



## **NHSNA Position Statement**

### **Universal Masking and COVID-19 Vaccinations**

**MASKS:** The New Hampshire School Nurses' Association recommends the **Universal Use of Masks for all students, school staff, and visitors** as an effective mitigation strategy in the fight against SARS CoV-2 transmission.

When used correctly and consistently, masks slow the spread of COVID-19. They help to prevent the spread of droplets through the air, particularly when talking, singing, sneezing, coughing, or breathing heavily during exercise. Masks protect others and yourself from asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic SARS-coV-2 transmission. [CDC Proper Use of Face Masks 2021.](#)

**Masks should be mandated in any indoor school setting, to protect the health of students and staff with the goal of maintaining access to in-person learning.** Given the high transmission risk of the Delta variant, or potential future variants, mask use is encouraged for both unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals.

Masks are not recommended for children under the age of 2, or those who are unable to wear a mask because they are unconscious, have trouble breathing, or are otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

**VACCINATION:** NHSNA strongly promotes COVID-19 vaccination for all eligible teachers, staff, and students. Vaccines are safe and effective and help to protect against the spread of COVID-19 as well as severe disease and death. Vaccines are widely available in New Hampshire and are provided at no cost.

Historically, school nurses have held a key role in supporting vaccine compliance for vaccine preventable childhood diseases, contributing to the mitigation of such diseases in New Hampshire. It is the responsibility of all school nurses to clarify misinformation, and provide accurate, evidence-based information and education for the community on COVID vaccines. Vaccine promotion by school nurses may have an impact on increasing overall vaccination rates across the state of New Hampshire, and as a result, decrease the impact and ongoing spread of COVID-19.

#### **RESOURCES:**

[NH DHHS COVID-19 School and Childcare Toolkit 2021](#)

[COVID-19 School Guidance from CHAD 2021](#)

[14 Diseases You Almost Forgot About \(Thanks to Vaccines\)](#)

[CDC Case Study: Outbreak Associated with SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 \(Delta\) Variant in an Elementary School — Marin County, California, May–June 2021](#)

[COVID Interactive Map Dashboard 2021.](#)

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