

## Viewpoint: If you care about science and the well-being of our children, don't close schools

We should not be going to public events. We should not be eating indoors at restaurants. We should not be drinking indoors at bars. These are the activities [responsible for a vast majority](#) of transmissions, and these should be the focus of our initial interventions.

Schools are different. Cases have definitely been more common in school-age children this fall. But when schools do the right things, those infections are not transmitted in the classroom. They're occurring, for the most part, when children go to parties, when they have sleepovers and when they're playing sports inside and unmasked. Those cases will not be reduced by closing schools.

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Closing schools also exacerbates social and economic disparities. In some cities, especially in poorer areas, as many as [one in three children](#) didn't — or couldn't — take part in online learning when schools across the country were closed in the spring. Students who fall behind will have an incredibly difficult time catching up. They will be less likely to graduate, with enormous, lifelong consequences.

There may come a time when the pandemic has become so unmanageable that we need to close everything, including schools. (This was the case [when I argued](#) that closures were necessary back in March.) But schools are essential, and should be treated as such.

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