



COVID-19: Kent County Observations

Adam London, PhD, RS, DAAS

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Mackenzie Town

Michigan Association of Local Public Health

2024 Premier Public Health Conference

Overview

- Brief and incomplete review of key observations regarding Kent County's COVID response
- Key observations from Ferris State University students
- Observations described with details from personal experience
- Perspectives from colleagues and After Action Report findings also included

These things really happen and it's a very small world

Wuhan Coronavirus Looks Increasingly Like a Pandemic, Experts Say

Rapidly rising caseloads alarm researchers, who fear the virus may make its way across the globe. But scientists cannot yet predict how many deaths may result.

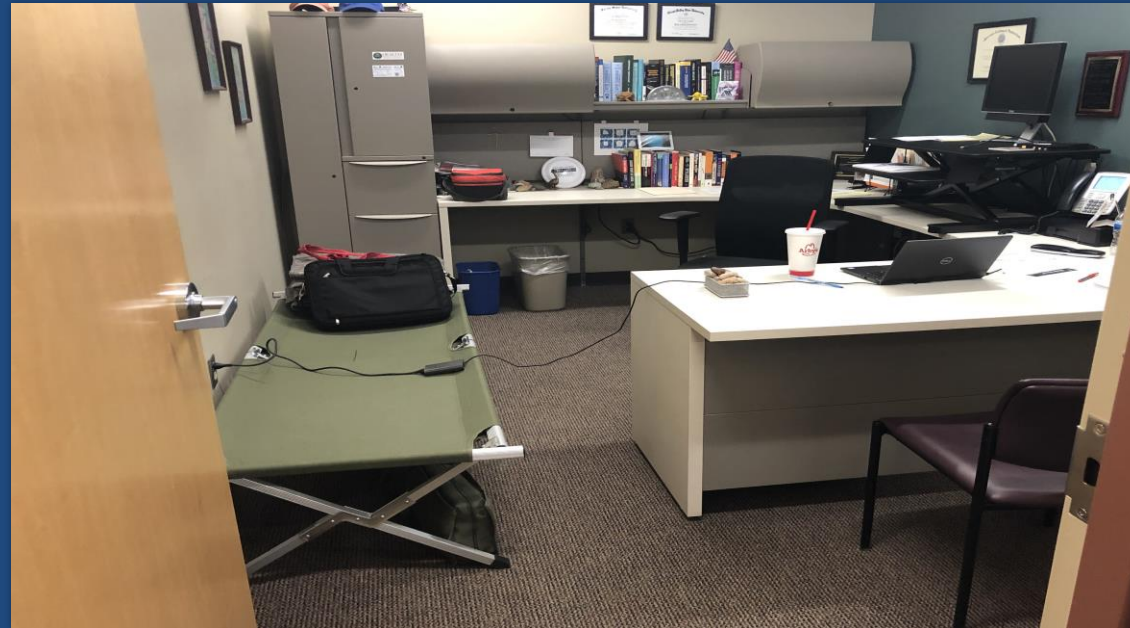
 Give this article    924



NY Times 2.2.20

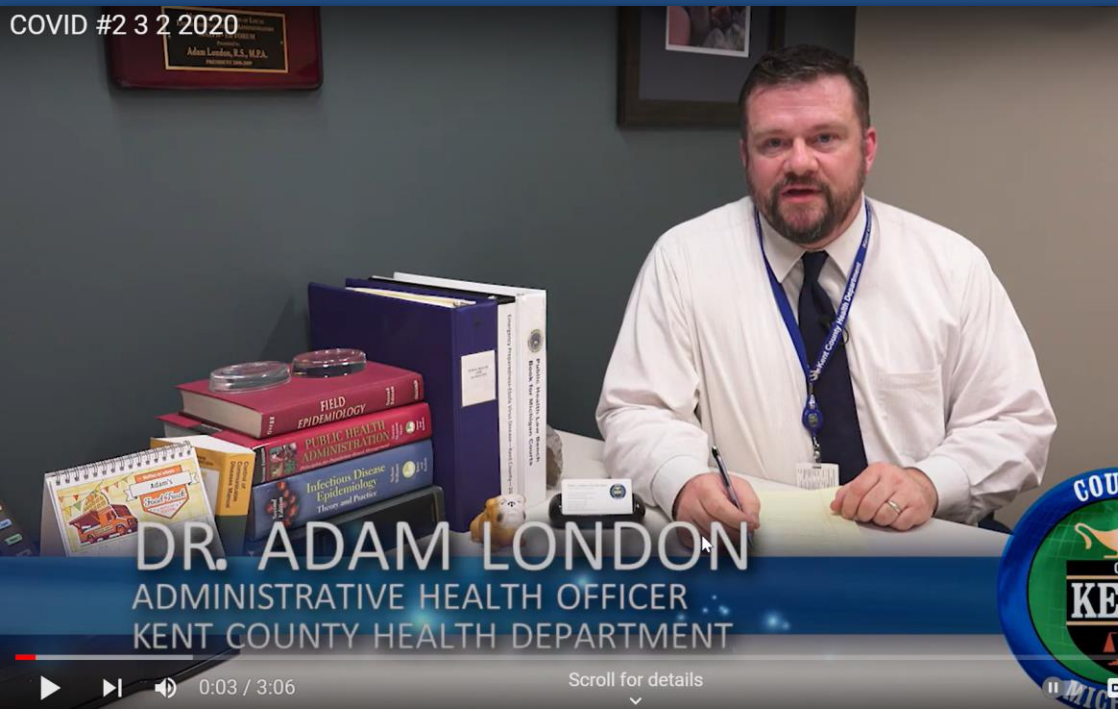
Public health was not equipped or supported to withstand stresses of multi-year crisis

- ❖ Year 1: Public health experienced appreciation and respect.
- ❖ Year 2: Public health was vilified by an influential minority as “enemies of the Constitution” and “criminals against humanity”.



Opportunity (demand) to become the media

COVID #2 3 2 2020

A man with a beard, wearing a white shirt and a blue lanyard, sits at a desk. He is looking towards the camera. On his desk are several books, including 'FIELD EPIDEMIOLOGY', 'PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION', and 'Infectious Disease Epidemiology: Theory and Practice'. A nameplate on the wall reads 'Adam London, M.D., M.P.H.'. A blue circular logo for Kent County Michigan is partially visible at the bottom right.

DR. ADAM LONDON
ADMINISTRATIVE HEALTH OFFICER
KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

0:03 / 3:06 Scroll for details

COVID 19 UPDATE 10 22 20

A man in a dark suit and red tie is speaking. Behind him is a screen displaying COVID-19 statistics for Michigan. A sign in the background says 'COVID-19 CASES THE RISE'. A blue circular logo for Kent County Michigan is at the bottom right.

| Michigan | |
|--------------|---------|
| Total Cases | 150,989 |
| Active Cases | 7,084 |
| Deaths | 1,597 |
| Recovery | 33 |

DR. ADAM LONDON
DIRECTOR
KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

A woman in a black blazer is performing sign language. The background is dark.

