COVID-19 Update
Early Childhood Program Guidance

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Questions to Address

1. What is the current situation of COVID-19 in Fairfax County?
2. How is infection spread?
3. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?
4. What are the policies for excluding ill children and for them to return?
5. What do I do if I am notified of a case amongst a student or staff member at my school?
6. What will the Health Department do if a COVID-19 case is identified?
7. What are effective approaches to prevent transmission?
8. Are there activities that are more or less risky?
9. What do we know about children spreading COVID-19?
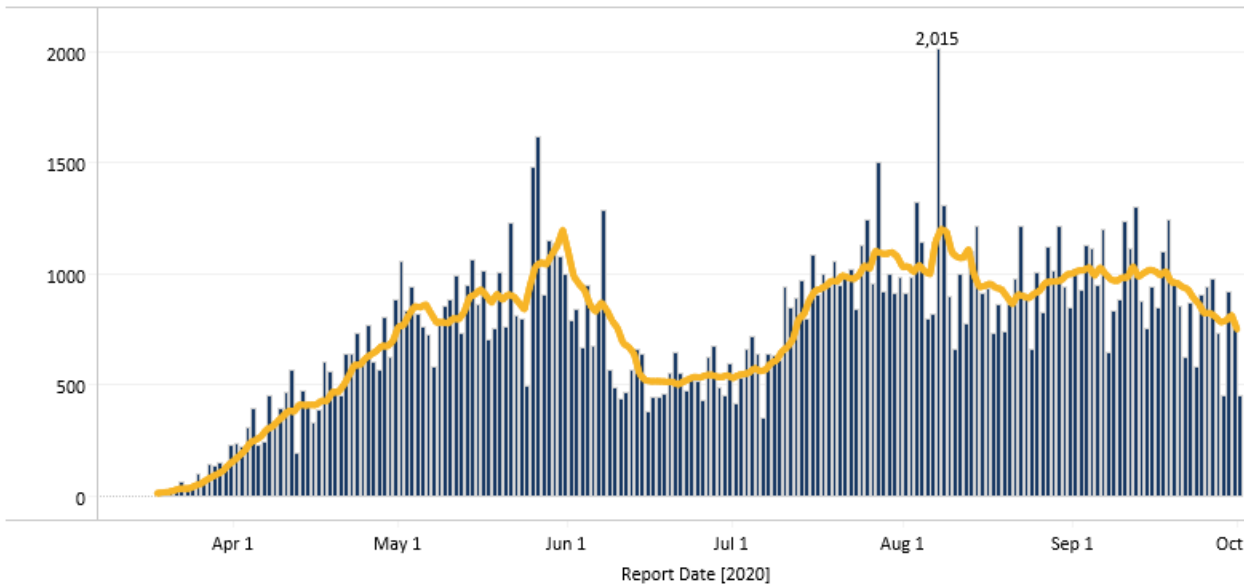10. What have we learned so far?

Guiding Principles for a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction

- Minimize risk by endorsing mitigation measures (e.g., use of cloth face coverings, maintain physical distancing, frequent handwashing, staying home when sick)

