



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**



NCDHHS COVID-19 Response: K-12 School Reopening Updates

November 5, 2020

Dr. Elizabeth Cuervo Tilson, State Health
Director & Chief Medical Officer

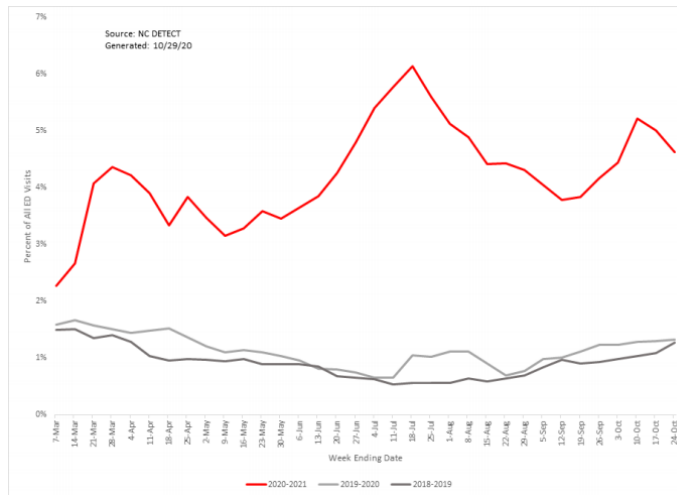
Susan Gale Perry, Chief Deputy Secretary

Rebecca Planchard, Senior Policy Advisor

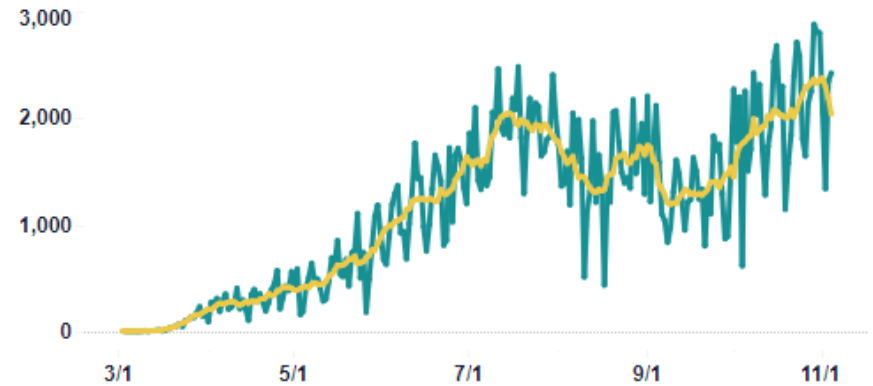
North Carolina State Board of Education

Where Are We? Key Metrics

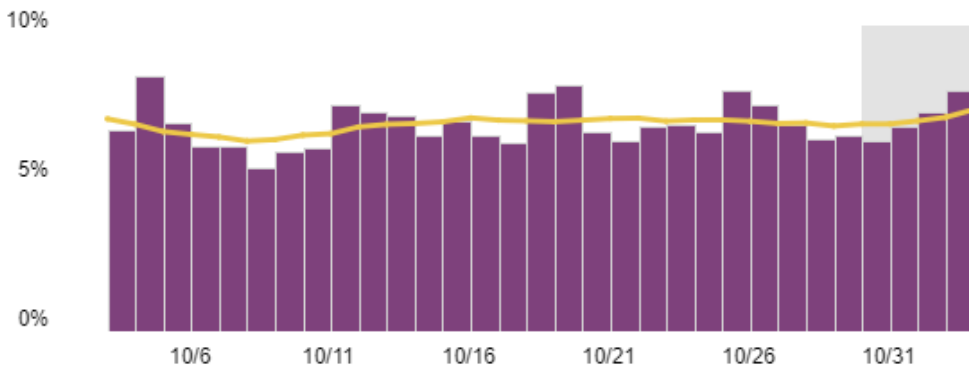
Percent of ED Visits This Season That Are For COVID-Like Illness Compared to Previous Seasons



