



Child Abuse Prevention Council, Department of Social Services
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August 16, 2021

Dear Monterey County Community,

The attached letter regarding masking in schools was written in partnership with all of the participating Greater Bay Area CAPC Directors and Boards, of which Monterey County CAPC is a member.

Monterey County CAPC is a prevention organization. We strongly stand behind this letter and the need for masking in schools, as a proven prevention strategy to minimize children and educator's exposure to Covid-19. This letter also aligns with local Board of Supervisor requirements that all county staff be fully masked while on the worksite.

As was stated in this regional letter, it is time for us to work cohesively, support our schools, our teachers, our families — and the youngest, most vulnerable among us. Let's pull together and keep our kids and our schools safe.

Respectfully,

Ginger Pierce, MSW
CAPC Director
Child Abuse Prevention Council
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CAPC Director:

Ginger Pierce, MSW

2021 CAPC Board Members:

Jonathon Thornburg

***County Sheriff*

Jeannine Pacioni

***District Attorney*

Marni Sandoval

***County Health Department*

Laura Neal

***Department of Social Services*

Annette M Cutino

***County Counsel's Office*

Ron Panziera

***County Office of Education*

Dr. Raul Lara

***Natividad Medical Center*

Todd Keating

***Probation Department*

Warren Hoy

Citizen-at-Large, Clergy

Lauren DaSilva

*Citizen-at-Large,
Monterey Rape Crisis Ctr.*

Julie Altman

Citizen-at-Large, CSUMB

Yuri Anderson

*Citizen-at-Large,
Monterey County
District 5 staff*

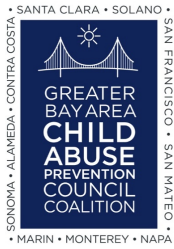
Colleen Stanley

Citizen-at-Large, MCOE

Renee Penalver

Citizen-at-Large, CSUMB

*** Alternates are demined for
those county represented
positions at each
Department level.*



The Greater Bay Area Child Abuse Prevention Council Coalition

MISSION: To provide leadership and support collaboration to the child abuse prevention community to promote culturally responsive, fair, respectful and effective services to end child abuse and neglect.

www.bayareapreventchildabuse.org

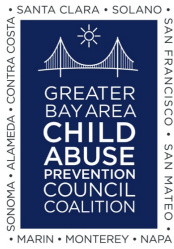
August 8, 2021

Over the past many months, we have learned to practice social distancing, mask wearing and hand washing. It's routine now. Our public health experts remind us often that these precautions remain our best daily protection against transmission of COVID-19 virus, particularly in the presence of unvaccinated individuals. For some families with kids, these standards present a burden, and some parents are stating that mask requirements for children in the classroom is a form of child abuse.

The COVID-19 virus and its variant forms, including the Delta variant, are serious health hazards. As we work to understand our risks and our options, child safety issues raise critical questions. Parents, caregivers and school staff are struggling to make the best decisions they can to keep kids healthy and protected while attending their classes, in person.

The need for protection is great. According to Dr. Yvonne Maldonado of Stanford University, the Delta variant has affected a “higher proportion of unvaccinated individuals who are becoming infected, including children, especially those under 12.” In California the second half of July of 2021 produced 13,757 cases of COVID infection in kids under 18 years of age — more than double the 4,835 cases reported during the first 2 weeks of the month.

These are the disturbing numbers that have forced school districts to implement standards they have not required in the past, including mask wearing in classrooms. The long term health of our kids makes it essential for schools to follow recommended safety protocols.



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No parent wants to see their child treated in an abusive or neglectful manner. Consequently, parents have, for decades, provided their kids with mandated vaccines, seat belts and car seats in an effort to keep them healthy and safe with no concerns of abuse.

Child abuse and neglect are serious social injustices and their impact is devastating and life changing. By equating mask requirements to abuse we dilute the purpose of child protection laws and minimize actual child maltreatment. It diverts child protection resources from legitimate reports of suspected child abuse, thereby endangering children.

It is time for us to work cohesively, support our schools, our teachers, our families — and the youngest, most vulnerable among us. Let's pull together and keep our kids and our schools safe.

Sincerely,

The Greater Bay Area Child Abuse Prevention Council Coalition

Alameda County Child Abuse Prevention Council • Contra Costa Child Abuse Prevention Council • Marin County Child Abuse Prevention Council • Monterey County Child Abuse Prevention Council • Napa County Child Abuse Prevention Council (COPE Family Services) • Safe & Sound – San Francisco • San Mateo County Child Abuse Prevention Council • Santa Clara County Child Abuse Prevention Council • Solano County Child Abuse Prevention Council (Children's Network) • Sonoma County Child Abuse Prevention Council (Child Parent Institute)