State and County offices must coordinate better (March 12, 2020)



Anntaninna Biondo | MLive.com

Kent ISD and county health officials update status of schools amidst coronavirus concerns

3 / 7



Gov. Whitmer announces school closures state-wide until April 5

All things are public health



Local public health is valuable as a community convening space



The screenshot shows the 'accessKENT' website for Kent County, Michigan. The navigation bar includes links for Online Services, Departments & Officials, Sheriff, Courts, Health, and Human Services. The main heading is 'COVID-19 School Resources' with a breadcrumb trail 'Home / School Resources'. A prominent dark blue banner features the text 'COVID-19 Testing for Schools' and 'Available testing locations for students, staff, and families', with a 'Schedule Now' button. Below this, a list of resources is displayed in a grid. On the right side, there is a schoolhouse icon and a list of additional resources.

accessKENT
KENT COUNTY · MICHIGAN

Online Services ▾ Departments & Officials ▾ Sheriff ▾ Courts ▾ Health ▾ Human Services ▾

COVID-19 School Resources

Home / School Resources

COVID-19 Testing for Schools

Available testing locations for students, staff, and families

[Schedule Now](#)

- Contact Tracing Spreadsheet for Schools (.xlsx)
- Risk of COVID Transmission in Schools: A Framework for Public Health Recommendations
- School Prevention Strategies (.xlsx)
- KCHD School Guidance Letter

- K-12 & Higher Education School Toolkit - (Updated 01/18/22)
- Early Childcare & Education School Toolkit - (Updated 03/15/22)
- K-12 & Higher Education Symptom and Testing Protocols - (Updated 01/18/22)
- Early Childcare & Education Symptom and Testing Protocols



- COVID-19: Student Precautions | Spanish
- When Your School Has an Outbreak
- When Schools Should Contact KCHD
- MDHHS Guidance
- MI Safe Schools Testing Program
- CDC Guidance
- Kent County Dashboard
- KISD Dashboard

CARES Act Fund Distribution

GRAND RAPIDS

Kent County receives \$115M in federal funding to cover coronavirus costs

Published: May. 11, 2020, 3:00 p.m.



Advertisement



School Framework for Public Health Recs

Information from KCHD COVID Dashboard:
District/Community incidence: Cases in 7 days per 100,000 people= ____
District/Community percent of all people vaccinated = ____

District/Community Incidence rate
Cases in 7 days per 100,000 people

| Risk Level | District/Community Incidence |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Low Risk | 0-9 |
| Moderate | 10-49 |
| Substantial | 50-99 |
| Highest | >100 |

1

District/Community Vaccination Percent
Adjust your risk level based on the percent of all people fully vaccinated in your district

| Percent vaccinated in district | Risk Adjustment |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Less than 70% | Go up 1 risk level |
| 70-89% | Stay at risk level |
| 90% or greater | Go down 1 risk level only IF there is NOT an active outbreak in the school |

2

| | Low Risk | Moderate Risk | Substantial Risk | Highest Risk |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Grades K-5 | Universal masking for staff, students, and visitors indoors | Universal masking for staff, students, and visitors indoors | Universal masking for staff, students, and visitors indoors | Universal masking for staff, students, and visitors indoors Offer weekly testing to unvaccinated staff |
| Grades 6-12 | Masking for staff and students who are not fully vaccinated | Universal masking for staff, students, visitors indoors Consider offering weekly testing staff and students who are not fully vaccinated | Universal masking for staff, students, and visitors indoors Offer weekly testing to staff and students who are not fully vaccinated | Universal masking for staff, students and visitors indoors Weekly testing of staff and students who are not fully vaccinated |
| Quarantine from school all household contacts AND: | Students within 6 feet who are not fully vaccinated OR not consistently masked | Students within 6 feet who are not fully vaccinated OR not consistently masked | Students within 6 feet who are not fully vaccinated OR not consistently masked | Students within 6 feet who are not fully vaccinated OR not consistently masked |
| Extracurricular Activities | | Offer weekly testing for high-risk extracurricular activities for those who are not fully vaccinated Masking for high-risk outdoor sports | Weekly testing for high-risk extracurricular activities for those who are not fully vaccinated Weekly testing for low and intermediate-risk sports for those who are not fully vaccinated Masking for high-risk outdoor sports | No spectators at events Test twice a week for high-risk activities for those who are not fully vaccinated Weekly testing for low and intermediate-risk sports for those who are not fully vaccinated Masking for high-risk outdoor sports |

Working with Employers



ABOUT COVID-19

GUIDELINES ▾

RESOURCES ▾

TESTING LOCATIONS

CONTACT

VACCINE INFO

HEALTH SCREENING

KENT COUNTY BACK TO WORK

Resources

● Industry-Specific Guidelines

[Reopening Plans & Guidelines](#)

[Personal Protective Equipment](#)

[Fact Sheets & Information](#)

[Cleaning & Disinfection](#)

[Community & Relief Resources](#)

[Testing Locations](#)

[Who to Contact for Help](#)

[FAQs](#)

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- [Agriculture](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Barber, Cosmetology and Personal Care Services](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Vietnamese](#)
- [Childcare Facilities](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Vietnamese](#)
- [Construction](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Food Service](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Chinese](#) | [Vietnamese](#)
- [Gyms and Fitness Centers](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Houses of Worship](#) | [Arabic](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Vietnamese](#)
- [Manufacturing](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Medical Services](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Offices and Professional Services](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Vietnamese](#)
- [Parks & Recreation](#) | [Spanish](#) | [MDHHS Guidance For Contact Sports](#)

Translate ▾

West Michigan Vaccine Collaborative

www.VaccinateWestMI.com

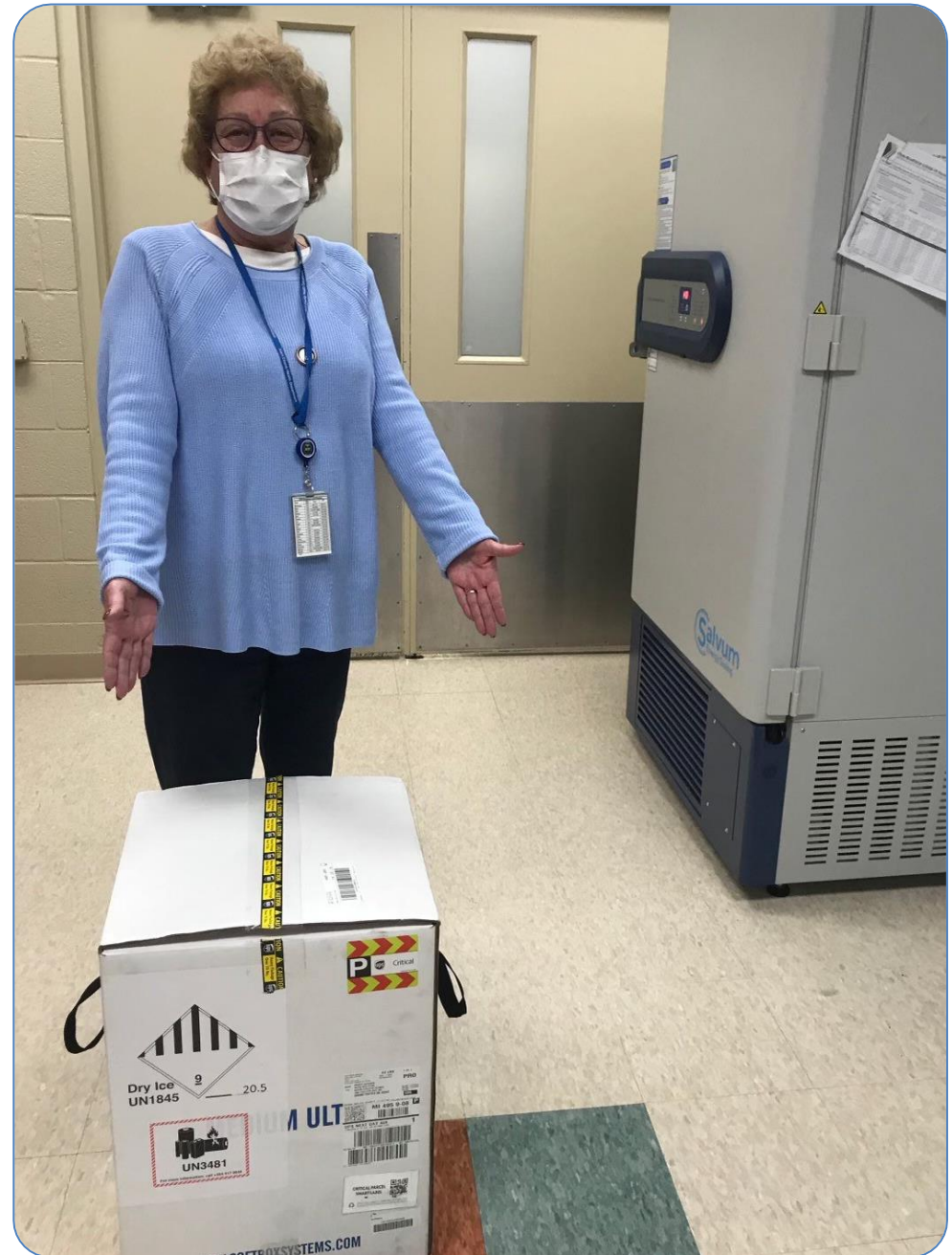
- Multiple Groups working on planning – Diversity of perspectives was important



