

## Test to Stay (TTS) in K-12 schools

(From the Centers for Disease Control:

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/transmission\\_k\\_12\\_schools.html#anchor\\_1639603965438](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/transmission_k_12_schools.html#anchor_1639603965438))

Test to Stay (TTS) is a practice comprised of contact tracing and serial testing (testing that is sequentially repeated) to allow school-associated [close contacts](#) who are not fully vaccinated to continue in-person learning during their [quarantine](#) period. While implementation of TTS may vary, contact tracing and testing as well as masking of contacts during their in-school quarantine period are integral to minimize risk of transmission. Schools may consider the use of TTS to minimize the impact of quarantine and limit school absences after a SARS-CoV-2 exposure in the K-12 school setting.

Initial investigations in K-12 schools implementing TTS with layered prevention strategies demonstrated low SARS-CoV-2 transmission in the school setting.

- A cluster-randomized trial in the U.K. compared 86 secondary schools and Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) that used daily testing for close contacts in lieu of quarantine to 76 secondary schools and IHEs using traditional quarantine for close contacts. Daily testing while remaining in-person did not differ from traditional quarantine in limiting SARS-CoV-2 transmission, resulting in similar rates of school absence and transmission to contacts, though only 42% of contacts participated in daily testing.<sup>99</sup>
- A study in Los Angeles County, California compared COVID-19 student case rates (CRs) in 39 school districts that implemented TTS to 39 school districts using traditional quarantine from September 20, 2021 – October 31, 2021. The ratio of student COVID-19 case rates in TTS districts compared with non-TTS districts was similar before and after TTS adoption. Schools implementing TTS did not identify tertiary transmission among school-related outbreaks.<sup>100</sup>
- In a study of 90 K-12 schools in Lake County, Illinois that implemented TTS during the fall 2021 semester, secondary transmission remained low, at 1.5% among 1,035 students and staff members enrolled in the

program. None of the secondary cases appeared to transmit SARS-CoV-2 to other school-based contacts. However, nine additional cases in five households were identified among household contacts of the 16 secondary cases<sup>101</sup>

- For both the Illinois and California investigations, the following criteria were required for participation in TTS: The exposure had to have occurred in the school setting. Individuals identified as a close contact outside of the school setting (e.g., household exposure) were not eligible to participate in TTS.
- Both the index case and school-based close contact had to be correctly and consistently masked during the entire exposure.
- The close contact had to continue correctly and consistently wearing a mask in the school setting, while participating in TTS.
- The close contact had to remain asymptomatic to attend in-person school while participating in TTS.
- Close contacts had to adhere to CDC's quarantine guidance outside of the K-12 school setting.
- All students had to physically distance when feasible.

The Illinois and California testing requirements after exposure varied; Illinois required testing on day 1,3, 5, and 7 and California required testing twice weekly.