- Safely and effectively manage staff and students who may have COVID-19

- Use data to make decisions – learn from experience

- Maintain good communications between public health, schools, and families

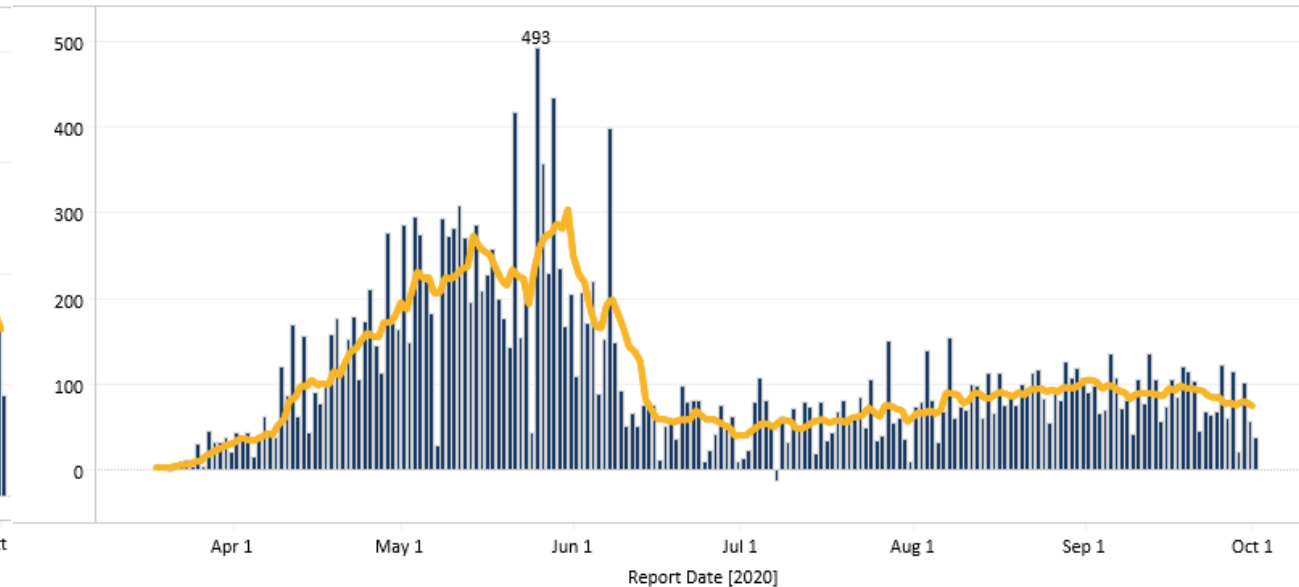# 1. What is the Current Situation in Fairfax County? Cases

Virginia

Fairfax County

Report Date Daily Cases Counts - All Localities
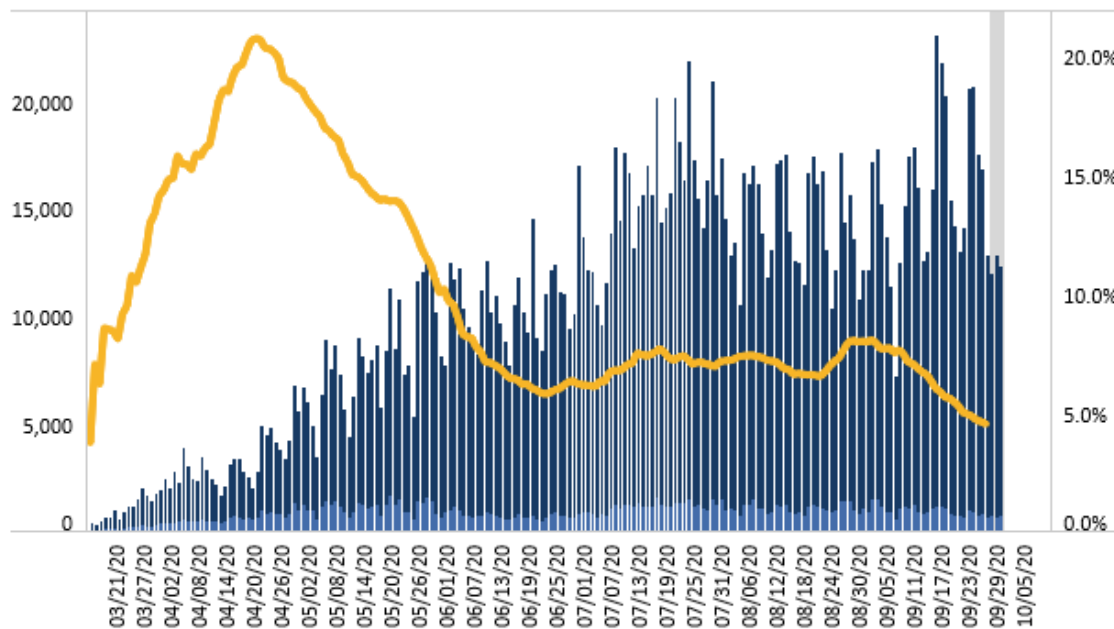
Report Date Daily Cases Counts - Fairfax