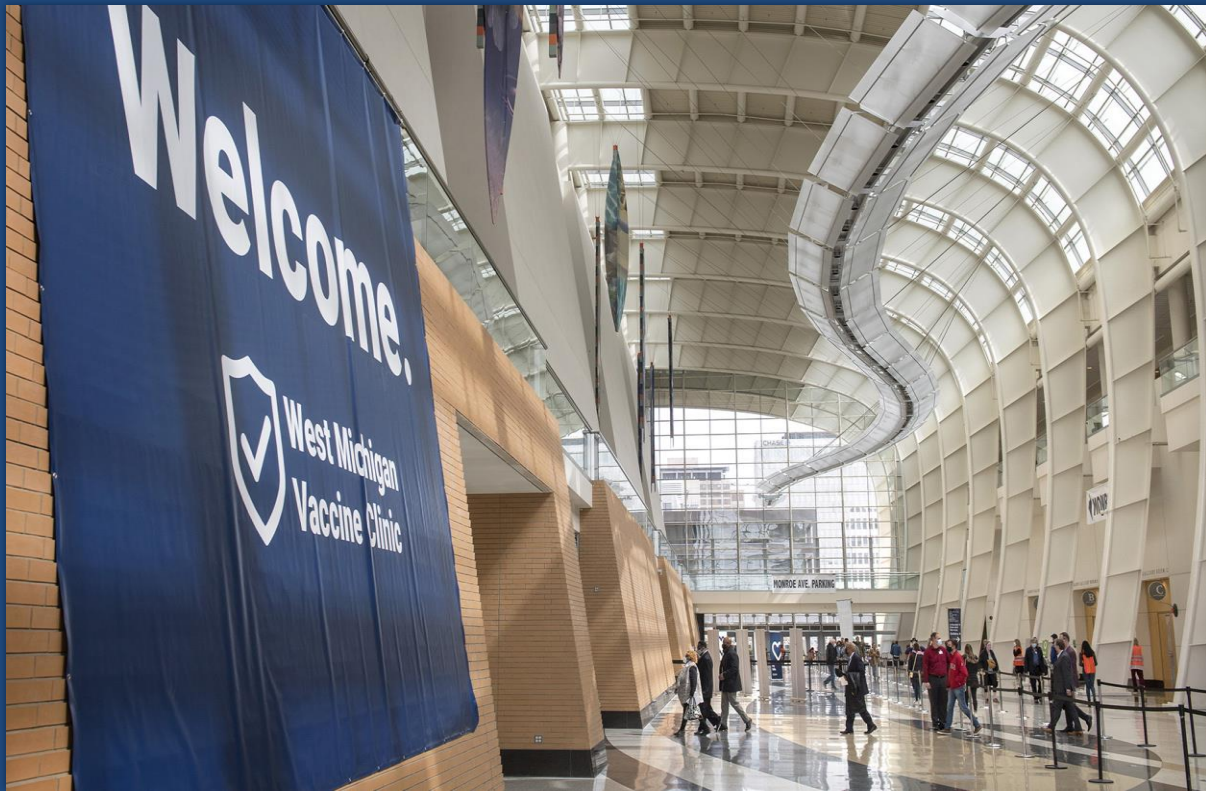
Ems Kent County Mi



December 2020: Vaccine Distribution Begins



Local public health accomplished extraordinary things





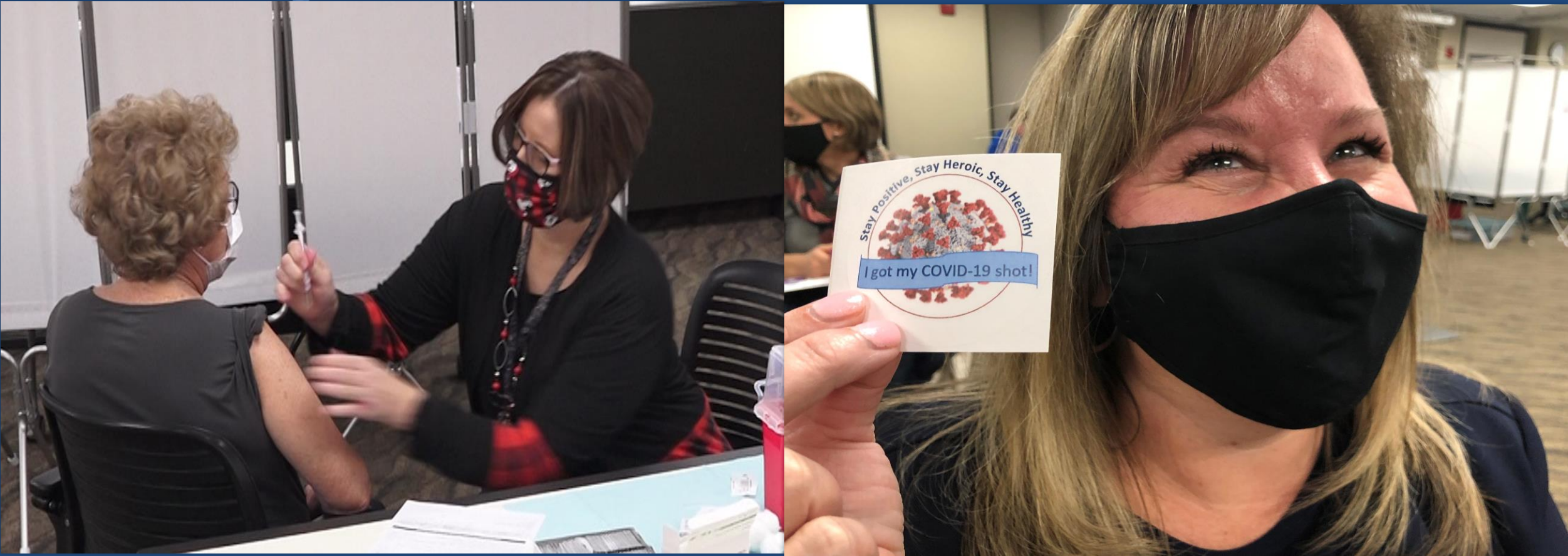
Vaccinating First Responders



Mobile Vaccine Strike Teams



High Priority Vaccine Clinic at KCHD

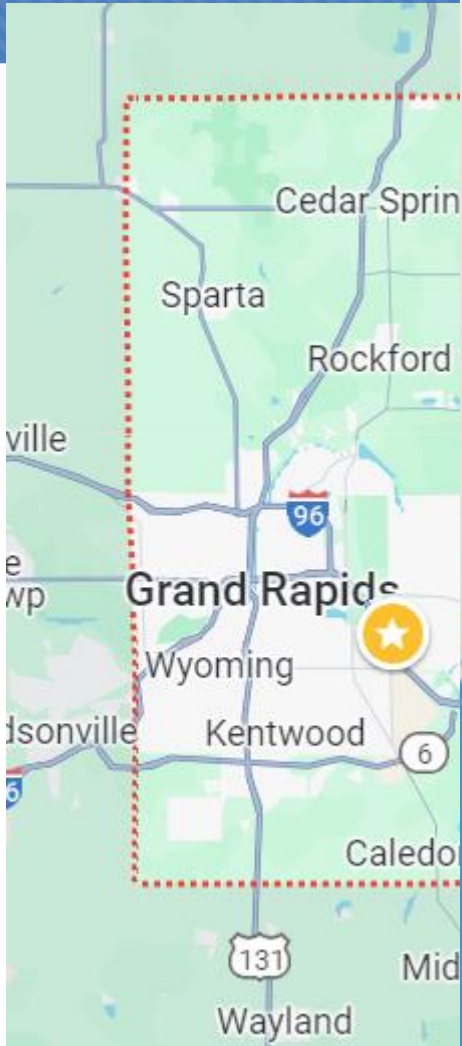


Mobile Clinics in Collaboration with Partners



Communi

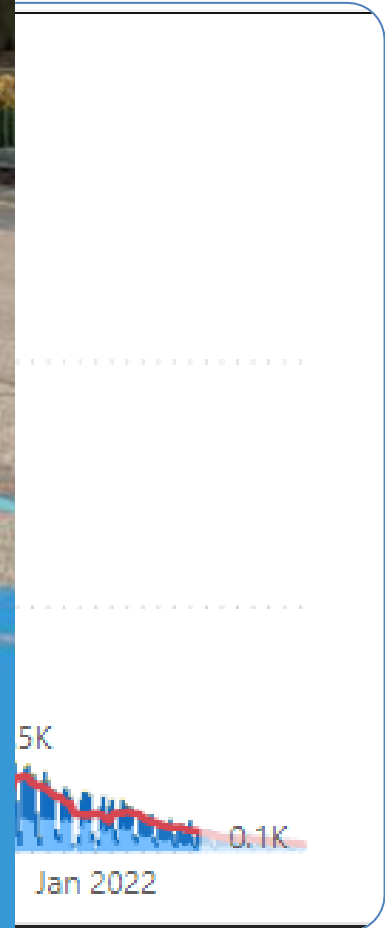
aign



FREE HOT DOG & PEPSI!

WHEN YOU GET A FREE COVID-19 VACCINATION
AT TONIGHT'S WHITECAPS GAME!

IT'S FREE AND EASY!



Health Officers have unique powers which are unrecognized by many people

- MCL 333.2451: Upon a determination that an imminent danger to the health or lives or individuals exists in the area served by the local health department, the local health officer immediately shall inform the individuals affected by the imminent danger and issue an order which shall be delivered to a person authorized to avoid, correct, or remove the imminent danger or be posted at or near the imminent danger. The order may specify action to be taken or prohibit the presence of individuals in locations or under conditions where the imminent danger exists... (imminent danger means a condition or practice which could reasonably be expected to cause death, disease, or serious bodily harm immediately or before the imminence of the danger can be eliminated through enforcement procedures otherwise provided.)
- MCL 333.2453*: If a local health officer determines that control of an epidemic is necessary to protect the public health, the local health officer may issue an emergency order to prohibit the gathering of people for any purpose and may establish procedures to be followed by persons, including a local governmental entity, during the epidemic to insure continuation of essential public health services and enforcement of health laws. Emergency procedures shall not be limited to this code.

*Ruled an unconstitutional delegation of authority

Public Health Orders in Kent County

- **January 12, 2022** - COVID-19 Prevention in Educational Settings
- **August 20, 2021** - Mask Use in Pre-K-6 Educational Settings
- **August 6, 2021** - In the Matter of COVID-19 Prevention in Educational Settings
- **May 09, 2021** - Quarantine Order in Educational Settings
- **March 13, 2021** – Containment of COVID-19 Through Mass Vaccination
- **November 20, 2020** - Public Health Warning
- **March 22, 2020** - Kent County Health Officer Issues Public Health Order for Childcare Facilities
- **March 15, 2020** - Kent County Health Officer Issues Emergency Order for Control of Pandemic

Literature Support for Face Masks

The effectiveness of face masks to prevent SARS-CoV-2 transmission: A summary of literature.

