

Two-in-three parents would send kids to school in fall: Survey

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(HealthDay)—About two-thirds of U.S. parents say they'll send their

kids to school again this fall, and most also support COVID-19 testing and social distancing policies for schoolchildren, a new survey finds.

Among parents, only about 12% said they would not send at least one of their kids to school, while 21% were still uncertain about their decision. Many are waiting to hear more about their schools' plans.

Many parents said they had no choice but to send their [children](#) to school because they had to work.

For many families, a surge in COVID-19 cases would make them reconsider sending children to school, the survey found.

Most did support measures to safeguard kids against the new coronavirus.

Those measures could include fewer children on buses, daily temperature screening, alternating classroom and [online learning](#), testing school staff and requiring staff and older kids to wear masks, researchers report.

For the report, researchers from the Susan B. Meister Child Health Evaluation and Research Center at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, surveyed nearly 1,200 parents in Michigan, Ohio and Illinois in June.

"Families are facing a challenging decision regarding whether to send their children to school for in-person classes in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic," said researcher Dr. Kao-Ping Chua, a pediatrician at Michigan Medicine C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

"On the one hand, sending children to school could increase the risk of COVID-19 among children and family members. On the other hand,

children who don't return to in-person [school](#) may experience disruptions in their education," Chua said. "Some families simply don't have a choice because they need to go to work."

According to the survey, 75% of parents supported daily temperature checks and testing of kids if one tested positive for COVID-19.

Over 60% supported limiting the number of kids on buses, alternating between in-person and virtual classes, staggering arrival and pick-up times, and random weekly COVID-19 testing for staff.

Half supported random weekly COVID-19 testing of kids and having children eat meals in classrooms, not in cafeterias.

Most parents supported [face masks](#) for staff and middle and [high school students](#), but not for younger children, especially kindergarten through second grade.

There wasn't much support for closing playgrounds and halting all extracurricular activities.

"Preferences for the number and types of measures vary among [parents](#)," Chua said in a university news release. "But they broadly agree with the notion that schools should take steps to keep children as safe as possible."

More information: For more on COVID-19 and schools, head to the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

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