

February 9, 2022

Regarding: ***Masking in CT Schools and Daycares***

Dear Governor Lamont and Legislatures,

My name is Stacey Walczak. I am a resident of 35 Banks Road in Simsbury CT and spouse of a Connecticut school teacher, and mother of two little ones in daycare.

Please make masking an individual choice in our schools & daycares, regardless of vaccination status. The choice is personal and belongs to the parents, not the government or any other municipal body, including the Dept of Public Health or OEC.

Masks were never meant to be utilized long-term and current data no longer supports the mandate. Our vaccines are effective against severe illness and are readily available to all staff and children over the age of 5. In addition, CT has one of the highest vaccination rates in the nation. The population under 5 years old is **the least** at risk of server illness. Masks DO NOT belong on children under 5. Even the WHO does not support this.

If we don't take the masks off now, when will we? Where is the goal post?

I commonly hear that children are resilient and they are just happy to be at school with their friends. Well, that is just not good enough. As adults, we tell our children what is best for them, and they believe us. A continuation of this policy would be detrimental to the mental health of our children. We have instilled a generation of fear and we are inadvertently causing harm with record levels of anxiety, depression, and loss of human connection through masking. We are asking our children to pay such a high price, when they are the least at risk.

Let's continue daily health assessments and allow our fully capable families to decide on daily masking.

It is time to start the healing process through human connection and masking is a hindrance to this process. It is time to share some real smiles. Be brave and let's give our kids their childhood back!

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