Executive Summary: The Kent County Health Department and Ottawa County Department of Public Health with assistance from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, health systems, and other local health departments have compiled scientific articles on the effectiveness of wearing masks during the COVID-19 pandemic. While each individual study may have its own strengths and limitations, the evidence presented in these scientific journal articles taken as a whole demonstrate that masks in healthcare and community settings are effective in reducing the risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 and transmission of the virus to others. Epidemiological and modeling studies indicate that communities that established mask mandates generally had reduced disease transmission. Controlled studies examining various masks generally show that masks help prevent the spread of virus-laden droplets. Taken together, current scientific data supports the use of masks to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in the community.

We will continue to review the science and update our recommendations as needed to protect the health of our community.

Reviews and Meta-analyses:
Chu et al. *Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection to prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2: a systematic review and meta-analysis.* Lancet 2020.

The authors identified 172 observational coronavirus studies across 16 countries; 38 of these studies specifically studied face masks and the risk of COVID-19 illness. The authors found that the use of either an N95 respirator or face mask (e.g., disposable surgical masks or similar reusable 12-16-layer cotton masks) by those exposed to infected individuals was associated with a large reduction in risk of infection (up to an 85% reduced risk). The use of face masks was protective for both health-care workers and people in the community exposed to infection.

MacIntyre et al. *A rapid systematic review of the efficacy of face masks and respirators against coronaviruses and other respiratory transmissible viruses for the community, healthcare workers and sick patients.* International Journal of Nursing Studies (2020).

The authors describe 8 clinical trials evaluating the effectiveness of face masks to reduce respiratory viruses and SARS-CoV-2 transmission. Their analysis suggests that community mask use by well people could be beneficial, particularly for those exposed to infectious agents pre-symptomatic. The studies of masks as source control (where sick persons use masks to reduce spread) also suggest a benefit and may be important during the COVID-19 pandemic in both community and health care settings.

