



Medical and Research Advisory Committee Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc.

SCDAA MARAC Position on 2020 School Reopening

SHOW THIS TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL PRINCIPAL TO HELP THEM HELP YOU.

July 27, 2020 – Sickle cell disease remains a high-risk condition for severe COVID-19 infection.¹ Registry data show that individuals with sickle cell disease are more vulnerable to death with COVID-19 at all ages, including children.² **We recommend that families with children with sickle cell disease follow state and local guidelines regarding the determination of in-person versus distance learning as long as processes are in place to ensure the least possible risk of your child getting infected with COVID-19.** If safety measures are not implemented or cannot be enforced, we recommend that schools provide equitable access to high quality education through home-based distance learning. The checklist below should be used to determine if your child's school has the recommended safety measures in place.^{3,4,5}

How do I assess the risk of community spread of COVID-19 in my area?

Check the box when you have completed the task.

- Contacted my local health department to understand how our community is doing
- Figured out how to keep up with rates of COVID-19 spread in my community by watching the news, reading the local newspaper, or checking the state and local health department websites
- Spoke to my child's doctor about his/her risks

Is my child's school environment as safe as possible?

Circle Yes or No:

Are procedures in place to ensure the following?

- | | | |
|-----|----|---|
| Yes | No | Students, teachers, and staff are checked every day for symptoms of infection. |
| Yes | No | Anyone who is sick asked to stay/go home. |
| Yes | No | Physical distancing is in place (drop off/pick up, classroom, hallways, mealtime, sports/recreation, clubs/activities, bussing/transportation). |
| Yes | No | Everyone wears a mask (as appropriate for age) at all times (meals excluded). |
| Yes | No | Those who arrive at school without a mask will be given one. |

- Yes No Cleaning and disinfection is intensified.
- Yes No Ventilation is maximized (e.g. windows open; air conditioning, where available).
- Yes No There is ongoing training of employees on health and safety protocols.
- Yes No There are policies for everyone at school to self-report travel, symptoms, and confirmed COVID infection of any household members or close contacts.
- Yes No The school has a regular communication process in place to update families on changes to policies and procedures as well as COVID cases and exposures in the school.
- Yes No A health professional (e.g. school nurse) is accessible at all hours of operation.
- Yes No There are quarantine procedures for those who develop symptoms while at school.
- Yes No The school has limited visitors into the buildings.
- Yes No Outdoor spaces are utilized when possible, but indoor options are available when weather is not good for being outside (too hot or too cold).
- Yes No The school has a plan in place for continued distance learning if my child has a known COVID exposure or has COVID symptoms but is not too sick to take part in learning from home.

If all of your answers above are “yes”, the school has implemented measures to reduce infection.

If any of your answers above are “no”, ask the principal for clarification. Consider asking for distance learning from home for your child.

Should I ask for my child to receive distance learning from home?

- Yes No Does your child have additional risk factors (other than his/her sickle cell disease) that put him/her at high risk for severe COVID disease if he/she gets infected? (Discuss with your child’s doctor.)
- Yes No Do others in your household (e.g. siblings, grandparents, etc.) or do primary caretakers (e.g. babysitter, relatives) of your children have high risk of severe COVID?
- Yes No Are there special circumstances that make in-person education not workable for your child?

If any answer above is “yes”, consider asking for your child to receive distance learning from home.

Is my child ready to receive distance learning from home?

- Yes No Do you have reliable internet access with enough bandwidth for all users in the home?
- Yes No Does your child have access to the necessary tools for distance learning (e.g. computer/tablet, headphones)? One computer/tablet shared across all children in the home might not work.

- Yes No Is there adult supervision in the home? (e.g. someone who can keep your child on a daily schedule and make sure s/he can access online content)?
- Yes No If your child has special educational or social/emotional needs, can the needs be met with distance learning?
- Yes No If you need it, are there plans in place for your child to continue to receive free and reduced-cost meal programs?
- Yes No Is the distance learning option high-quality (e.g. not just packets at home)?
- Yes No Are there plans in place to have your child safely interact with other children (e.g. virtual, social distancing) to promote social/emotional development?

If all the answers are “yes”, consider asking for your child to receive distance learning from home. If any of the other answers are “no”, seek help from your child’s teacher, guidance counselor, school psychologist, special education teacher, or principal.

Please ask the school to make modifications for COVID-19 for your child’s SCD, whether you are in distance-learning education or in-person education or both, through a 504 plan and/or an Individualized Education Plan. These plans are started by a request from parents to school administrators and should be reviewed every year.

For More Information, contact info@sicklecelldisease.org

References:

1. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fgroups-at-higher-risk.html (accessed 7/14/2020)
2. https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/10/20-2792_article (accessed 7/14/2020)
3. <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/> (accessed 7/14/2020)
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/School-Admin-K12-readiness-and-planning-tool.pdf> (accessed 7/14/2020)
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html> (accessed 7/14/2020)

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