essential workers in a K-12 or child care center have received a vaccine since February 24<sup>th</sup>
- There have been **30 identified vaccine events** that specifically target educators either held or scheduled since February 24<sup>th</sup> – Note: this number will grow or decrease as scheduled events are changed due to a variety of factors.



# Real World Evidence Supports Effectiveness of Vaccines

## Increasing evidence that vaccines prevent asymptomatic infection and transmission.

### Impact of the COVID-19 Vaccine on Asymptomatic Infection Among Patients Undergoing Pre-Procedural... Molecular Screening

*Oxford University Press for the Infectious Diseases Society of America*

- Among asymptomatic adults undergoing screening for COVID-19, the risk of a positive COVID test was lower among vaccinated as compared to unvaccinated individuals

### Early Evidence of the Effect of SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine at One Medical Center

*New England Journal of Medicine*

- Real-world experience with SARS-CoV-2 vaccination shows reduction in incidence of infections among healthcare workers.
- 90% decrease in number of employees in isolation or quarantine

### SARS-CoV-2 Infection after Vaccination in Health Care Workers in California

*New England Journal of Medicine*

- Real-world experience with SARS-COV-2 vaccination shows higher rate of infection after vaccination than clinical trials among health care workers
- Infection 14 days after the second dose of the vaccine is rare

### Interim Estimates of Vaccine Effectiveness of [...] Vaccines in Preventing SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Health Care Personnel[...]

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

- "Authorized mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are effective for preventing SARS-CoV-2 infection in real-world conditions. COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all eligible persons."
- 14 days after first dose, but before the second dose, the mRNA vaccine was 80% effective
- 14 days after second dose, the mRNA vaccine was 90% effective against COVID-19 infection

# What is on the horizon for children and vaccination

- **Pfizer: authorized for 16 and over**
- **Moderna and Johnson & Johnson: authorized for 18 and over**
- **12-15 year olds**
  - Pfizer announced data shows COVID-19 vaccine safe and effective
    - Plan to bring to FDA for possible authorization in next few weeks
  - Moderna currently conducting trials
  - May have data and authorization by summer for Pfizer and Moderna and may be able to vaccinate middle and high school students before fall
  - Johnson & Johnson just began to include children 12-17 years
- **6 months to 11 year olds**
  - Both Pfizer and Moderna started a trials in March, 2021
  - May have ability to vaccinate younger children during 2021-2022 school year

# Vaccine Comms Resources

## New materials available

- Top Ten Facts
- Developing COVID-19 Vaccines infographic
- Social media graphics and content
- Community posters

## Materials in English and Spanish

The collage features three primary materials:

- 10 FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINE:** A list of ten facts, including that vaccines are found to help prevent COVID-19 and are effective in preventing hospitalization and death, and that there are no serious side effects.
- How Safe and Effective COVID-19 Vaccines Come to the U.S.:** A diagram showing the process from scientists having a head start to the FDA reviewing trials and determining if vaccines are safe and effective.
- TWO SHOTS are necessary to fight COVID-19:** A poster stating that the second shot will come 3-4 weeks after the first.

Each material includes the 'YOU HAVE A SPOT. TAKE YOUR SHOT.' logo and the website [YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov](https://YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov).

The screenshot shows the 'NCDHHS: COVID-19 Vaccine Communications Toolkit' website. The header features the 'YOU HAVE A SPOT. TAKE YOUR SHOT.' logo and the NC Department of Health and Human Services seal. The main content area includes a 'CAMPAIGN' section with the title 'You Have A Spot. Take Your Shot.' and a 'DESCRIPTION' section explaining that this is a resource for ready-made materials to help communicate about safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. It also lists hashtags such as #FindYourSpotNC, #TakeYourShotNC, #YourSpotYourShotNC, #BestShot, #COVID19NC, #COVID19Vaccine, #StayStrongNC, #StopCOVID19, #ThisIsOurShot, and #VaccinesSaveLives. A 'HASHTAGS' section lists these same hashtags. Below the description, there is a section for 'For more information: [YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov](https://YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov)' and a 'Version en español: [covid19.ncdhhs.gov/kit-de-herramientas-de-comunicacion-sobre-vacunas-covid-19](https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/kit-de-herramientas-de-comunicacion-sobre-vacunas-covid-19)'. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Brand Guidelines', 'Social Media Graphics', 'Flyers', 'Post Cards', 'Presentation/Reports', 'Website and Newsletter Graphics', and 'Video Library'. A footer section contains the text 'FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES WHEN PRODUCING ANY MATERIALS IN SUPPORT OF THE YOU HAVE A SPOT. TAKE YOUR SHOT. CAMPAIGN' and two buttons for 'Brand and Usage Guidelines (URL)' and 'Brand and Usage Guidelines (PDF)'.