https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-daily-dashboard/

Number of COVID-19 Tests & Percent Positive

Virginia

Fairfax County

https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-daily-dashboard/
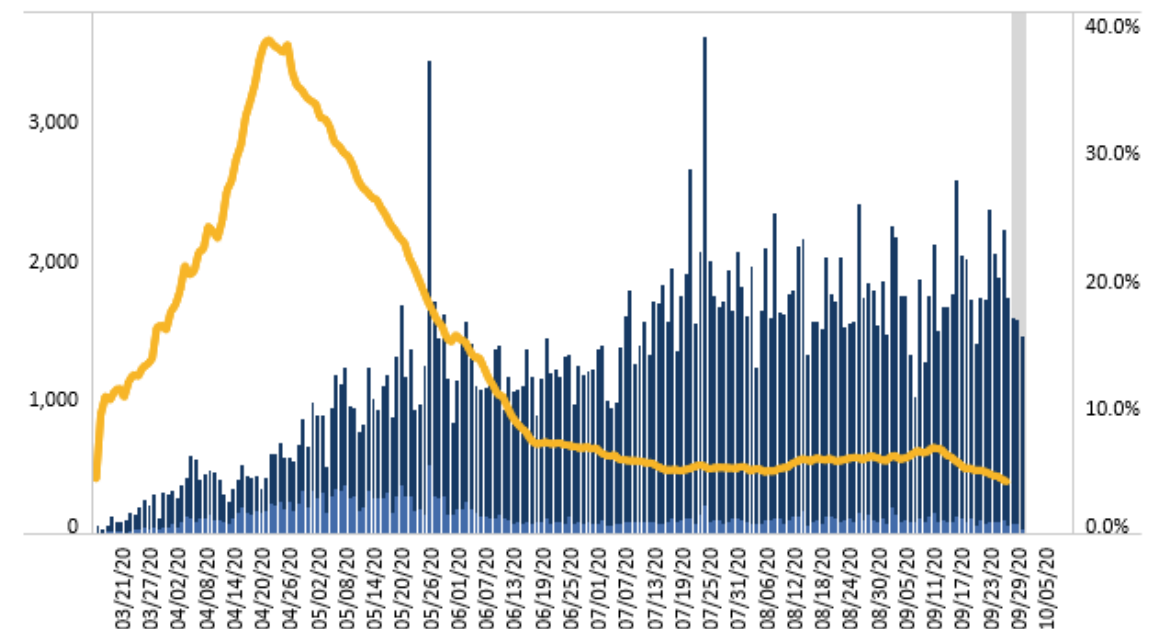
2. How is COVID-19 Spread?

- Respiratory droplets (primary method)

  - Droplets produced when sneezing, coughing, singing, talking, breathing

  - Travel limited distances (generally <6 feet)

  - Droplets may remain suspended in the air

- Contact with secretions

  - Sharing food or drink

  - Touching a contaminated surface and then touching one's eyes, nose or mouth

    - Variable virus survival time depending on type of surface

CDC Public Health Image Library

3. What are the Symptoms of COVID-19?

More Common

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Congestion/runny nose
- Muscle aches

Less Common

- Loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Tiredness
- Poor appetite

4. What are the Exclusion and Return to School Criteria?

- All students exhibiting any symptom of COVID-19 that is new or unusual for them are **recommended healthcare provider evaluation** before returning to school.

  o Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever (≥100.4∘F) or chills, fatigue (more tired than usual), headache, muscle aches, cough, nasal congestion or runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, new onset poor appetite or poor feeding.

  o Testing for COVID is recommended

  o Students should provide a healthcare provider note (with alternative diagnosis) or a negative COVID result to return to school.

  o Students are recommended to be excluded for at least 10 days if no clinical evaluation is performed on the symptomatic child.

o Public health recommends the same policy for staff

VDH Algorithm-https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2020/10/Child-School-COVID-19-Algorithm-Infographics2020-FINAL.pdf

Return to School Criteria

Evaluation	Action
Test positive	Isolate for 10 days + 24 h fever free and improved symptoms
Test negative/other diagnosis	Exclude based on usual practice (including fever free for 24 h)
Not evaluated or tested	Isolate as for test positive
Close contact to a case/ not ill or test negative	Quarantine for 14 days after last contact with the case

5. What do I do if I am notified of a case amongst a student or staff member at my school?

- Report case to the Fairfax County Health Department at the following link: https://redcap.link/FCHDSchoolReporting

Who should be reported in this portal?

This form should be only completed for confirmed COVID-19 students or staff members (confirmed by laboratory result or healthcare provider diagnosis) that have in-person exposures in the school.

Who should NOT be reported in this portal?

- Staff that are 100% virtual with no exposures in the school.
- Individuals that are symptomatic but are not confirmed cases.
- Individuals that are contacts to a confirmed case.

