

# Focusing on You: Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 as Students Return to In-Person Learning

UHealth pediatrician offers parents advice on keeping kids safe and healthy.

Lisa Gwynn, D.O., M.B.A., a UHealth pediatrician and president of the Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, discusses the safety precautions students should take to prevent the spread of COVID-19 now that they're back to in-person learning. She also addresses how parents can best support their children through this challenging time.

## Keeping students healthy as they return to the classroom

With South Florida students back in the classroom and concerns about the rise in COVID-19 cases, UHealth pediatrician Dr. Lisa Gwynn says following safety protocols is key to keeping kids healthy.

"Let's all wear masks when we go into this, especially because community infection rates are rising and there's not a lot of things that protect us except for masks and vaccinations," says Dr. Gwynn.

Dr. Gwynn is also the President of the Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which recently put out a statement encouraging the use of masks for children while they're at school.

## What are the concerns for a child's mental health now that they're back in school?

"I think that's probably one of the most important questions we can answer," Dr. Gwynn says. "Not all kids are able to verbalize, 'Hey mom, I'm depressed.' Having those open lines of communication, asking your child when they come home from school, 'Hey, how was your day today?' And listening, really listening."

She says it's about empowering kids and our community, which is why UHealth Pediatrics rolled out its new Shotz-To-Go mobile unit!

"Our goal is to bring up immunization rates, not just for the COVID vaccine, but for all childhood vaccines throughout the district."

Dr. Gwynn says we **can** overcome these challenging times.

"We've got to work together to get through this and we have to do it for our children," says Dr. Gwynn.

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