



## Pediatric COVID-19 trends in Wisconsin – Oct. 6

Each week, Children's Wisconsin will provide hospital census information to help our community better understand how respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), are impacting kids. As the only health system in the state dedicated to the health of kids, Children's Wisconsin has the largest pediatric intensive care unit in the state. Check back on Wednesdays for the latest update.

### This week's takeaway

*"In September, Wisconsin saw a spike in the number of children with COVID-19. I'm encouraged that preliminary state figures show cases in kids flattening, but we're not out of the woods yet. We'll get a better understanding of whether or not we've turned the trajectory around as cases from the last couple weeks are investigated and confirmed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Other states in the country are continuing to experience concerning hospitalization rates of kids. We must continue to protect our kids through the precautions we've seen be successful. I encourage families and school districts to reinforce the use of masks and good hand hygiene to decrease the spread of viruses. Masks are our best tool for limiting disruptions to the school year."*

- Michael Gutzeit, MD, chief medical officer, Children's Wisconsin

### What has changed since last week

- **Hospitalizations at Children's Wisconsin continue to be higher than expected this time of year, but not for COVID-19:** Over the last week, the number of rooms occupied at Children's Wisconsin continued to slowly increase. However, the percent of patients in isolation (meaning those who have respiratory symptoms from illnesses like COVID-19, rhinovirus or RSV) decreased slightly the past week. This indicates more children are being hospitalized in our area, but not necessarily for COVID-19.
- **In September, Wisconsin hospitalization rate for kids with COVID-19 hit all-time high:** According to the latest data available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the hospitalization rate of those 0-17 in Wisconsin with COVID-19 hit an all-time high in the last week of September. Based on preliminary data for this week, that number will decrease, mirroring what we've seen at Children's Wisconsin. Wisconsin's hospitalization rate of kids is still lower than what has been experienced in other states, with current spikes occurring in Georgia and Montana.
- **Progress continues for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines for those age 5-11:** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced an upcoming meeting of its Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) on Oct. 26. At the meeting, the FDA anticipates receiving a request from Pfizer-BioNTech to amend its emergency use authorization to allow the use of its COVID-19 vaccine in children 5 through 11 years of age. In anticipation of the request, the FDA is moving forward with scheduling an advisory committee meeting on Oct. 26 to inform the agency's decision-making.
- **Wisconsin's pediatric health experts release statement on keeping school kids safe from COVID-19.** Children's Wisconsin, UW Health Kids and the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics released a joint statement stressing the importance of in-person schooling and calling on the community to continue practicing all necessary safety precautions to protect our children from exposure to COVID-19. Read the full statement [here](#).

## What continues to be a focus

- **Mitigation is vital:** In other parts of the country, schools in communities with lower vaccinations rates and less stringent mitigation efforts appear to experience more outbreaks. Until more kids age 12-17 receive the COVID-19 vaccine and the age eligibility is lowered, masks continue to be the best way to protect kids from COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses. Two recent studies published by the CDC provide additional evidence that masks protect children from COVID-19, even when community rates are high and the more contagious Delta variant is circulating.
- **The W's (and a V):** To decrease the chance of seeing kids hospitalized in Wisconsin due to COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses, we need everyone to **wear masks, watch their distance, wash their hands, work or attend school only when well**, and to **get the COVID-19 and flu vaccines** when they are eligible.

## Data

### Average daily occupancy trends at Children's Wisconsin Hospital-Milwaukee

The average daily occupancy at Children's Wisconsin Hospital-Milwaukee		
	% of rooms occupied	% of rooms occupied in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)
Sept. 29-Oct. 5	72%	82%
Sept. 22-28	71%	78%
Sept. 15-21	68%	78%
Sept. 8-14	68%	79%
	% of patients in isolation with respiratory symptoms (including COVID-19 and RSV)	% of patients in isolation with a confirmed respiratory illness (including COVID-19 and RSV)
Sept. 29-Oct. 5	33%	25%
Sept. 22-28	37%	28%
Sept. 15-21	34%	26%
Sept. 8-14	31%	24%

### Respiratory virus trends seen at Children's Wisconsin Hospital-Milwaukee

Average daily number of children admitted to Children's Wisconsin Hospital-Milwaukee who tested positive with a respiratory virus				
Average # hospitalized with:	COVID-19	RSV	Rhinovirus	Influenza
Week of Oct. 5	11	16	11	0
Week of Sept. 28	12	16	13	0
Week of Sept. 21	10	15	11	0
Week of Sept. 14	5	17	9	0

### Confirmed pediatric COVID-19 cases

Confirmed COVID-19 cases statewide for kids 0-17 based on [Wisconsin Department of Health Services database](#).

Confirmed COVID-19 cases statewide	Total	Age 0-3	Age 4-8	Age 9-13	Age 14-17
Week of Sept. 19	5,012	498	1,168	1,789	1,557

Week of Sept. 12	5,524	487	1,280	1,924	1,833
Week of Sept. 5	4,381	488	1,117	1,425	1,351
Week of Aug. 29	3,095	404	796	961	934
Week of Aug. 22	2,342	377	631	692	642
Week of Aug. 15	2,099	346	556	630	567

*\*The latest information from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services is still preliminary and will continue to be updated by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services as cases are investigated and confirmed.*

## National and state context

- In Wisconsin, the hospitalization rate of those age 0-17 with COVID-19 is now the highest Wisconsin has seen. While the overall hospitalization rate for all ages remains far below the peak in November 2020, hospitalizations in kids have continued to rise.
- All states saw an increase in hospitalizations among those age 0-17 with COVID-19 in September, but the majority have begun to decline.

State	COVID-19 hospitalization rate age 0-17 (As of Sept. 28)	Previous highest hospitalization rate age 0-17
Wisconsin	.54	.51 on Nov. 3, 2020
Florida	.65	1.61 on Aug. 30, 2021
Georgia	.49	2.23 on Aug. 13, 2021
Idaho	.80	.38 on Nov. 2, 2020
Illinois	.08	.31 on Nov. 11, 2020
Iowa	.31	.83 on Nov. 20, 2020
Louisiana	.42	1.2 on Aug. 15, 2021
Minnesota	.38	.42 on Dec. 11, 2020
Montana	1.37	3.31 on Oct. 2, 2020
Ohio	.75	1.01 on Sept. 21, 2021
Tennessee	.53	1.12 on Sept. 5, 2021
Texas	.48	.92 on Sept. 4, 2021

*Current hospitalization rates are an average of how many kids, age 0-17, out of 100,000 are hospitalized. For example, on Nov. 3, an average of .51 children out of 100,000 were hospitalized in Wisconsin with COVID-19, though many of those kids were hospitalized for other reasons. To see more of this data, please visit the [COVID-19 Data Tracker](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

For more information and data specific to pediatric cases of COVID-19, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website](#).