

## **What Message is Society Sending to Our Children - Food for Thought**

Despite ours and many other physicians [1] and parental groups requesting that students not be required to wear masks or be socially distanced due to the COVID-19 issue, many school districts have set up plans to do so. The question is what message is society sending to our children and what may be the impact now and in the future?

Children as we know are in their prime immune system building period as we have previously documented [2] and therefore are well equipped to handle infectious diseases that many adults may no longer be able to do so. So when we require them to wear masks and social distance, the message they get is that their immune systems are not equipped to handle a viral or bacterial illness and that they are potentially a threat to infect other people. Add to this the message being broadcast by the media that they may take the virus home and infect mom and dad, grandma and grandpa places an additional stress/burden on them.

This of course is touted by the special interest groups as being a need for a “vaccine” or a new drug to counter a viral illness that is otherwise relatively benign in children and the greater portion of the adult population. [3] Certainly as we have stated before, there are segments of the population that are at risk and need to be identified so that prevention and treatment measures can be set up. [4]

What is the message that our children are getting from these actions by the supposedly well-educated public health officials that certainly have access to the same scientific literature that we do? They are in essence being told that they are not healthy, cannot fend off diseases and are potentially a risk to spread the disease to others. Little if any of this is correct but is being perpetuated by the media on an almost daily basis.

The media onslaught of either conflicting information or misinformation not only confuses children, but their parents as well who are left to try and explain to them what is going on and why extreme measures are being enacted by the authorities.

The concern of course is what will this do to them both psychologically and emotionally in the long term. While children are resilient and very adaptable, they need to have some guidance as to how to navigate the now rapidly changing and at times a seemingly chaotic environment. Otherwise they will be left to their own devices to try and make sense of it all. To that end we make the following recommendations when they ask about what it all means.

1. Be open and honest with them when it comes to answering their questions about why they are being made to do what does not come naturally for them such as socializing, playing at recess and whether they will become ill. If you do not know the answer, let them know that and tell them that you will try and find out for them. Certainly we are here to help you find answers.

2. Let them know that their immune systems are undergoing development, and that it is normal to have periodic sniffles, sneezes, fevers and fatigue, as this is how their bodies build immunity. Just because they may have signs of acute illness does not mean that they have COVID-19. Socializing with other kids at school helps this process unfold and many children never become ill because their immune systems have been allowed by their parents to develop naturally.
3. Let them know that the COVID-19 pandemic shall pass once it has run its course as with all other epidemics/pandemics that we have seen since 1918. Ease their concern by letting them know that we are comfortable treating people with all types of illness and have various safe and effective tools for this virus as well to help them make a full recovery.
4. Do your best to counteract the negativity they may be bombarded with and reinforce the positive things in their lives, especially those pertaining to your family.

In my opinion it is unfortunate and totally inappropriate that children are now being used to promote certain special interest groups' and political agendas. As adults, and especially those who are in decision-making positions during the pandemic, we should know better and set better examples for our children.

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**References:**

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