## New Easy-to-Use Toolkit

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-communications-toolkit>

## CHILD CARE AND SCHOOL WORKERS:

You have a spot to take  
your shot against COVID-19.

There's good news for North Carolina child care and school workers. A tested, safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is ready for you. Supplies are limited—and you may have to wait. But you will have a spot to take your shot.

The vaccines are proven to help prevent COVID-19 and are effective in preventing hospitalization and death.

Get the peace of mind that you are protected and get back to the people and places you love.

### Find participating vaccine providers:

- [YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov](https://yourspotyourshot.nc.gov)
- COVID-19 Vaccine Help Center toll-free at 1-888-675-4567
- Talk with your employer about vaccination opportunities.

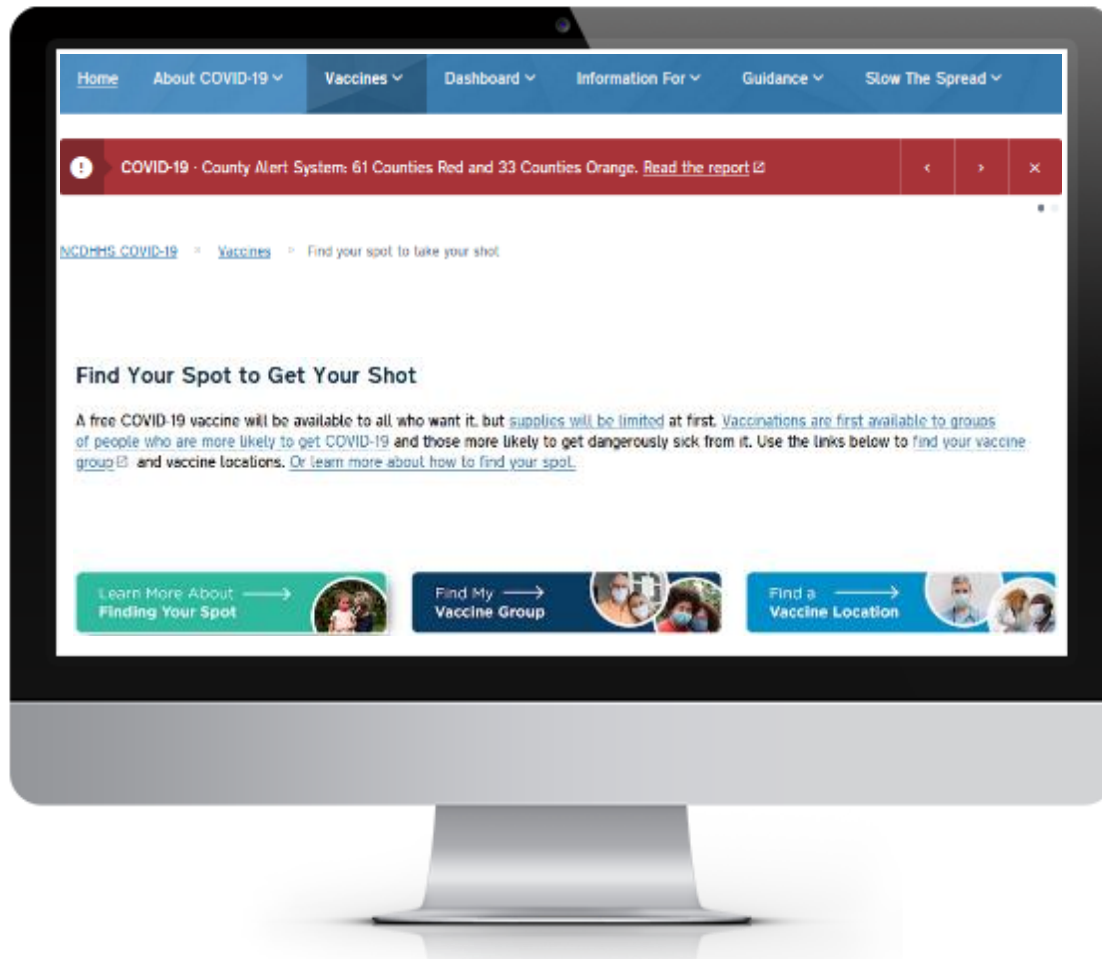


## Flyer: Child Care and School Employees

- Available in Spanish and English
- Download from Flyers section of the Vaccines Toolkit:  
<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-communications-toolkit>
- Customize your own using our brand guidelines:  
<http://bit.ly/vaccines-brandguide>



# Web Tools: Eligibility Tracker, Vaccination Locator



<http://yourspotyourshot.nc.gov/>

## Find your spot to take your shot

Please note: Until 11/18/2020, NCDHHS has been notified by the federal government of continued delays in some shipments and deliveries of COVID-19 vaccine. It is worth noting to some residents. Please help us by your vaccination appointments to be performed in a safe and secure setting.

Because vaccine supplies are still limited, you may have to wait. Here is how to take your shot against COVID-19:

- Supplies are very limited. Right now, very few vaccine doses are available.
- You will likely need an appointment to get vaccinated. You may have to wait to schedule your appointment to get your vaccine.
