



LAUNCHING INTO HEALTHY LEARNING Operational Strategies - Fall 2022

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), State Department of Education (CSDE), and Office of Early Childhood (OEC) are excited to announce the **Launching into Healthy Learning** initiative for the start of the 2022-2023 school year! This initiative is designed to get Connecticut's kids back to school, child care, and camp at the scheduled start of the school year, to keep them there in-person as much as possible throughout the year, and to keep them healthy and learning all year long. In addition to updated DPH guidance for K-12 school administrators, child care, and youth camp program operators (*Respiratory Disease Prevention Strategies for Schools, Child Care, and Camps: Fall 2022*), DPH, CSDE, and OEC will work closely with school districts, child care, and youth camp facilities in the coming weeks to provide the following resources to Connecticut's children and their families.

COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINICS will be organized for all 36 of Connecticut's Alliance School Districts that are open to school, child care, and youth camp staff, students, and families in those communities. DPH, CSDE, and OEC will coordinate with Alliance District administrators, child care operators, and youth camps to deliver on-site state-sponsored mobile vaccination clinics ("yellow vans") to offer COVID-19 primary or booster vaccine doses to anyone 6 months of age or older. Administrators, child care operators, and youth camps in non-Alliance Districts can also request free mobile vaccination clinics for their communities by contacting SDE.COVID19@ct.gov at CSDE (for school district administrators) or HealthEquityTeam@ct.gov.

SELF-TEST KITS will be available free of charge to all Connecticut schools, child care programs, and youth camps to distribute to their students, staff, and service providers (e.g., bus drivers, specialized instruction providers, etc.). The State of Connecticut has ordered approximately 2.5 million self-test kits (5 million individual tests) for distribution to school districts and early childhood education programs. The State plans to order additional self-test kits for distribution to licensed child care programs and operating youth camps throughout Connecticut as well. For more information on test kit distribution, school administrators should work within their Districts to coordinate COVID-19 supply requests or contact SDE.COVID19@ct.gov for more information. School districts, licensed child care centers, and operating youth camps will receive additional information in the coming days directly from CSDE and OEC.

TEST-MASK-GO is an optional strategy designed to increase the number of days of in-person learning and care available to children, both to improve the social/emotional/physical wellbeing of students, staff, and their families and to enhance learning recovery. The fall and spring allergy seasons combined with New England winters present a challenge for schools, child care, and youth camp facilities that were advised in previous years to exclude individuals from in-person attendance if they had any of a long list of symptoms associated with COVID-19. Schools, child care programs, and camp operators choosing to utilize a *Test-Mask-Go* strategy can give children and staff with mild respiratory disease symptoms (e.g., infrequent cough, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, etc.) the option to continue participating in-person provided:

- they are fever-free (< 100°F) and feel well enough to participate,
- they do not live with anyone who has had COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks,
- they can wear a mask consistently and correctly (if facility operators require them to do so), and
- they test negative for COVID-19 prior to reporting in-person on every day they have symptoms, as well as one final test on the morning their symptoms have completely resolved.

Individuals who have any respiratory disease symptoms **should not** use the *Test-Mask-Go* strategy if:

- they have a fever ($\geq 100^\circ\text{F}$) or feel feverish (they should not report in-person until their fever has resolved for at least 24 hours without the use of medication)
- they live with a person who recently tested positive for COVID-19 (within the past 2 weeks)

Instead, these individuals should stay home until their symptoms resolve and test for COVID-19. Anyone testing positive for COVID-19 should complete isolation according to the [CDC Q/I Calculator](#). School, child care, or youth camp administrators or health staff who have questions regarding *Test-Mask-Go* should contact DPH.EPI@ct.gov.