Wang J, Pan L, Tang S, Ji JS, Shi X. *Mask use during COVID-19: A risk adjusted strategy.* Environ Pollut. (2020). 266(Pt 1):115099.

Prior to COVID-19, the authors highlight a large systematic review of 67 studies that showed that wearing masks is one of the important barriers to controlling respiratory viruses transmission; and evidences indicates that N95 respirators were similarly effective to surgical masks (Wang et al., 2011). Additionally, the authors summarized that the main transmission routes of SARS-CoV-2 include droplet, contact transmissions, and airborne transmissions, which is characterized by high proportion of cases with mild symptoms or asymptomatic cases, and the necessity of wearing masks by the public during COVID-19 pandemic has been under-emphasized.

Brainard et al. *Facemasks and similar barriers to prevent respiratory illness such as COVID-19: A rapid systematic review.* medRxiv (2020).

The authors reviewed 31 clinical trials and observational studies to better understand the value of wearing facemasks in community settings to prevent respiratory illness. The authors report that when both households and individuals in the household were encouraged to wear facemasks, the likelihood of additional household members becoming ill may be modestly reduced by around 19%. The authors go on to conclude that, based on clinical trials, wearing facemasks can be slightly protective against primary infection from casual community contact, and modestly protective against household infections when both infected and uninfected members wear facemasks.

Gandhi et al. *Masks Do More Than Protect Others During COVID-19: Reducing the Inoculum of SARS-CoV-2 to Protect the Wearer.* J Gen Intern Med. 2020;31(4):463-469.

The authors suggest that although universal public masking can certainly protect others, the "inoculum" that the one who is the source of infection could be exposed to argues for a major protective effect for the individual. Masks, depending on the material and design, filter out a majority of viral particles and decrease the overall "dose" of virus particles one could be exposed to. This perspective is particularly important given the advantages of population-level face mask wearing in pandemic control with SARS-CoV-2 based on an end but enduring theory regarding viral inoculum.

Howard et al. *Face Masks Against COVID-19: An Evidence Review.* Proceedings National Academy Sciences (2020).

This review of the literature offers an overview in favor of widespread mask use to reduce community transmission; masks use materials that obstruct droplets of the necessary size; people and most animals have shown substantially lower community transmission. The available evidence suggests that near-universal adoption of non-medical masks when out in public, in combination with complementary public health measures could successfully reduce effective R to below 1.0, thereby stopping community spread.

Matsushita et al. *Face masks: benefits and risks during the COVID-19 crisis.* Eur J Med Res. 2020 Aug 12;25(1):32.

In this review of the available literature, the authors found that the use of masks that include mouth and nose coverage were linked to relevant protection during close contact scenarios by limiting pathogen contact and reducing droplet dissemination. Wearing a mask in areas where sufficient distancing is not feasible, such as public transportation, most likely reduces the spread of virus-laden droplets and therefore the risk of transferring SARS-CoV-2. However, the authors note that masks are not interchangeable for wearing properly when masks of cloth pathogens can accumulate in the mask. When improperly used, the risk of spreading the pathogen—including SARS-CoV-2—might be critically increased.

Brooks JT, Butler JC. *Effectiveness of Mask Wearing to Control Community Spread of SARS-CoV-2.* JAMA. 2021;325(10):949-950.

The authors review data that demonstrate that community mask wearing is an effective nonpharmaceutical intervention to reduce the spread of this infection, especially as source control to prevent spread from infected persons; but also as protection to reduce wearers' exposure to infection. Authors conclude that with the emergence of more transmissible SARS-CoV-2 variants, it is even more important to adopt widespread mask wearing as well as to reduce efforts with use of all other nonpharmaceutical prevention measures until an effective level of vaccination are achieved nationwide.

count was observed when only the receiver was masked. The most substantial exposure reduction occurred when the aerosol source was masked (or both parties were masked). When both the source and target were masked, particle count was reduced by more than 99.5% of baseline, regardless of separation distance or which type of mask was employed.

This study investigated transmission after a patient was symptomatic with dry cough during a flight from China to Canada. A virus. Transmission indicated that droplet

In this investigation elementary schools for a secondary at students' classroom

Among 139 clients exposed to two symptomatic hair stylists with confirmed COVID-19 while both the stylists and the clients wore face masks, no symptomatic secondary cases were reported: among 61 clients tested for SARS-CoV-2, all test results were negative. Adherence to the community's and company's face-covering policy likely mitigated spread of SARS-CoV-2.

The authors conducted two sets of experiments. In the first sets of generated by coughing without and with a surgical mask was examined in motion and because coughing is a typical symptom of COVID-19. Based on their findings masks in public is highly effective. Firstly, because they act as self-protection against germs that are sneezing, thus protecting the air entering, thus protecting the person wearing the mask.

The study finds that achieving similar results to the reference. 95.81% (60/73) compared to the reference.

Modeling results showed that CIs 72.73–126.312% COVI was implemented 1 week earlier (on April 3 when the averted infections and death respectively.

Among 22 participating K SARS-CoV-2 second COVID-19. Schools ventilation had much

County-level and daily percent wearing 20 days of

Based on their findings masks in public is highly effective. Firstly, because they act as self-protection against germs that are sneezing, thus protecting the air entering, thus protecting the person wearing the mask.

The authors present their findings on the effectiveness of wearing masks in public. They note that wearing masks in public is highly effective, particularly in crowded settings.

The study finds that the relative virus risks that are reduced by wearing masks in public are similar to those reported in the literature.

During an outbreak of COVID-19 among 19 patients in the U.S., 19

Wilson et al. *Factors Influencing Risk for COVID-19 in the Workplace.* Wisconsin, March-July 2020.

The authors tested virus swabs, respiratory droplet samples collected with masks to reduce coror

The authors demonstrate that wearing masks in public is highly effective, particularly in crowded settings.

The models explored in this study and contained would reduce masks offering 25% protection. Pieces requiring public mask

Wilson et al. *Factors Influencing Risk for COVID-19 in the Workplace.* Wisconsin, March-July 2020.

The authors assessed the impact of counties reported to federal health as found that face masks reduced the 2.3% and 13% over a period of 10, conclude that the introduction of the mask the next 20 days by almost 2%

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Influence of physicians and healthcare leaders has been diminished



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August 19, 2021

Dear Dr. London,

As the school year approaches and news of the delta variant and COVID-19 outbreaks in other parts of the country spreads, we are consistently hearing questions from patients, parents, coworkers, neighbors, friends and community members about wearing masks and vaccinations. The evidence is very clear on vaccinations, they dramatically lower a person's risk of serious illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19.

I want to share with you Spectrum Health's position on masks. It's simple and applies to all ages and everywhere in the community. Spectrum Health is supportive of the CDC guidance on universal masking indoors in areas of substantial and high transmission to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The CDC guidance includes students and staff in K-12 schools. Unfortunately, at this point, within our state, almost every county has substantial or high transmission of COVID-19.

When it comes to kids and schools, we can all agree that keeping kids safe while allowing them to thrive and learn in school is vitally important. To assure the greatest chance for in-person learning, universal masking is one of the best ways to prevent outbreaks and keep schools open and operational. We are fortunate to have vaccines available to older students, along with teachers and staff this academic year. However, not all students are eligible for a vaccine and emerging data shows that transmission with the delta variant can still occur amongst the vaccinated.