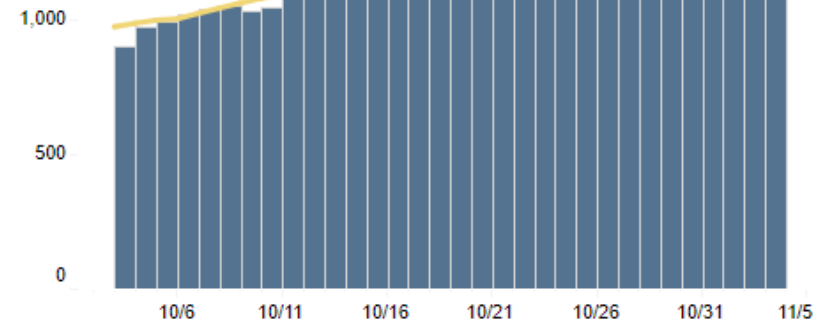
COVID-19 Cases by Date Reported



Percent of Tests That Are Positive

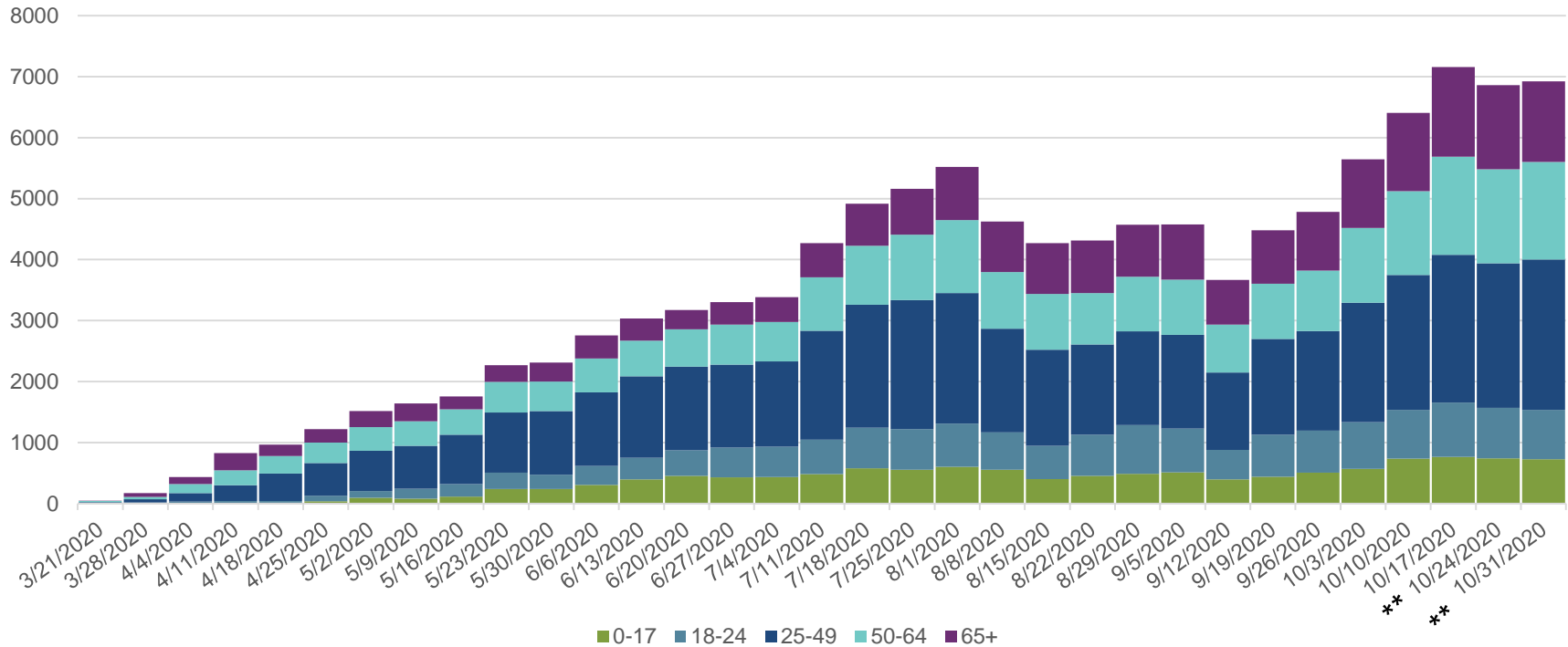


Current COVID-19 Hospitalizations



Cases are increasing in rural counties more quickly than in urban or suburban counties.

COVID-19 Cases in Rural Communities by Age



**Early Data

- **Also seeing spread in:**
 - Smaller Social Gatherings
 - Houses of Worship

What are we learning about COVID-19 cases among children, adults and K-12 schools?

- **Children can get and spread COVID-19**
- **Children, in general have mild illness or no symptoms**
- **Children, especially younger children, may be less likely to have, and spread COVID-19 than adults**
- **So far in NC, US, or internationally – not seeing schools as a big source of spread**

NEWS · 29 OCTOBER 2020

Why schools probably aren't COVID hotspots

Young children are unlikely to spread the virus – but older kids are more at risk, say researchers.

