

The Nass Report



Wisconsin State Government and the 11th Senate District

August 21, 2020

Covid-19 in Wisconsin and Children

As of August 21, 2020

Covid-19 and Children in Wisconsin

In recent weeks, there has been debate across Wisconsin about the reopening of schools utilizing in-person classes, virtual classes or a hybrid of both. Many national organizations representing pediatricians, mental health professionals and other healthcare professionals have come out in favor of the need to get children back into the classrooms for in-person education.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has also raised the alarm about the rapidly increasing crisis facing the nation from the wave of depression, overdoses and suicides among children this year. In part, the CDC and other experts report that children seeking help are identifying isolation practices, lack of socialization and closed schools as key factors in this escalating crisis. In many areas of the U.S., suicides by children are claiming significantly more lives than Covid-19.

So, what are the numbers on children and Covid-19 in Wisconsin, as of August 20, 2020 (Source: Wisconsin Department of Health Services):

For children ages 0-9:

-There have been a total of 2,333 test confirmed Covid-19 cases since March 2020.

-Only 50 children in this age group have ever been hospitalized for Covid-19 issues.

-Only 5 children in this age group required intensive care services.

-There have been no deaths in this age group due to Covid-19.

-The current estimated population of children ages 0-9 in Wisconsin is 697,628.

For children ages 10-19:

-There have been a total of 6,734 test confirmed Covid-19 cases since March 2020.

-Only 90 children in this age group have ever been hospitalized for Covid-19 issues.

-Only 5 children in this age group required intensive care services.

-There have been no deaths in this age group due to Covid-19.

-The current estimated population of children ages 10-19 in Wisconsin is 755,764

For all age groups in Wisconsin:

-There have been a total of 68,233 test confirmed Covid-19 cases

since March 2020.

-Only 5,469 people have ever been hospitalized for Covid-19 issues.

-Only 978 people have required intensive care services.

-There have been 1,067 deaths in Wisconsin due to Covid-19.

-The current estimated population of Wisconsin 5,813,568 people (Source: 2019 U.S. Census Bureau).

When we look at test confirmed Covid-19 cases in Wisconsin, we must also keep in mind that these are just the people that sought testing either based on symptoms, after being notified of possible exposure to another individual confirmed to have Covid-19, or simply opting to obtain a free test for other reasons. However, we know that a significant number of people have had Covid-19 in Wisconsin but never sought or required testing.

As I have mentioned before, researchers estimate that the actual number of Covid-19 cases in a state is probably in a range of 10x to 18x higher than the test confirmed positive number. This is an important factor because it helps to quantify the number of people that have either had no symptoms or relatively minor symptoms without the need to obtain a test.

By combining the number of test confirmed positive cases and the range of untested cases, it gives a much better perspective on the levels of infections and deaths. It also establishes a more accurate analysis that Covid-19 is a far less lethal disease than originally thought and it causes a lower level of serious complications including hospitalizations. In the overwhelming majority of cases, the individual has no symptoms or relatively mild symptoms.

In-Person Classes are Necessary

When it comes to children and Covid-19, the complete picture clearly suggests that we should utilize in-person classes. For most children, the in-

person format is the best educational option in comparison to the ineffective virtual systems being hastily developed by school districts.

Every parent has witnessed the negative impacts on their children of isolation practices, lack of direct socialization with other children and the mental stress caused by months of excessive restrictions on youth activities. We must balance the real health risks posed by Covid-19 with the increasing mental and physical damage being suffered by children due to the spiraling overreaction of adults.

Covid-19 is a virus that is with us permanently and experts now agree that a vaccine(s) is not a short term option in the next 12-18 months. We can no longer delay moving forward based on the previous theory that a vaccine(s) is the only road forward.

If we prioritize the best interest of children, as opposed to the demands of certain adults and groups, then the obvious path forward is the reopening schools utilizing some form of in-person classes. Yes, this means adopting reasonable safety protocols in our schools and acknowledging that some students and staff during the school year will come down with Covid-19.

If we care about our children and their development, our society needs to stop living in a constant state of Covid-19 fear and hysteria.

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