COVID-19 and Education

A summary of the scientific literature on the impacts of COVID-19 in education settings.



How This Impacts Children's Development

In the United States, COVID-19 exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and challenges for historically and currently marginalized groups of children, youth and families, including those who are Black, Latinx, Asian,

American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN), and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+). It may take years to understand the depths of the effect of the pandemic on the socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical development of children and youth.

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Talking Points from the SRCD Briefs

- The COVID-19 pandemic affected different groups in varying ways. For example, minoritized communities faced more discrimination and mental health struggles, while girls were more likely to feel second-hand stress from family members. Younger children struggled with social isolation, and older children experienced less school pressure but had greater concerns about their futures.
- Black children are more likely to attend schools that have fewer economic resources and less technology to support remote instruction, and the pandemic has strained the limited fiscal resources of these schools as they work to provide remote educational experiences
- Dual Language Learners (DLLs; 75% of whom are Latinx in K-12 schools; 62% in Early Care and Education (ECE) Programs) face increased educational disparities, like lack access to stable internet at home, limiting their ability to engage in distance learning programs and activities
- Over 65% of Chinese American children/adolescents and over 78% of parents reported being worried that they will face discrimination due to China being blamed for COVID-19.
- The effects of historical trauma on American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) communities are exacerbated by COVID-19, but it is impossible to know the true impact of COVID-19 as data on AIAN people are frequently incomplete, inaccurate or not tracked at all.
- LGBTQ+ students experience greater harassment than heterosexual and cisgender students, both in school and online settings. However, they often do not report victimization, fearing that adults will be unresponsive.

Policy Considerations in the Briefs

1. Consider how policies, practices, and programs can be leveraged to promote children's optimal development and address the exacerbating effects of COVID-19 among historically and currently marginalized children and families.
2. Give attention to the well-being of adults responsible for caring for youth through providing ongoing institutional mental health support for teachers, counselors, administrators, and staff.
3. Increase investments in school infrastructure and remote learning resources to ensure children in under-resourced communities have access to electronic devices with high-speed internet access necessary for distance learning.
4. Increased support for AIAN students through federal programs like the Johnson O'Malley and Title VII Indian Education programs, which fund cultural, language, academic, and dropout prevention

initiatives. Address challenges of virtual learning for DLLs by reopening schools serving Latinx children for in-person learning when health and safety guidelines allow.

5. Mandating teachers and school staff take diversity, equity, and inclusion training, including bias reduction and bystander training, and update anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies to include clear reporting guidelines and constructive follow-through.

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