Rapid communication

Surveillance of COVID-19 school outbreaks, Germany, March to August 2020 | 

Eveline Otte im Kampe¹ , Ann-Sophie Lehfeld¹, Silke Buda¹, Udo Buchholz¹, Walter Haas¹

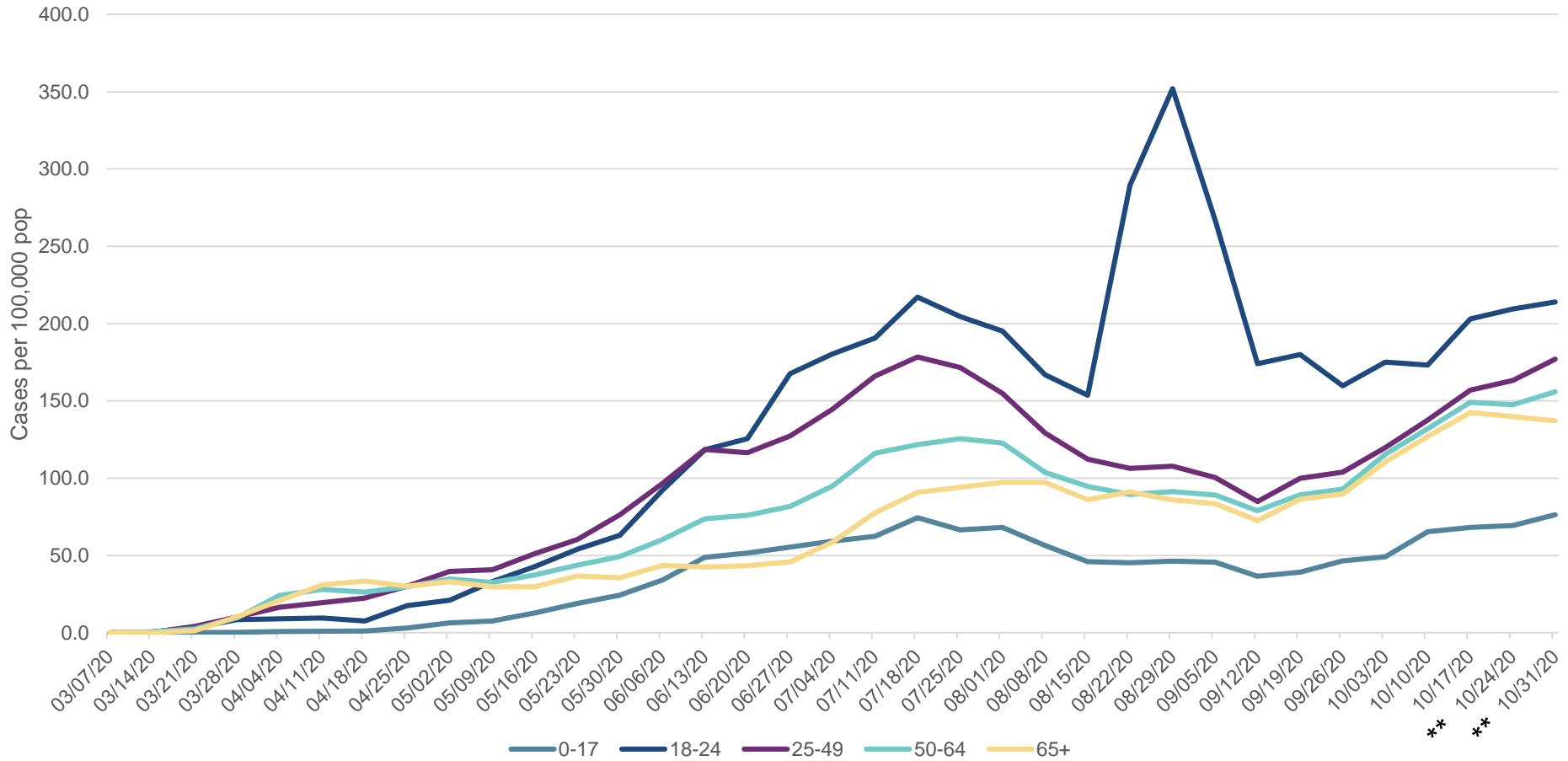
September 25, 2020

Susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Children and Adolescents Compared With Adults
A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

Russell M. Viner, PhD¹; Oliver T. Mytton, PhD²; Chris Bonell, PhD³; [et al](#)