- Your local vaccine provider can help you get vaccinated. Because supplies are very limited, right now, your vaccine provider will provide vaccinations in three phases.
- You can also call the COVID-19 Vaccine Help Center 1-800-675-4567. It's a free call.

The COVID-19 vaccine will be available to everyone for free, whether or not you have health insurance. You will need two shots to build up your immunity. You will get a practice shot and a second to protect you to come back a set 4 weeks later for your second dose. Your personal information is private and strictly confidential.

### Need transportation to and from your vaccine provider?

People who need transportation should call a COVID-19 vaccine coordinator or should reach out to their local health agency. You can find your local health agency on our list and call the phone number listed for assistance. Local health agencies serve all 100 North Carolina counties.

## Find A Vaccine Location



Now you can find your spot to get your shot. Use the map to find your spot to get your shot.

### Find Local Vaccine Providers Near You

Use this tool to find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you in North Carolina. Enter your zip code or search by current location to find the closest vaccine providers.

Vaccine will be available to all who want it, but supplies are currently limited. You may have to wait.

North Carolina is currently vaccinating Groups 1 and 2. Not all vaccine providers may be ready to vaccinate your group yet. Don't know what group you're in? Visit [Find My Vaccine Group](#) to find your vaccination group.

You will likely need an appointment to get vaccinated. You may have to wait to schedule your appointment to get your vaccine. Please contact the provider to find out which groups they are currently vaccinating.

Search by zip code or current location

5 Miles 10 Miles 25 Miles No limit



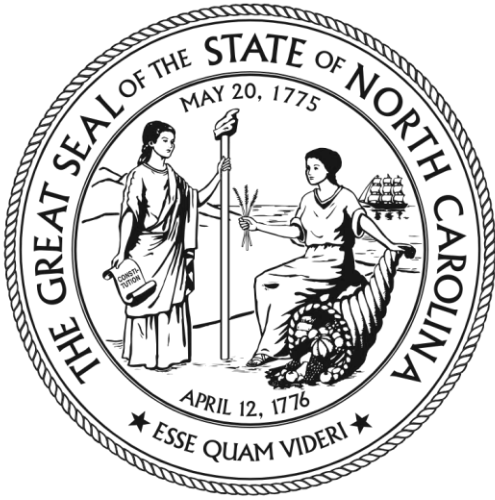
## Find My Vaccine Group

Do you currently live, work or volunteer full or part time in any of the following?

