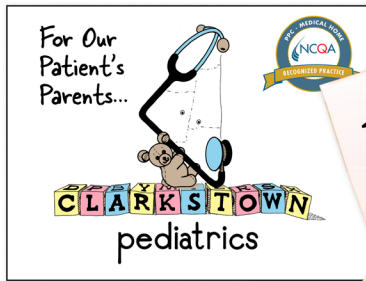
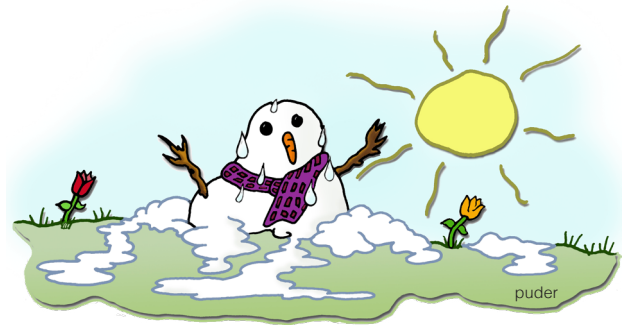


Spring 2021



PARENT LETTER

the best parents ever!



Time to Get Students Back into Classrooms!

by Doug Puder, MD
and Erica Berg, MD



Schools Are Essential Services!



In school learning is best for students. In person education (K through 12th grade) has been shown to be safe when the right protocols are used. This is the opinion of our doctors at Clarkstown Pediatrics along with **six thousand New York State Pediatricians!**

School closure was mandated during the lockdown and peak months of our COVID pandemic. We understood the need to minimize COVID spread and keep children safe. But we also see how school closure hurts the education of our children. Some students may have *permanent* effects on their learning, social skills, and emotional health.

Our Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics says: "Elementary age students are facing staggering losses in expected literacy and school success." "Schools should be treated as essential services." Schools should be among the first to reopen when the COVID rate in our community drops. As long as we keep up mask wearing, handwashing, putting students into pods (cohorting), and social distancing schools can remain safe.

How did we come to this conclusion?

- The positive COVID rate in our schools is no higher than the rate in our community. Very often schools have lower positivity rates!

- Although cases have been brought into schools by staff and students, there is very low transmission between students or students to staff. The highest risk was staff to staff which should hopefully be minimized with more vaccinations.

- When a case of COVID is detected in a class, good protocols can contain it with little spread. (When COVID has spread in schools it is almost always because safety protocols were not followed.)

- Our schools practice mandatory in-school facemask wearing, social distancing, and cohorting students into pods. Most other countries don't require these protocols. So our schools could be the safest in the world!

- The risk of COVID infection must be taken very seriously. But we have learned how much children suffer with all remote learning! The impact is greatest for our special needs students (ELL, SPED) and Pre-K through 2nd grade students. They have already missed out on a year of in-person learning. Let's get them back!

We hope you find our Parentletter helpful and informative. Please keep in mind that receipt of this newsletter does not create a doctor/patient relationship and that it is not meant to serve as a substitute for professional medical advice. For particular pediatric medical concerns, including decisions about diagnoses, medications and other treatments, or if you have any questions after reading this newsletter, we encourage you to speak with your child's pediatrician.

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