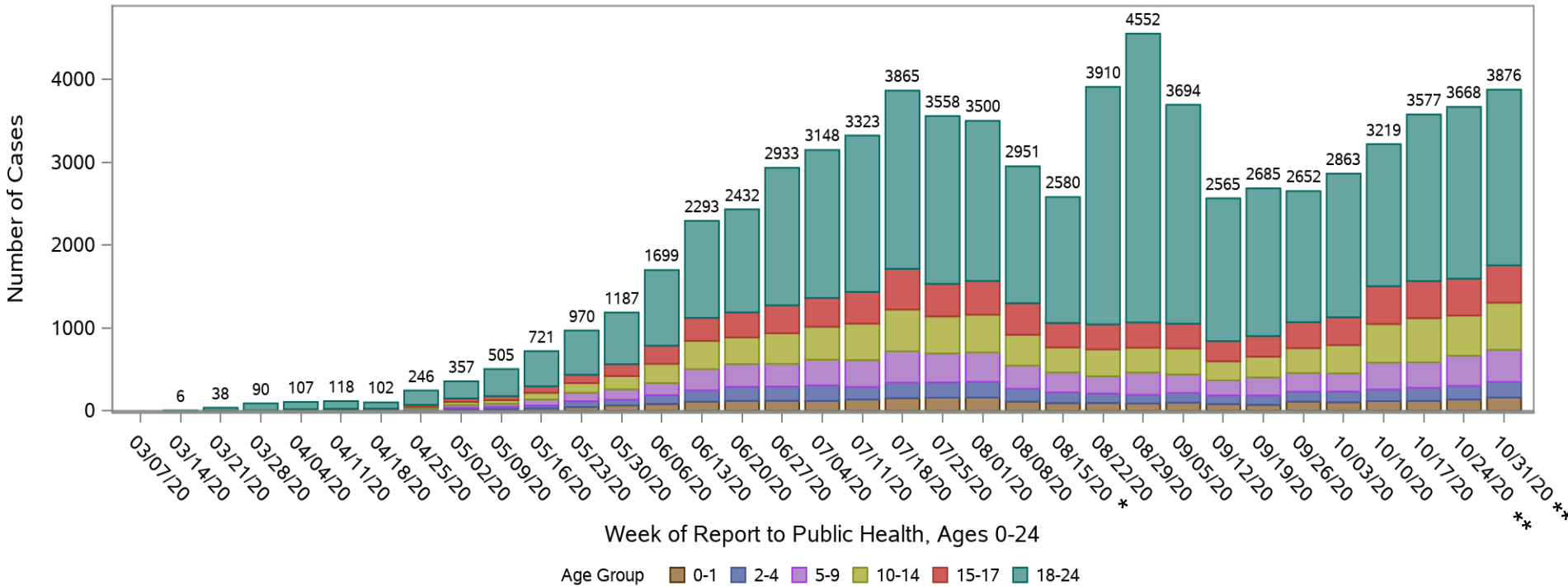
<https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/guidance/education/What-Are-We-Learning-About-Children-and-COVID-English.pdf>

