

**Changes to K12 StrongSchoolsNC and ChildCareStrongNC Toolkits
Effective March 7,2022**

K12 StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit

As we emerge from the latest surge, the COVID-19 landscape looks different today than it did two years ago or even two months ago. We continue to learn more about the virus and have effective tools to reduce to risk to people. As it has throughout the pandemic, NCDHHS adapts its response based on the emerging science and evidence to best protect North Carolinians and use the tools we have to get back to the people, experiences, and places we love.

- Vaccines and boosters are widely available and help protect against severe illness, hospitalization, and death.
- Treatment is available for those at higher risk of severe disease.
- Trends are decreasing, lowering the risk of infection, and improving hospital capacity.

At this phase in the pandemic, NCDHHS recommends that schools:

- Promote vaccinations and boosters for students and staff by providing accurate information and hosting vaccination events
- Participate in the School Testing Program
- Consider moving to voluntary masking at the discretion of local authorities as universal masking is a less important tool in lower risk settings like schools.
- Masks are recommended in indoor settings for people at high risk for severe disease and who are not up to date on vaccines
- Masks are required following a COVID infection and recommended after a COVID exposure.
- Because masks can add a layer of protection for those who want it, schools should support students and staff who choose to wear a mask.

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ChildCareStrongNC Toolkit

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