6. What Will the Health Department do if a COVID-19 Case Occurs?

- FCHD case investigation and contact tracing with recommendations for isolation and quarantine

- If more than one case occurs, an outbreak investigation will be done (separate specialized team will contact school for follow-up)

  - Adults versus children; one classroom versus multiple rooms; direct contacts versus no evidence of contact

- Based on investigation, interventions may include

  - Cleaning of daycare; quarantine of individually identified contacts based on case investigation

  - Closing a classroom or school for 14 days – based on situation and # of cases

School Notifications

- School notifications are essential tools in raising awareness amongst your school community and providing public health guidance.

- FCHD will be able to provide guidance on who and when classroom and/or school notifications should be sent to students.

 - Template letters have been developed by FCHD and can be shared.

COVID-19 Testing for Identified School Contacts

- Testing is recommended for all confirmed contacts to a COVID case.

- FCHD has 3 testing sites for contacts of confirmed cases and persons in high-risk situations who have no other source of testing

- FCHD will be establishing Neighborhood Testing Sites for people with COVID-19 symptoms, including children, in communities where access is more limited – date for openings TBD

Definitions: Case, Contact and "Contact of a Contact"

ISOLATE   QUARANTINE   OBSERVE
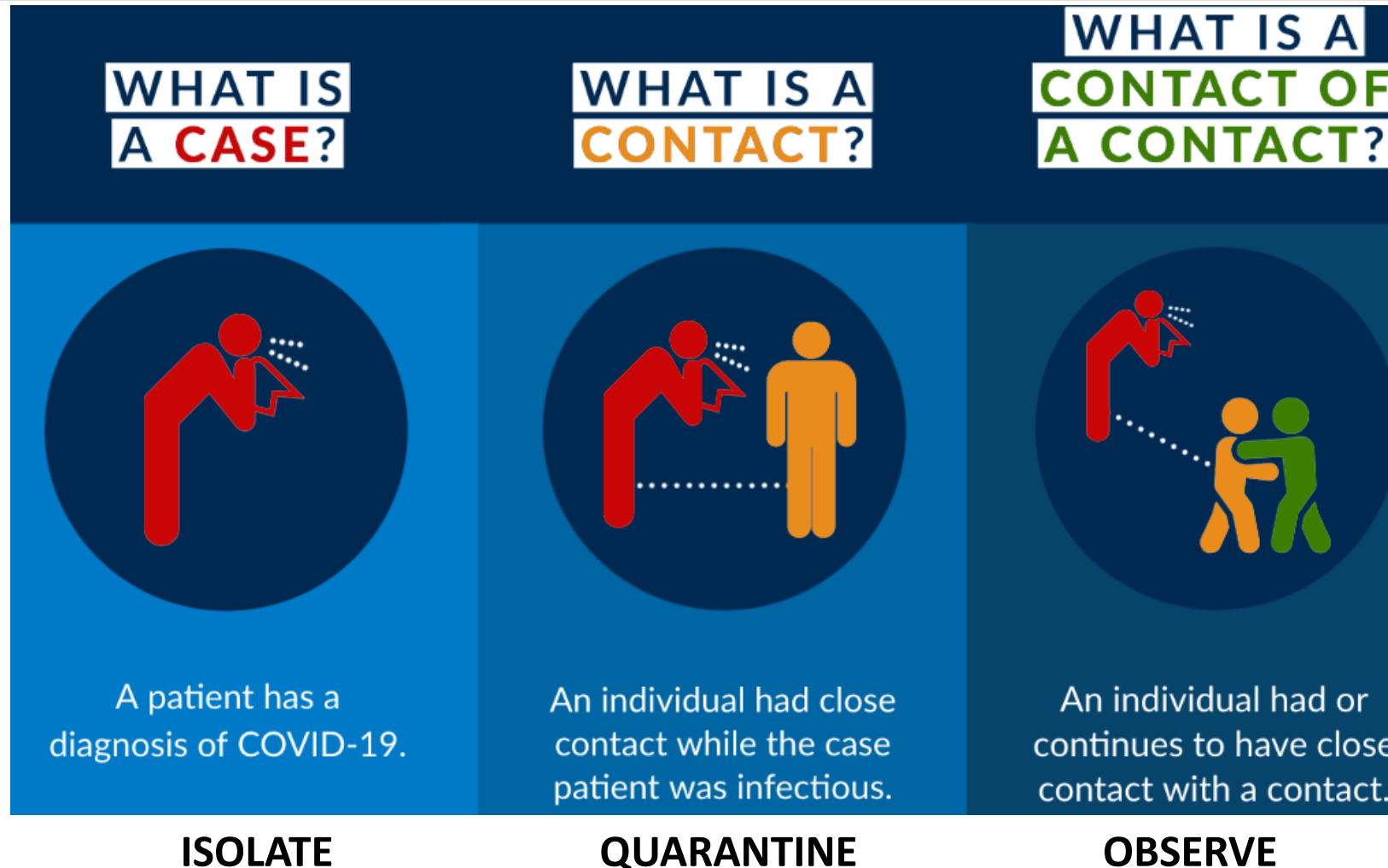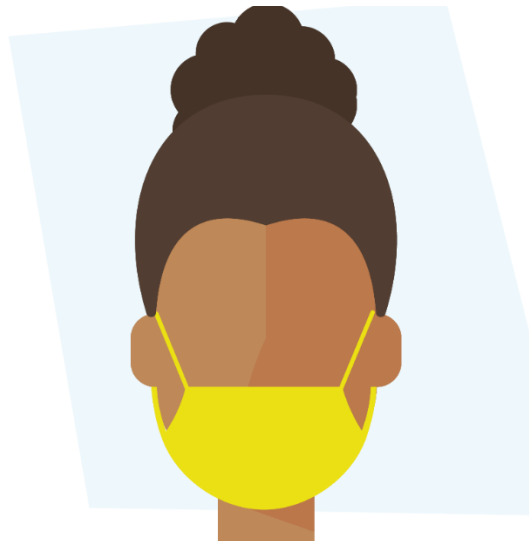
Wear a face covering

