

Lessons from Summer Camps

*Brookline Remote Learning Expert Advisory Panel on
Public Health, Safety, and Logistics*

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**** DRAFT DOCUMENT – SUBJECT TO REVISION****

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Report: Coronavirus infected scores of children and staff at Georgia sleep-away camp

The finding that 'children might play an important role in transmissions' is likely to fuel debates about whether to reopen schools.



260 campers and staff tested positive.

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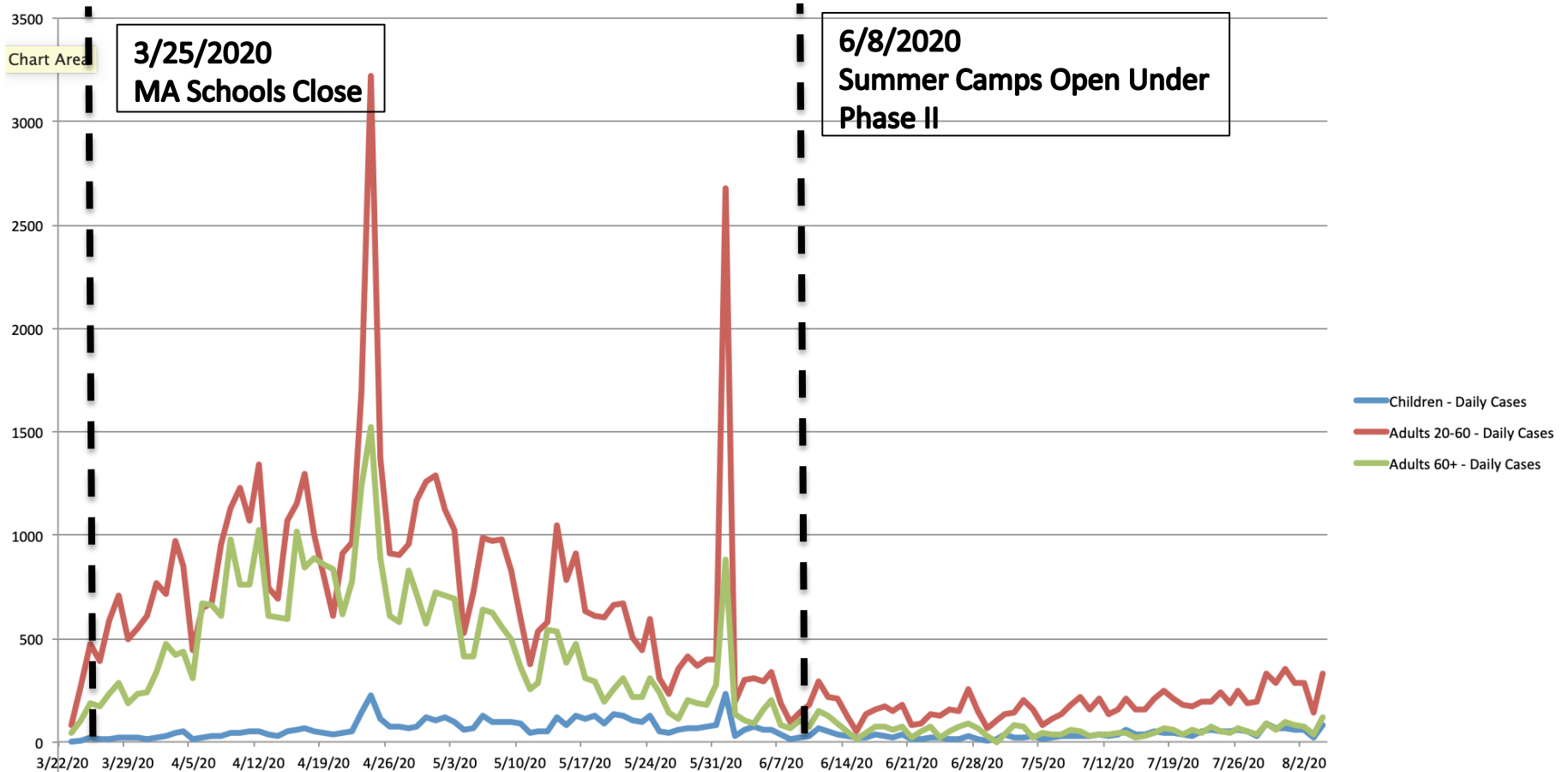
Report: Coronavirus infected scores of children and staff at Georgia sleep-away camp

The finding that ‘children might play an important role in transmissions’ is likely to fuel debates about whether to reopen schools.