NC COVID-19 Cases per 100,000 by Age Group & Report Week



****Early Data**

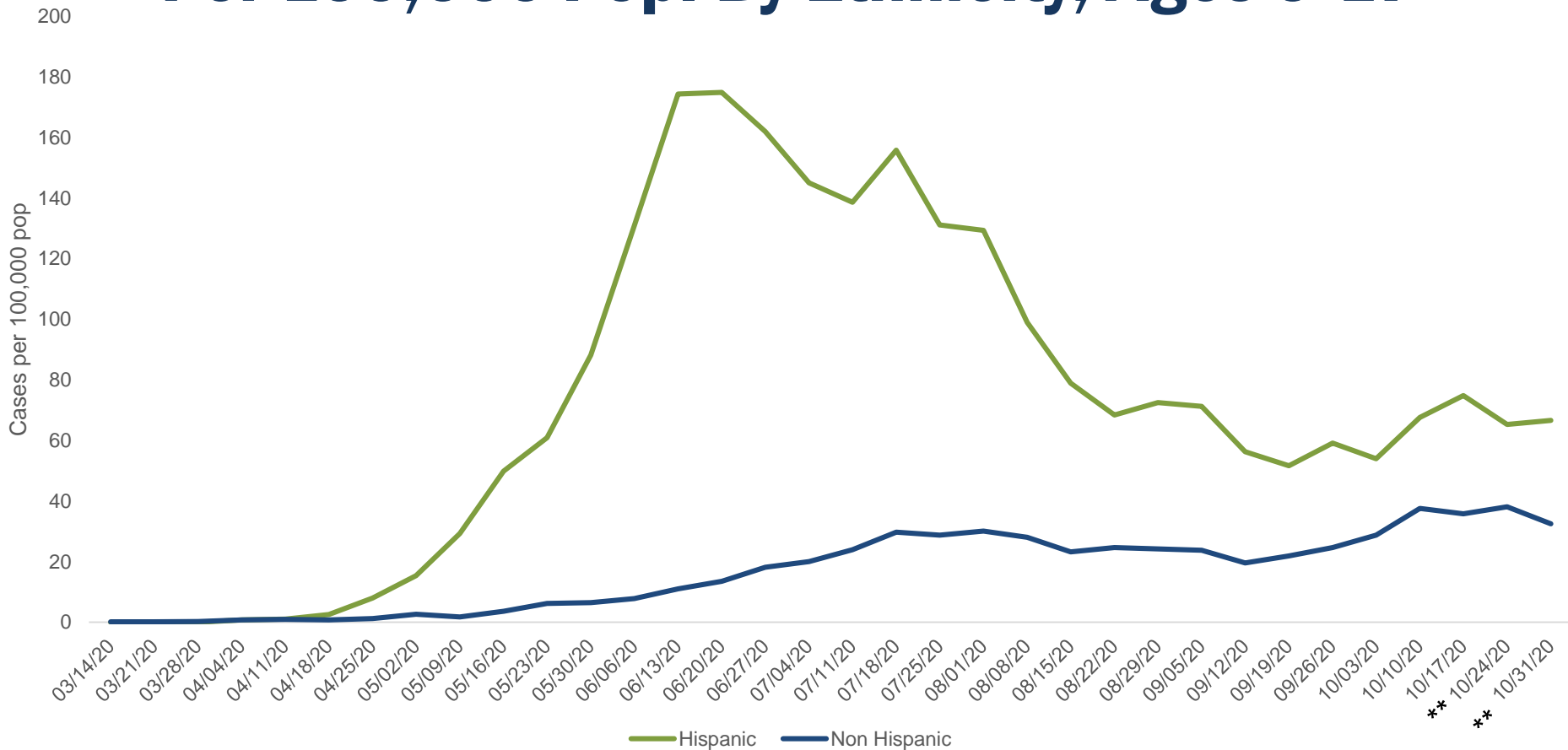
New Lab-Confirmed Cases by Age Group: Weekly Totals



