

Very little spread of coronavirus at kids' day camps: study

February 5 2021



Day camps could be considered breeding grounds for coronavirus

infection, but a new study shows that when social distancing measures are followed, few illnesses result.

Researchers analyzed data from more than 6,800 [children](#) and staff members who were at 54 YMCA day camps in the greater Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area of North Carolina from March through August 2020, when community cases of COVID-19 were on the rise.

The Duke University team identified just 10 children and nine staff members with confirmed infections. Only two patients were possibly infected at camp, while all of the other patients were infected outside of camp, according to the study published online Feb. 3 in the journal *Pediatrics*.

"Our study suggests that [appropriate measures](#) to reduce the spread of disease can create an environment where normal childhood activities such as day camp, [school](#) and after-school recreation can be provided with minimal risk," said study author Emily D'Agostino, an assistant professor in the department of family medicine and [community health](#) at Duke.

"The study also highlights the critical importance of academic partnerships with community organizations for promoting pediatric health," D'Agostino said in a university news release.

All staffers at the camps were trained on how to limit the spread of the coronavirus, and the camps adhered to symptom screenings for children and workers, masking, hand-washing/sanitizing, daily cleaning/disinfecting and limiting group sizes to no more than 10 children.

Last month, another Duke University team reported that transmission of the coronavirus in schools was rare. They tracked 11 [school districts](#) in

North Carolina over nine weeks of in-person teaching.

There were 773 community-acquired infections among [school children](#) and staff, but only 32 infections were acquired within schools. There were no cases of child-to-adult transmission within the schools, according to that study, also published in *Pediatrics*.

"These data should be helpful to school systems and child care providers as they navigate this exceedingly difficult time, yet work to promote the well-being of children and primary caregivers," said co-author Dr. Ibukun Akinboyo, an assistant professor in Duke's department of pediatrics.

More information

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [children and COVID-19](#).

SOURCE: Duke University, news release, Feb. 3, 2021

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Citation: Very little spread of coronavirus at kids' day camps: study (2021, February 5) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-02-coronavirus-kids-day.html>

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