The CDC released a separate statement with a headline about “the importance of CDC mitigation strategies,” rather than about the incident’s implications for viral transmission in children. The statement noted that by not requiring campers to wear masks, or airing out cabins, the camp had not followed CDC reopening guidance, and also pointed to “daily vigorous singing and shouting” as potential contributing factors.

MA COVID Rates – All Ages: Schools and Camps



MA Population 0-19 years: 1.57 million. Current daily case rate ~ 1 in 31,000.
MA Total population: 6.9 million. Current daily case rate ~ 1 in 22,000.

Brookline-Area Summer Camps

- Data solicited from Brookline Area Summer Camps open for in-person experiences
- 8 out of 8 camps responded
- Enrollment ranged from 10 children per week to over 400 children per week, 3 staff to 130 staff
- Mixture of indoor and outdoor camps; most full day, some half-day.
- Age range 15 months to 16 years old; most are Kindergarten through 8th Grade.
- All subject to MA guidelines: group sizes generally 10 kids and 2 staff

Feedback From Camp Leaders

- *General experience with kids handling masks, social distancing requirements, etc.?*
 - “No major issues. It was like teaching a new habit with constant reminders.”
 - “The children (and families) are SO happy to be back. The teachers and staff all wear masks all of the time. Many children (over the age of 2) wear a mask to school. It seems that it has been challenging for children to wear a mask safely and properly during the day (they are constantly playing with it, sucking on it etc.)... Most of the staff agree that the transition has been easier than they expected.”
 - “We did pretty well with that issue overall. Our youngest group 6-8, we expected to be a little bit of a problem, but it was actually our oldest group, 13-15 that we had to speak to the most. We disciplined them on occasion by having the group sit down on the field six feet apart for 15 minutes at a time. They eventually got the message.”

Feedback From Camp Leaders

- *General experience with kids handling masks, social distancing requirements, etc.?*
 - “Just to start off, I was extremely skeptical before camp started, I didn't know how we were going to make this work or be successful. I was extremely surprised with our Brookline students on how well camp has been so far! Campers came to camp excited to be back with friends and were willing to stay safe and participate in cleaning as much as possible! It truly has been a success so far and I couldn't be more happy!”
 - “Younger kids [K-2] did the best at keeping masks on. Older kids had more trouble with it, and parents have less control on their distance from each other. It's very hard to keep the kids apart – it feels like we're telling them to not be nice. Parents were quick to sign their kids up, but also quick to judge. Our kids were only meant to have fun – not a lot of restrictions, so not very similar to school. They were outside most of the day. That being said, they did a pretty good job and the kids had a wonderful time.”

Feedback From Camp Leaders

- *General experience with kids handling masks, social distancing requirements, etc.?*
 - “The students have been great with wearing their masks! Out of 80 students we have only had one student who refused to wear her mask, and when we told her that she would be sent home if she doesn't wear her mask, she ended up putting it back on. We have not had any issues since... To be completely honest, camp has been going much smoother/easier than I would have ever expected.”
 - “The kids are thoroughly enjoying the interactions with each other, and honestly so are the staff – there’s been nothing negative about the experience. Sure, they don’t like masks – but they’re having a great time.”

Brookline-Area Summer Camps

- Total Enrollment: 882 children per week, with a total of 5005 weeks of camp attended
- Staff: 231 staff per week, with a total of 1361 staff-weeks of camp worked
- Total confirmed COVID cases in children: 0 (0%)
- Total confirmed COVID cases in staff: 0 (0%)