COVID-19 continues to produce suffering, disability and death within our communities. Given transmission within our state and the fact that the delta variant is so much more contagious than prior variants of COVID-19, vaccinations, masking and other preventative measures remain critical to prevent serious illness and to keep our kids in school. None of this is easy, but let's do all we can to keep our kids safe.

Respectfully,

Hossain Marandi, MD, MBA, FACHE
President & Children's Health Department Chief
Helen DeVos Children's Hospital

Lori,

Hope this finds you well! Adam London reached out yesterday to me about our position in terms of masking. Desiring to provide a formal statement to you all at the County of our position as an organization, please feel free to share that:

"Mercy Health and St. Joseph Mercy Health system, members of Trinity Health Michigan, support indoor masking, including in schools, consistent with current CDC recommendations. We acknowledge the large body of evidence showing that attending in-person classroom instruction provides an optimal learning environment, and is important to the mental and physical health of our children. Mask wearing is a proven strategy to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19, and is a critical component of creating a safe environment in our schools so that children can continue to attend in-person classes."

Please don't hesitate to reach out if any follow-up questions. All my contact information is listed below, including my cell.

Thank you!

Matt Biersack MD
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[MercyHealth.com](https://www.mercyhealth.com) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)



August 21, 2021

Dr. Adam London
Administrative Health Officer
Kent County, Michigan

Dear Dr. London,

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought much suffering to our local community - and around the world. Unfortunately, the pandemic continues with a recent surge of affected patients due to the Delta variant. With over 170 million Americans fully vaccinated, this has helped control the pandemic. However, still many of our friends and neighbors are susceptible to developing a COVID-19 illness, and this includes millions of children less than 12 years of old who are not yet eligible for vaccination.

COVID-19 had a significant impact on the education of our children over the last 18 months. With this school year fast approaching, many teachers, parents and students are wondering how this will affect school this year. A number of studies have shown that children attending in-person classes experience the optimal environment for their educational progress and mental health. To that end, we are obligated to provide the safest environment for children to attend in-person classes.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended universal masking for staff and students attending in-person classes. This recommendation is consistent with other studies which have shown the prevention of respiratory viral transmission by masking. Without question, everyone would like to eliminate the use of masks in schools - however, in addition to vaccines, the safest process to minimize the transmission of COVID-19 and provide our children the opportunity to attend in-person classes is to abide by the recommendations for universal masking in schools.

Many thanks to you and your colleagues at the Kent County Health Department for your work during this pandemic. I look forward to working with the Health Department to provide the safest environment for our children, which includes attending in-person classes.

As always, if any questions or concerns arise, please do not hesitate to contact me anytime.

Sincerely,

Ronald G. Gryka, MD, FAAP, FACC, FSCAI
Chief Medical Officer
Metro Health-University of Michigan Health
Professor of Pediatrics
University of Michigan Medical School
Attending Cardiologist
C. S. Mott Children's Hospital



5900 Byron Center Avenue SW | Wyoming, MI 49519
616.252.7200 | [metrohealth.net](https://www.metrohealth.net)



August, 16, 2021

Dr. Adam London:

Thank you for your continued partnership with school leaders from across Kent County to keep our children and community safe throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. On August 13th, you released a statement indicating it was your strongest recommendation that school districts require individuals in educational settings to wear masks.

At this time, school districts across Kent County are mirroring the recommendations put forth by the Kent County Health Department, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and are strongly urging parents and staff to adhere to the masking guidance.

While we expect there will be parents and staff members who will follow this guidance. It is our professional experience that many will not. Universal acceptance of this recommendation without a public health order will not happen. To that end, if in your expert opinion our community is in imminent danger without universal masking in school settings, we ask you to issue an order requiring masks for everyone in buildings with students who do not have the opportunity to be vaccinated (under the age of 12 years) and unvaccinated individuals.

Last year the data shared by health experts demonstrated that when the community was in imminent danger and masks along with other mitigation strategies were required by public health orders, transmission of COVID-19 in school settings was minimal, and transmission of other communicable diseases was also significantly reduced. It was our practical observation that when masks were used consistently in the educational setting, we observed fewer disruptions due to illness.

Thank you for your listening. We look forward to our continued work together to support the education of our children and the safety of our communities.

On behalf of Kent County superintendents,

Influence of politicians



MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Adam London, PhD, RS, DAAS
Administrative Health Officer
Kent County Health Department
700 Fuller Avenue Northeast
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

August 13, 2021

Dear Administrative Health Officer London,

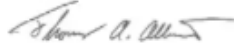
There is currently a lively public debate among Kent County residents about the issue of a possible mask mandate. Of course, you know this quite well, as advocates on both sides of the issue have contacted you to express their views on the subject. You recently stated that you are not currently planning to require mask-wearing in schools, and we respectfully urge you to continue that course of action by refraining from issuing any mask mandate for the county.

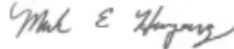
It is unfortunate that public health administrators such as yourself have been placed at the center of this debate. Your efforts should be focused on administering our county's existing public health system and advising policymakers, rather than crafting new restrictions that interfere with the daily lives of the people of Kent County. The political process is designed to form public policy through consensus. The people elect representatives — whether to Congress, the state Legislature, or the County Commission — to voice their differing perspectives on political issues. However, a unilateral mask mandate instituted by one unelected official circumvents consensus, restricting liberty in the process.


Ultimately, we believe the best way to settle the masking debate is to allow Kent County's 657,974 residents to evaluate their own risks, weigh the costs and benefits, and act accordingly. We hope you will agree and conclude that people can make informed choices for themselves and their families. We in the Legislature are willing to use the constitutional tools at our disposal — including the power of the purse — should a public health officer act outside the sphere of proper authority.


Thank you for your time and consideration. We wish you the best as you continue serving the people of Kent County.

Sincerely,


Representative Thomas Albert
District 86


Representative Mark Huizenga
District 74


Representative Steven Johnson
District 72


Representative Bryan Posthumus
District 73

Health officers are in better position to make difficult decisions than superintendents



Traffic ▾

Sports ▾

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Community ▾

WOTV ▾

CORONAVIRUS

Kent and Ottawa counties order masks in pre-K-6 schools

by: [Rachel Van Gilder](#), [Joe LaFursey](#)
Posted: Aug 20, 2021 / 02:03 PM EDT
Updated: Aug 21, 2021 / 04:38 AM EDT



DeVos Place: August 26, 2021



DeVos Place: August 26, 2021



DeVos Place: August 26, 2021



A growing portion of Americans believe violence is justified

- “You are guilty of crimes against humanity and should be arrested and executed!”
- “You are going to suffer forever in hell for how you are abusing my children!”
- “I hope someone abuses your children and forces you to watch”
- “You have the blood on your hands from all the kids who are dying from suicide and infections”
- “You are a traitor against the Constitution... You deserve the fate of all traitors”
- “I won’t stop until you are in a cage!”
- “I’m demanding the police or the military arrest you for your crimes... If they fail to do their job, we the people will do it”
- “Adam London, I’m coming for you!”
- Thousands of encouraging notes were also received

Media Coverage

Michigan Advance

HEALTH CARE ENVIRONMENT BUSINESS + LABOR CIVIL RIGHTS EDUCATION POLITICS + GOV

COVID-19 EDUCATION HEALTH CARE HEALTH POLICY LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEST MICHIGAN

Kent Co. health director tells commissioners after almost being run off the road: 'I need help'

Email details abuse after department issued school mask mandate

BY ANNA GUSTAFSON · SEPTEMBER 20, 2021 2:36 PM



The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Health

County health director says woman tried to run him off the road after he backed mask mandate

By Caroline Anders

September 21, 2021 at 11:07 p.m. EDT

'I need help': Michigan county health director pleads for help after almost being run off the road

Aysha Qamar
Daily Kos Staff

Tuesday September 21, 2021 3:30 PM EDT

Recommend 253 Share Tweet 158 Comments 158 New

MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids health officer 'broken' after threats tied to mask order

Associated Press
Published 12:47 a.m. ET Sept. 22, 2021 | Updated 9:03 a.m. ET Sept. 22, 2021

View Comments

Grand Rapids – The public health officer in the Grand Rapids area said he's a victim of "brute mob hatred" after ordering masks in schools in Kent County to prevent the spread of COVID-19.