Practice social distancing

6 feet
#SafeSix

Self-isolate if you are sick

Wash hands and avoid touching your face

Effectiveness of Cloth Face Coverings

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6928e2.htm

Additional Approaches to Prevention

- Reduce the number of children and adults who are in contact with each other (pods)

- Increase ventilation

  - Spend time outside

  - Open windows

  - HVAC system air exchanges and filters

- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces

- Avoid carpools (if possible)

- Restrict visitors

Remember Prevention in All Parts of One's Life

**Maintain protective behaviors
in the community and at home too!**

8. Are There Activities that are More or Less Risky?

More Risk

- Transit to and from school

- Eating (lunch, snacks)

- Staff breakrooms

- Playing in the gym

- Choir/singing

Less Risk

- Playing outside (socially distanced)

- "Desk time" (socially distanced)

- Brief hallway transitions

9. What do We Know about Children Spreading COVID-19?

- Children more likely than others to be asymptomatically infected

- Children 0-9 years old appear less likely to spread infection than other age groups

  - Similar or perhaps greater amount of virus in nose or throat

  - Lower risk may be related to less droplet production or droplets not being expelled as forcefully

  - Lower risk may also be due to children having fewer symptoms so less coughing and sneezing

- In households, young children appear unlikely to introduce infection or to be infected if another family member has COVID-19

Preliminary Findings: COVID-19 in Schools and Childcare

- Often, infection is introduced by the staff related to external exposures, not a student

- Risk is less in preschool and elementary grades than with older children who are infected and spread infection similar to adults

- Secondary cases are not common, but outbreaks may occur

- Transmission among staff seems more common than child to staff

- There is still a lot we don't know!

10. What Have We Learned from so Far?

- A site visit by FCHD is not a regulatory visit, but is helpful in identifying where things are being done correctly and where practices could be improved
  - Schools have also found it useful to share they are working with the HD with their school community.
- Confidentiality is taken seriously – administrative staff will be advised who is in quarantine or isolation status but no one else needs to know

- Teachers and others in direct contact with children need a good understanding of why they are being asked to do the various control actions and then have that information repeated regularly

- Staff who have a checklist have the cleanest, most compliant spaces

- Schools should try to avoid combining children from different classrooms into one classroom as well as floating staff members to different classrooms as much as possible.

- VDH daycare guidance has been updated, thresholds for closing entire schools have been modified and we are relying more on contact investigations to guide our recommended actions.

What You Can Do?

1. Notify the Health Department of all known cases
2. Assist the Health Department in identifying close contacts in your facility when a case is identified
3. Ensure that students and staff members in isolation or quarantine status do not attend in-person during that time
4. Contact the Health Department at 703-267-3511 for any questions

Where can you find resources?

- CDC- https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-faq.html

- VDH- https://www.vdh.virginia.gov

- DSS- https://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/index.cgi

- FCHD- https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus

Thank you all so much for the work you do!

Questions?