***Most Schools Reopened (8/17)**

****Early Data**

Youth and Young Adult COVID-19 Cases Per 100,000 Pop. By Ethnicity, Ages 0-17



**Early Data

See more: Race, Ethnicity, Age, Gender Data on Dashboard

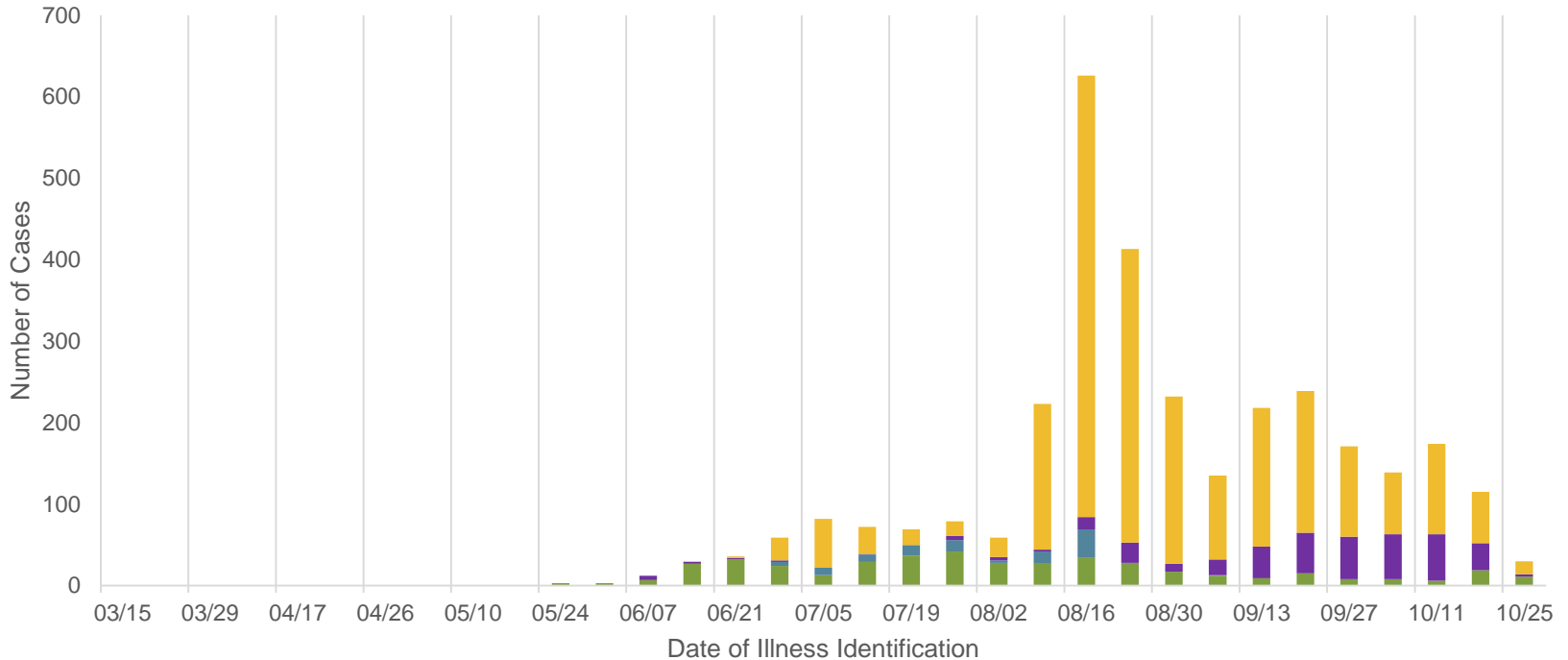
K-12 Reported Clusters

- **390 total cluster-associated cases among all K-12 clusters (active and complete)**
 - **0 K-12 cluster-linked deaths**

- **297 cases associated with currently active clusters as of 11/03/20**
 - **34 currently active clusters**
 - **182 among students and 115 among staff**

Comparing Education Clusters

Child Care, Schools, & Higher Education



282,802
TOTAL CASES

■ Child Care ■ Camp ■ K-12 School ■ College or University

0.1% of cases
are from K-12
clusters

Plan A for K – 5 only, Plan B allowed for all

- **Governor Cooper first announced Plan B as schools' baseline operational plan**
 - Schools could choose more restrictive Plan C: remote-only
- **As of 10/5, Plan A allowed for K – 5 (elementary grades)**
- **Remote instruction options must be provided for high-risk individuals**
- **AAP, NAS Alignment: Schools are fundamentally important to children's well-being; need to be flexible and balance risks/benefits.**



What Resources Are Available For K – 12 Schools?

CDC Indicators for Dynamic School Decision-Making

- **“In short, success in preventing the introduction and subsequent transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in schools is connected to and dependent upon preventing transmission on communities.”**
- **The three core indicators are:**
 - New cases per 100k over the last 14 days in the county
 - Percent positive over the past 14 days in the county
 - Ability of the school district to implement 5 key mitigation strategies
 - These are supplemented by additional indicators
- **CDC indicators confirm NC’s statewide approach for making decisions on school operations:**
 - Emphasize robust mitigation strategies, and
 - Monitor community spread

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/indicators.html#thresholds>

CDC Re-Opening Indicators for K - 12 Schools

Data for the two quantitative core indicators are available on the NCDHHS COVID-19 dashboard

Indicator	Lowest Risk of Transmission in Schools	Lower Risk of Transmission in Schools	Moderate Risk of Transmission in Schools	Higher Risk of Transmission in Schools	Highest Risk of Transmission in Schools
Core Indicators					
The number of new cases per 100,000 persons within the last 14 days, AND/OR	<5	5 to <20	20 to <50	50 to ≤ 200	≥ 200
The percentage of RT-PCR tests that are positive during the last 14 days, AND	<3%	3% to <5%	5% to <8%	8% to ≤ 10%	> 10%
The school's ability to adhere to the following key mitigation strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent and correct use of masks • Social distancing to the extent possible • Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette • Cleaning and disinfection • Contact tracing in collaboration with local health department 	Implemented all 5 strategies correctly and consistently	Implemented all 5 strategies correctly but inconsistently	Implemented 3 – 4 strategies correctly and consistently	Implemented 1 – 2 strategies correctly and consistently	Implemented no strategies

