

WHO/Europe advisory group issues revised recommendations on schooling during COVID-19



PUBLISHED MAR 24, 2022
BY [WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION](#)

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on schooling during COVID-19, an advisory body to WHO/Europe, has published its latest set of recommendations on children and adolescents' access to education during the COVID-19 pandemic. These recommendations replace and update the previous ones issued in June 2021.

Gathering in February 2022, for its 8th meeting, the TAG made 8 new recommendations for countries to ensure safe schooling during times when COVID-19 community transmission is high.

The revised recommendations should be used to reaffirm what is already known about ensuring that schools are a safe environment for child and adolescent health, and educational and social development.

Schools should adopt evidence-based public health measures; promote the participation of all children, including those from vulnerable groups; and adopt a “health-promoting school” concept, meaning that schools should constantly strengthen their capacity as healthy settings for living, learning and working.

WHO/Europe encourages countries to use these recommendations beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to promote supportive environments that foster resilience and preparedness.

The 8 recommendations should be seen as a set of connected themes that minimize the negative impact of the pandemic.

In particular, the recommendations:

The recommendations have been updated with the most recent epidemiological data (as of the end of February 2022). They have also been revised to reflect countries' different contexts, variation in

vaccination uptake and availability, and affordability of implementation (particularly for measures such as COVID-19 testing).

The TAG recommendations and WHO/Europe underscore that not being vaccinated should never be used as a reason to interrupt school attendance or after-school activities for any child.

Press release distributed by Wire Association on behalf of World Health Organization, on Mar 24, 2022. For more information subscribe and [follow](#) us.

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