

Dear Legislators,

I am strongly opposed to the continuation of the Governor's Emergency Declarations and Executive Orders, most specifically, the mask mandate for children in school. It is very evident that we are no longer in a state of emergency. For two years, we have been told to "follow the science," so why aren't you following the science? The CDC admitted that cloth masks are no more than a face decoration and offer little to no protection against the spread of COVID. Why are we continuing to place the burden of this pandemic on our kids? Why are we continuing to mask them when the masks don't work?! Sports stadiums, concerts, restaurants and gyms, are filled with unmasked adults and yet we are forced to send our kids to school in masks! And what are the consequences of this now known ineffective mitigation strategy? Our kids are in crisis!! Brown University recently conducted a study that showed a 23% drop in children's development and a similar drop in their ability to communicate both verbally and through subtle facial cues. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Children's Hospital Association has declared a mental health emergency in children and the Surgeon General has reported that symptoms of depression and anxiety have doubled among young people. This is alarming and should concern us all!

My daughter, who is almost 21, has Autism and still receives services through the Trumbull public school system in the transition program. I have witnessed firsthand the psychological, social, and emotional toll this pandemic has taken on her. One of the aspects of social development, is the ability to read social cues. So, let me ask you, when people have a mask on, can you tell by looking at their faces if they're happy or sad? Angry, excited, frustrated? Can you tell if they're smiling? The answer is of course, no, because how can you read someone's facial expression if you can't see their face?!! Think about the ramifications for elementary aged children who are just learning the nuances of social interaction. When was the last time teachers were able to smile at their students and they were able to smile back?

It is urgent that we get back to normal! You have the power to make the decision to unmask our kids! Do the right thing...be on the right side of history...Do the job you were elected to do, **OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE** and fight for the children in Connecticut!!

Sincerely,

Jaime
Trumbull, CT