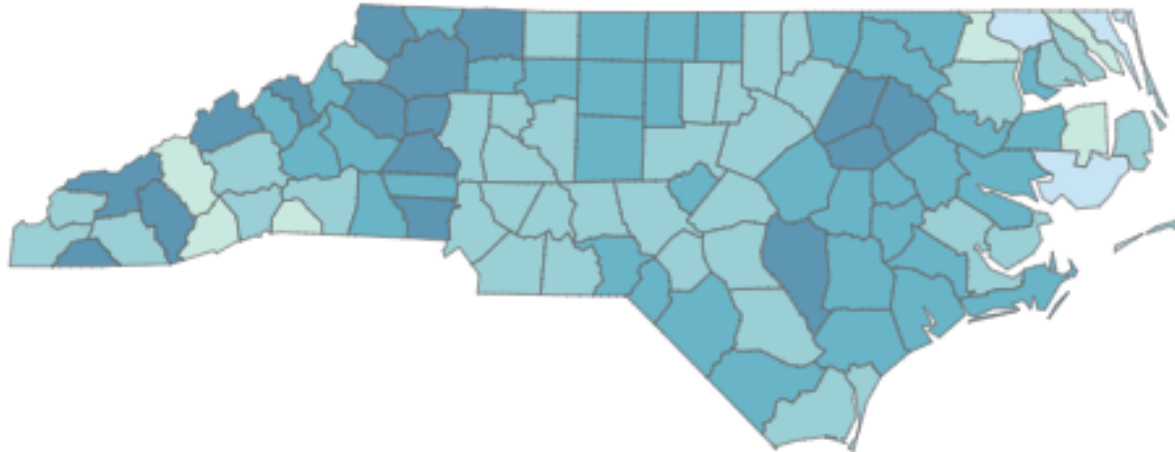
All 5 key mitigation strategies listed are already required in NC public schools

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/indicators.html#thresholds>

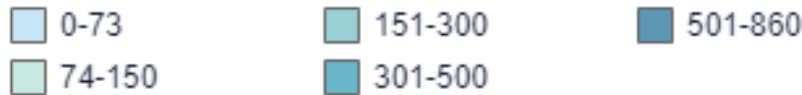
County Map by Cases per 100,000 Residents (Molecular (PCR) and Antigen)



(Click to highlight map, unclick to revert map)



Map Credit: NCDHHS



Select Geography

- County
- ZIP Code

Date Range

Last 14 Days

Search for County

Select Metric

- Cases
- Cases per 10,000 Residents
- Cases per 100,000 Residents

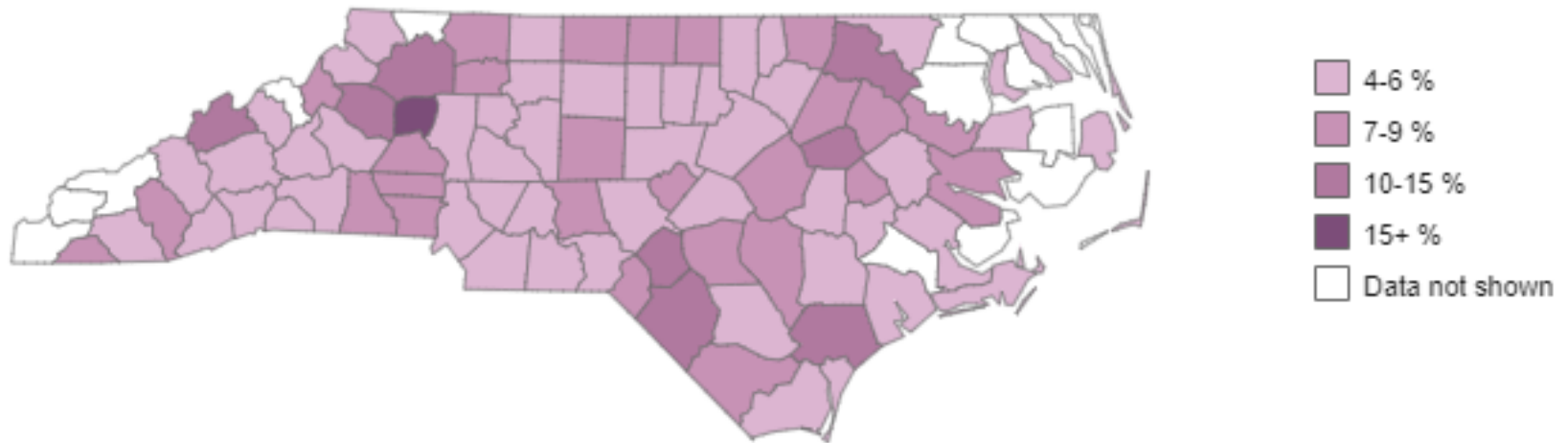
Source: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard>

Percent Positive by County



Which counties are seeing a decline or sustained level of percent of tests that are positive?

It is important to recognize that the amount of testing being conducted varies across counties. Because the percent positive is calculated using only molecular (PCR) testing data reported electronically in to NC COVID, which is a subset of total tests reported, county-level percent positive rates may be impacted by how many of the total tests for residents in the county were reported electronically through NC COVID.