- ☐ Health Care settings (including hospitals, outpatient clinics, COVID-19 testing or vaccination sites, home health care, public health clinical services, emergency medical services, mortuaries, and pharmacies)
- ☐ Long-Term Care Facilities (including skilled nursing homes, subacute nursing facilities, extended care nursing homes, continuing care retirement communities, independent living facilities)
- ☐ None of the above

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## **StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit Updates**

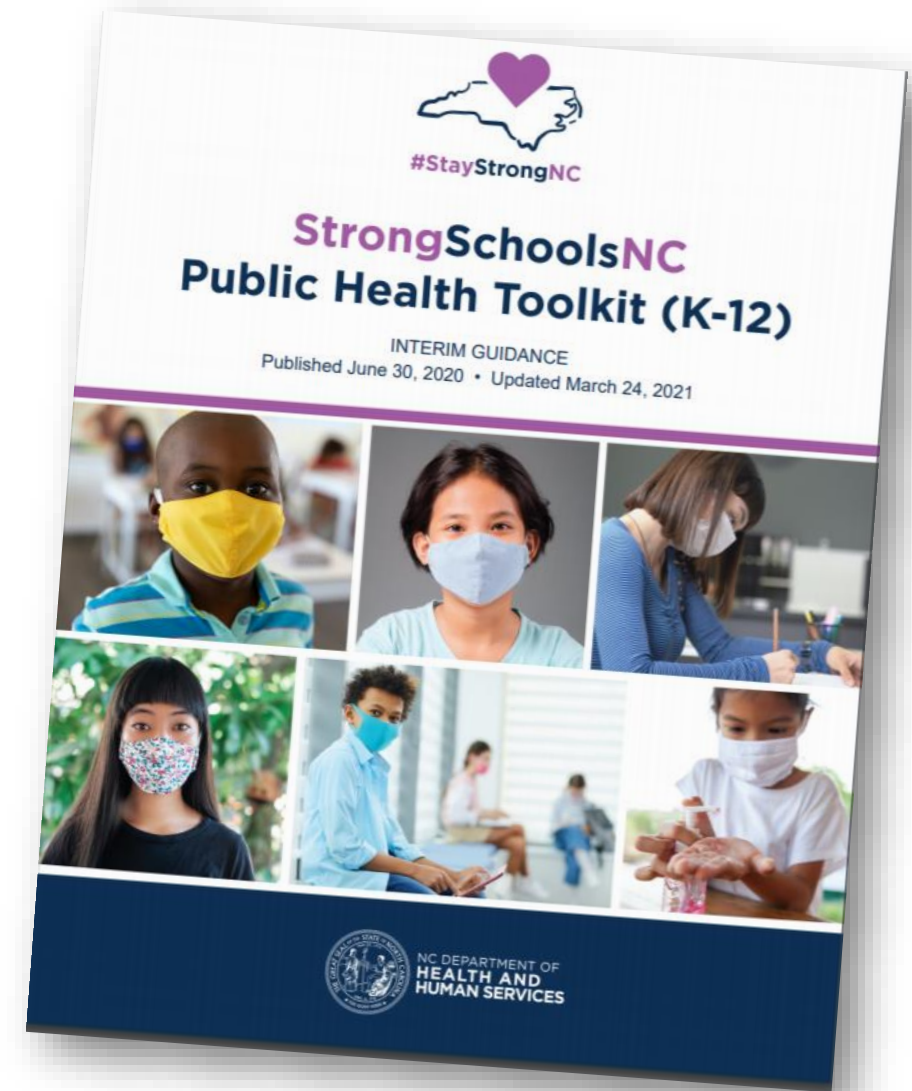
Rebecca Planchard, Senior Policy Advisor



# StrongSchoolsNC Guidance Updates

## Approved by State Board on March 25<sup>th</sup>

- Daily symptom screenings can be considered for adults and are **not** recommended for children
  - Exclusion based on symptoms, close contact, or a positive case still applies
- K – 12<sup>th</sup> grades should return to in-person instruction to the fullest extent possible up to five days per week under Plan A or Plan B.
- Incorporated CDC physical distance recommendations for Plan A only that at least 3 feet of physical distance between children and 6 feet between adults; No changes to Plan B (remains 6 feet of distance required at all times)



Reach out to  
[StrongSchoolsNC@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:StrongSchoolsNC@dhhs.nc.gov)  
for ongoing questions and  
support about NC DHHS K-12  
COVID-19 response