Adam London told county commissioners that a woman tried to run his vehicle off the road in August immediately after the mask order. He is no longer making public appearances because of concerns about violence.

Angry residents have expressed their disgust about the order at public meetings. County commissioners can't overrule London.

"There is a sickness in America ... far more insidious than COVID," London said in an Aug. 22 email, two days after his mask order.

London's email was reported by the Michigan Advance and pursued by other news organizations.

"I need help. My team and I are broken," London wrote. "I'm about done. I've lost a lot of my ability. I've



Kent County Health Department Director
Screen Grab From Video



DR. ADAM LONDON
DIRECTOR
KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Grand Rapids

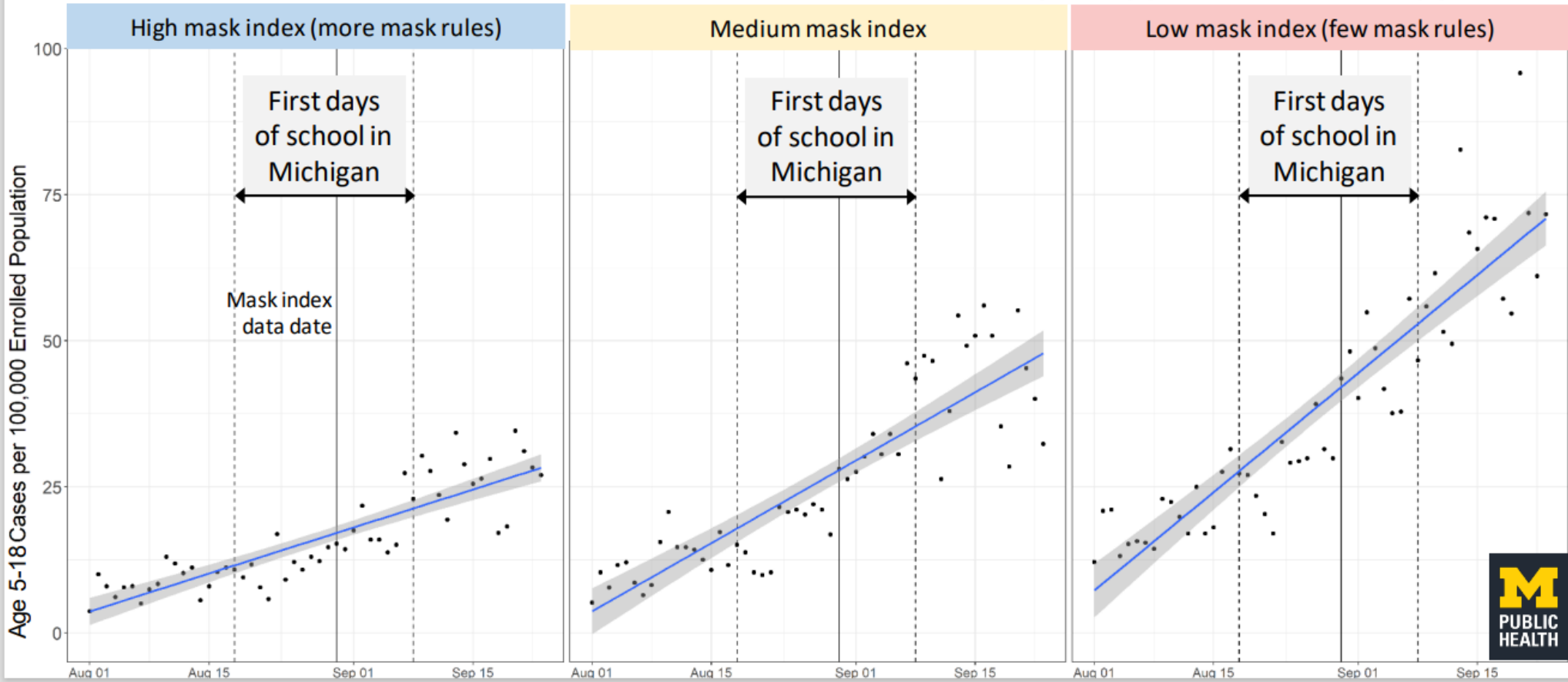
'I need help': Kent County's top health official tells commissioners after threats, road rage over COVID-19 response

Updated: Sep. 21, 2021, 6:15 p.m. | Published: Sep. 21, 2021, 5:30 p.m.



Districts with fewer mask rules during back-to-school saw higher case rates and faster case rises

High mask index = mask required for all grades; Medium = partial mask req. (tiered, some grades, based on vax status, staff only); Low = None or unknown. See Appendix for details. Blue line & shaded region is a linear trend fit. Data Sources: MDSS/MDHHS case data as of 10/1/2021 geocoded to school district, EOG School District Mask Policy Tracker as of 8/30/2021. Note: Cases are among all 5-18 year olds, population is the school-enrolled population.



Public health workforce in transition



THE PROBLEM

Nearly half of state and local public health employees left their organizations from 2017 to 2021, creating a **critical lack of skills and experience** across the nation.