Source: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/testing>



The Science of the 3 Ws

WEAR


WAIT

WASH



Three Quarters of People with SARS-CoV-2 Infection are Asymptomatic: Analysis of English Household Survey Data

[Abstract](#)[Fulltext](#)[Metrics](#)[Get Permission](#)[Cite this article](#)

Authors [Petersen I](#) , Phillips A

Received 13 August 2020

Accepted for publication 25 September 2020

Published 8 October 2020 Volume 2020:12 Pages 1039–1043

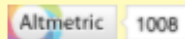
DOI <https://doi.org/10.2147/CLEP.S276825>

Checked for plagiarism Yes

Review by [Single anonymous peer review](#)

Peer reviewer comments 2

Editor who approved publication: [Professor Henrik Toft Sørensen](#)



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Whatever Your Reason, Get Behind the Mask



ncdhhs.gov/WhateverYourReason and ncdhhs.gov/CualEsTuRazon

Prevention Lasagna.....It's all about the layers



EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES®

[EID Journal](#) > [Volume 26](#) > [Number 11—November 2020](#) > [Main Article](#)

- Risk of infection if exposed to someone with COVID-19 decreased by:
 - 85% with social distancing
 - 77% by always wearing a mask
 - 76% by duration of contact <15 minutes
 - 67% by frequent handwashing

Doung-ngern et al. [Case-control study of use of personal protective measures and risk for SARS-CoV-2 infection, Thailand](#). Emerg Infect Dis (2020).

Prevention Beyond COVID-19

- **Protect against the flu, COVID-19, and other viruses**

Practice the 3 Ws

The infographic is divided into three vertical panels by dotted lines. The first panel shows a line drawing of a cloth mask with the word 'WEAR' in purple below it, followed by the text 'a cloth mask over your nose and mouth.' The second panel shows two blue silhouettes of people standing apart, with a horizontal line between them labeled '6 FEET' in purple, and the word 'WAIT' in purple below. The third panel shows a purple line drawing of hands being washed with water droplets, with the word 'WASH' in purple below it, followed by the text 'your hands or use hand sanitizer.' At the bottom of the infographic is a dark blue banner with the text '@NCDHHS' on the left and '#StayStrongNC' on the right.

WEAR
a cloth mask over
your nose and mouth.

WAIT
6 feet apart. Avoid
close contact.

WASH
your hands or
use hand sanitizer.

@NCDHHS **#StayStrongNC**

What Other Tools And Updates Are Available For K – 12 Schools?

StrongSchoolsNC

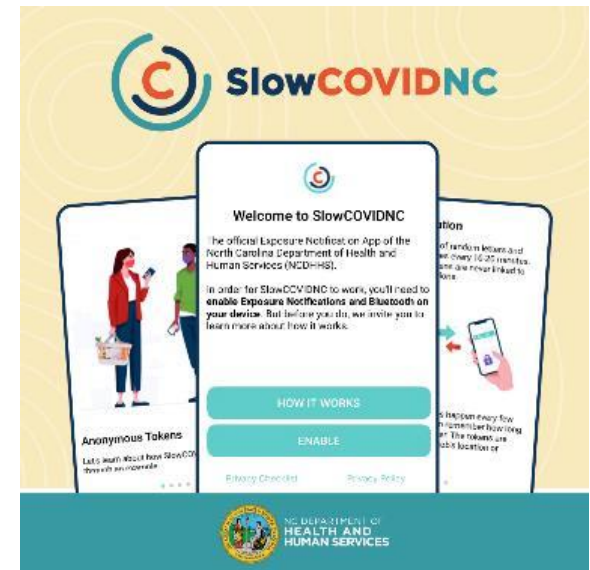
Public Health Toolkit (K-12)

November Updates

- **Going live today**
- **Clarification of allowing an “alternate diagnosis”**
- **Easier to understand example symptom screening questionnaire**
- **Easier to understand return list for excluded individuals**
 - Clarifies when someone can come back to school who had screened out due to symptoms, diagnosis, or exposure

Slow COVID NC App

- Free smart phone app to support public health
- Notifies users if they have been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19
- App integrates with NC's testing and tracing infrastructure to provide next steps to notified users
- Anonymous, no personal information stored
- Could be a helpful tool for school staff, older students, and parents/families
- Download for free through the [Apple App Store](#) and the [Google Play Store](#)
- Communications toolkit to help spread the word:
<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/slowcovidnc/communications-toolkit>



Vaccines



- **Influenza Vaccine – More important than ever this year**
- **Required child and adolescent vaccines**
 - Extended deadline for documentation until December 30th.
 - Need concerted effort to ensure children and adolescents (especially 12th graders) are vaccinated
- **On the horizon: COVID-19 vaccine**

Questions?

- See regularly updated [FAQ document](#)
- For questions about NCDHHS statewide guidance not covered in the FAQ document, email StrongSchoolsNC@dhhs.nc.gov

