

# Outside-of-School Covid FAQs

Dear Families,

The below FAQs are created to serve as principles and suggestions for decision-making outside of school.

We do not want to give you rules or prohibitions, but merely a guide on how to keep your child and community safe.

Your guiding principles for any kind of gathering (family gathering, extracurricular activity, playdates) should be:

## 1. Vaccination

Ensuring all adults spending time with your child are vaccinated is key to minimizing the risk of Covid transmission to them. E.g. babysitters, instructors at after school activities, family members if planning family gatherings.

This also means avoiding indoor gatherings where you don't know the vaccination status of everyone present.

## 2. Ventilation

Outdoor activities are significantly safer. Keep play dates and birthday celebrations outdoors as much as possible, especially where there is going to be eating and drinking (i.e. masks will be removed)

## 3. Masks

We recommend wearing masks indoors when with people other than immediate family (even if vaccinated) to the extent possible, due to the risk of breakthrough infections and transmission.

Masks vary in performance. Simple cloth masks are not sufficient indoors particularly given the higher transmissibility of delta. A genuine KN95 or KF94 made for kids have a very high filtration efficiency and are designed to seal the face. We strongly recommend upgrading masks for indoor use to either KF94s or multilayer cloth masks with filters, eg. Enro and Happy Masks (KF 94 examples from amazon: [Link](#))

- Comfort is key: Your child won't wear the mask if its not comfortable and it's hard to breath with it
- The mask should fit tightly with no gaps, gaps are most common on the side of the cheeks and around the nose. If there are gaps, air will pass through the gasps and not through the mask, the virus will too

A few (non MMS) health experts and parents compiled a list of recommendations and criteria for effective masks. They tested different types and brands. Search for 'mask nerd' or Aaron Collins on YouTube. A summary of results is here: [LINK](#)

#### **4. Distance and “Close Contact”:**

In general, NYS defines a close contact as someone who was within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 10 minutes over a 24-hour period, starting two days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two days prior to positive specimen collection) until the patient is isolated. This guidance applies to indoor and outdoor settings.

Minimizing close contacts will reduce the likelihood of infection and quarantine.

#### **Playground Tips:**

We know the risk of outdoor transmission is minimal and we do want our children to be physically active and have unstructured social interaction.

However at a playground, you're dealing with larger numbers of people. Please make sure:

1. As much as possible, kids should keep social distance or wear a mask (although other children may not wear masks, which leaves your kid less protected).
2. If possible, go when there will be fewer people around.

#### **Extracurricular activities:**

Outdoor activities are significantly safer. Overall, increasing the number of people your child spends time with indoors increases the risk of Covid exposure, so it's best to minimize indoor activities

Ask the facility what their protocols are with regard to vaccinations, ventilation and masking. Best practice involves:

1. Vaccine required for everyone 12+
2. Some combination of: upgraded filtration in ventilation systems (ideally Merv 13), HEPA purifiers, open windows and doors to create cross-currents, fans and high ceilings
3. Masks required for everyone
4. Distancing to reduce close contacts

## Travel Tips:

Check local guidance to see what's permitted where you're going. You should consider the different levels of risk involved in where you're going and how you're getting there. Also you should check what quarantine rules apply on your way there and back. MMS will follow CDC guidelines for quarantining and testing after domestic and international air and cruise travel. (pls see charts and links below)  
Please plan vacations accordingly.

1. Experts emphasize you should learn about the coronavirus status of the destination, making sure that case numbers are consistently decreasing.
2. Make sure you have all PPE and the right masks
3. Traveling by plane or train is riskier than by car.
4. Domestic Travel CDC [LINK](#) ; International Travel CDC [LINK](#):

### CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Domestic Travel RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	Domestic Travel Recommendations Quick Reference	
	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
Get tested 1-3 days before travel	✓	
Get tested 3-5 days after travel and self-quarantine for 7 days. Self-quarantine for 10 days if you don't get tested.	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓

 [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

International Travel RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	International Travel Recommendations Quick Reference	
	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
Get tested 1-3 days before traveling out of the US	✓	
Get tested 3-5 days after travel	✓	✓
Self-quarantine after travel for 7 days with a negative test or 10 days without test	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