WHO LEFT



of state and local **public health employees**



of employees with **<5 years' experience** at their organizations



of employees **under age 35**

56%

of public health workers report at least one symptom of PTSD

25%

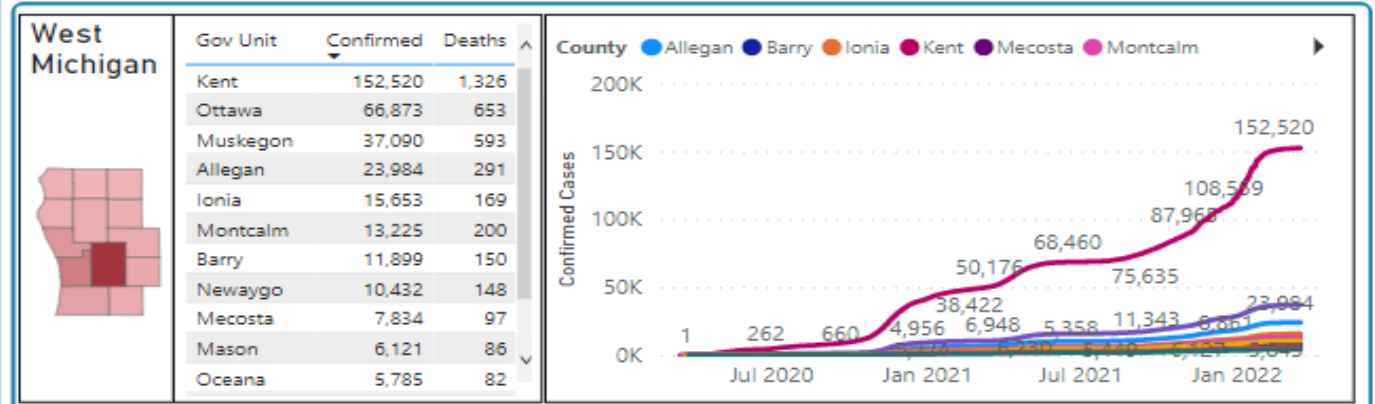
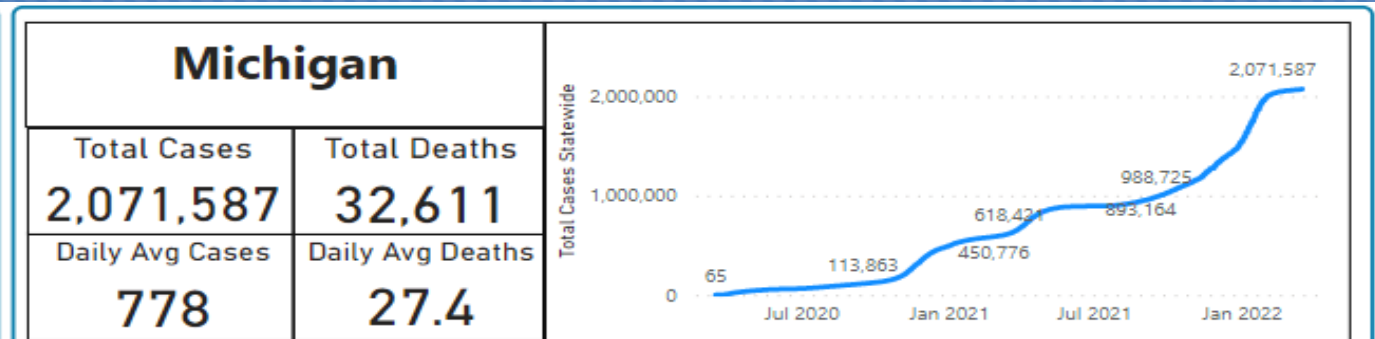
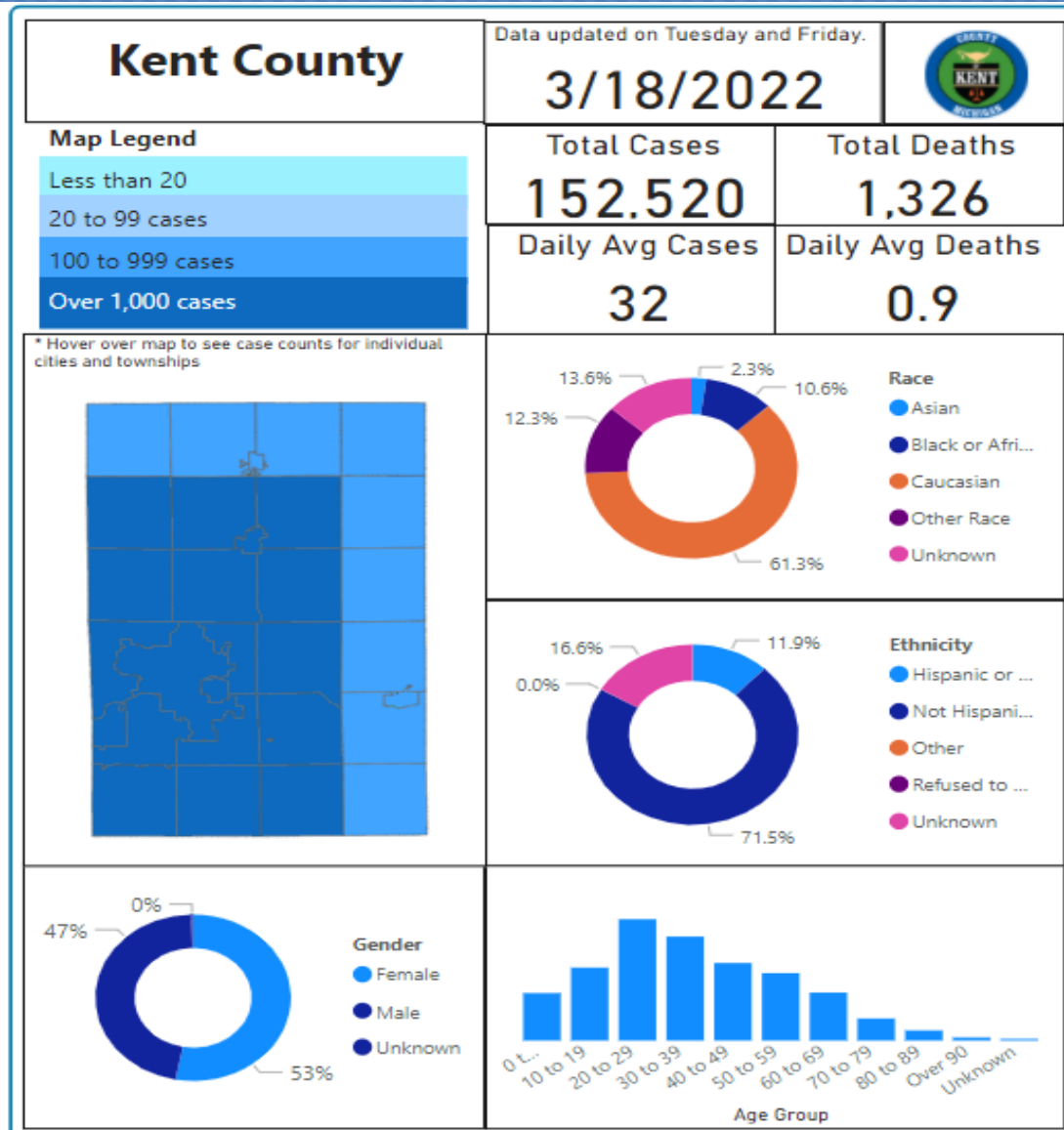
reported 3 or more symptoms, indicating probable PTSD



Public health workforce wellness



KC public health response was effective



Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at University of Washington

<https://covid19.healthdata.org/projections>

Covid Act Now

<https://www.covidactnow.org/state/MI>

Covid Direct

<https://covid-19.direct/county/MI/Kent>

Local Hospital Info and Dashboards

<https://www.spectrumhealth.org/covid19>

<https://www.mercyhealth.com/health-and-wellness/coronavirus>

Penn Medicine CHIME App (COVID-19 Hospital Impact Model for Epidemics)

<https://penn-chime.phl.io/>

CDC: Cases in the U.S.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>

Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

State of Michigan Coronavirus Data

https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98163_98173---,00.html

COVID Mortality Rates

- **US population: 333 million**
 - COVID deaths: 1,219,487
 - Rate: 366/100,000
- **Michigan population: 10.3 million**
 - COVID deaths: 44,728
 - Rate: 434
- **Kent County population: 659,083**
 - COVID deaths: 2,013
 - mortality rate: 305

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Coronavirus

America marks two years of Covid - is it prepared for the next pandemic?

Melody Schreiber
Mon 14 Mar 2022 02:00 EDT

f t e



- Recovery & Recuperation?
- National conversation about pandemic response?
- Clarity about the roles and responsibilities of public health?
- **Celebrate!**

Questions?
THANK YOU!

