



The Kid Angle

Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children

Kids and Covid: By the numbers March 10, 2022

Contact: Michele Kayal, VP Media and Communications,
MicheleK@FirstFocus.org

Conversation series examines Covid's "outsized impact" on kids

Two years after the first COVID-19 cases were diagnosed in the United States, kids are back in school, more of them have health insurance, and life has begun to look a bit more “normal.” But that doesn’t mean the kids are alright.

Nearly [13 million children have contracted the disease](#), more than [241,000 have lost a caregiver](#). Our [youngest children remain unvaccinated](#). And we have only just begun to consider [COVID’s long-term effects on children](#).

That’s why First Focus on Children is launching “**Kids and Covid**,” a **multi-week conversation series examining the pandemic’s ongoing, outsized impact on the country’s children**.

The first session, on **March 16, will tackle the mental health crisis** afflicting the nation’s children and proposals for treating it.

Featured conversations run through April and will gather experts, advocates and lawmakers to discuss **homelessness, vaccinations, children in foster care and the juvenile justice system, mixed status families, economic impacts, education and nutrition, and global health**.

[For more information – and to register for conversations – please visit our website.](#)

In the meantime, here are some numbers that outline the impact the pandemic and its economic fallout have had on every aspect of our children's health and well-being. The numbers below tell only part of that story. But they are a good place to start.

Physical health:

Despite early misconceptions that children don't get COVID, **[children account for 19% of all COVID-19 cases](#)** in the United States.

- **6+million:** Number of children who have **[contracted COVID-19](#)**
- **114,730:** Number of **[children hospitalized](#)** with COVID
- **7,459:** Number of children who developed the serious condition known as **[multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children \(MISC\)](#)**
- **1,433:** Number of **[children who have died](#)** with COVID
- **13:** where COVID-19 ranks among the **[top 15 causes of death](#)** in children
- **19 million:** the number of **[U.S. children under 5](#)**, for whom there is still no vaccine

Emotional health:

Our country's children are in the throes of a **[full-blown mental health crisis](#)**.

- **31%:** percentage increase in **[mental health-related emergency room visits](#)** by 12-17 year olds in 2020
- **5:** where **[suicide ranks](#)** among the top 15 causes of death in children
- **0:** the number of states that meet the **[recommended ratio of one social worker for every 250 students](#)**
- **4,000+:** the number of **[students served by a single school psychologist](#)** in West Virginia, Missouri, Texas, Alaska and Georgia.
- **241,000+:** the number of **[children grieving a caregiver](#)** who died of COVID-19

Economic stability:

At the height of the pandemic in 2021, government programs in the American Rescue Plan **[cut child poverty by 36%](#)**.

- **3.7 million:** the number of [children who slid back into poverty](#) when improvements to the Child Tax Credit expired
- **6.7 million:** number of children expected to [lose health coverage](#) when the Public Health Emergency ends
- **1-in-6:** the number of children who experienced [food insecurity](#) last year
- **22%:** percentage of households with children who are [behind on rent](#)

Inequity:

Black, Hispanic, indigenous and other children of color are far more likely to contract COVID, be hospitalized, lose a caregiver to the disease, suffer economic consequences and endure other pandemic fallout than their white counterparts.

- **65%:** percentage of children [who lost a caregiver to COVID](#) who belong to racial and ethnic minorities
- **Twice:** the likelihood of [Black or Hispanic children losing a caregiver](#) to COVID, v. white children
- **5x:** the likelihood of [American Indian/Alaska Native children losing a caregiver](#) to COVID, v. white children
- **29%:** percentage of [Black renters with children who are behind on rent](#), v. 22% for all renters with children
- **3x:** the rate of [food insecurity among Black and Hispanic](#) households v. white households
- **70%:** the percentage of [total MISC cases that occurred in children who are Black or Hispanic](#)
- **3 million:** the number of marginalized K-12 students — those with disabilities, experiencing homelessness, in foster care or who are migrants — who [stopped attending school](#)

Where we go from here:

Emergency pandemic aid — improved tax credits, increased food benefits, economic impact payments and other child-centered initiatives — achieved [historic levels of well-being for children](#). These investments reversed more than a decade of decline in federal spending on children, helping lift nearly 4 million out of poverty and producing the [largest year-to-year increase in the share of federal spending on kids](#) since First Focus on Children began tracking 15 years ago.

We must capitalize on this progress. And propose long-term solutions to these long-term problems.

--

First Focus on Children

This email was sent to michelekayal3@gmail.com. To stop receiving emails, [click here](#).