

U.S. Rep. Gallagher: Slams Fauci for doubling down on mask mandates for kids

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Contact: [Jordan Dunn](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) today criticized Dr. Fauci’s comments earlier this week where he doubled down on masking kids in schools. In a [video](#), Gallagher said, “Any parent knows that in just their first decade our kids develop at a rapid pace. Socially, they learn how to recognize new classmates as they try to make friends. They learn how to read these classmates’ responses to their words and actions. Academically, teachers can better understand a student’s understanding of a lesson based on their expressions. By masking kids, you’re impairing their education severely, you’re impairing their development, and you’re impairing their childhood...Even The World Health Organization and the European CDC long ago determined that this tradeoff is not worth it, especially for younger kids.”

Watch the congressman’s video [HERE](#) or read the full transcript below:

"Earlier this week, Dr. Anthony Fauci doubled down on CDC recommendations for universal masking in schools for kids as young as two years old, even though this is based on inconclusive science at best. Now, this should surprise no one who has watched as Dr. Fauci has consistently maintained indefensible positions like refusing to admit that his agency has funded dangerous research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, supporting vaccine mandates, and discounting the role of natural immunity. Now, he is continuing to recommend what I think is our most abhorrent policy, which is masking young kids in schools despite its unclear benefit and very real harm when it comes to the social development and learning of our children. "Maybe we could justify child masking in the confusing first months of the pandemic when we didn't know anything, but we are well past that point. Think about what we've learned since then. First, thankfully, children are unlikely to suffer the worst outcomes of COVID like hospitalization and death. Second, the adults in schools, teachers, can protect themselves with vaccines, boosters, and other treatments. Third, we have provided schools billions of dollars to improve infection control and measures like ventilation. Finally, there is still no clear evidence that universal masking in schools has any significant impact on the transmission of the coronavirus.

"CDC Director Walensky has tweeted and the media has reflexively parroted studies that compare masked and unmasked schools to supposedly show the benefits of masking. She keeps falling back on this talking point whenever asked. But here's the thing, respected experts have blown massive holes in these studies she is citing and highlighted their flawed methods, yet the CDC is still using them as talking points. We have top public health officials that are citing flawed or inconclusive data, top health officials that don't even understand indigeneity or a failure to control for variables in these studies. Even laymen could understand if they took five seconds to dig into it.

"Now, let's think about what costs our kids face when wearing a mask for 6 or more hours a day. And that's interesting because adults aren't masking all day. Adults at worst have to wear a mask when they walk into a restaurant, and as soon as they sit down they take their mask off. And that of course doesn't make any sense at all. But our kids, in many cases, have to wear a mask all day at school. Any parent knows that in just their first decade our kids develop at a rapid pace. Socially, they learn how to recognize new classmates as they try to make friends. They learn how to read these classmates' responses to their words and actions. Academically, teachers can better understand a student's understanding of a lesson based on their expressions. So by masking kids, you're impairing their education severely, you're impairing their development, and you're impairing their childhood. You're stealing parts of their childhood from them.

"And the science around the impact of universal masking and COVID transmission is inconclusive at best. Even The World Health Organization and the European CDC long ago determined that this tradeoff is not worth it, especially for younger kids. But, here in the U.S. for some reason, likely fear or incompetence, the CDC still can't give any real prediction on when their universal masking requirements will come to an end. In fact, last summer CDC Director Walensky said that we must effectively have full vaccination in schools before these recommendations change. What? That's insane.

"Anyone who has been following the pandemic knows this is an impossible goal. Anyone with kids knows this is an impossible goal. The CDC needs to listen to the advice of groups other than the American Federation of Teachers, which as you know, is the same national teacher's union that has been intimidating democratic politicians into keeping schools shut down all the while pocketing billions of dollars from the federal government. People in the Biden administration just need to talk to parents, and get outside their bubble. This is not rocket science. It's actually anti-science. And commonsense would suggest that parents should be able to send their kids to school in person. And parents can choose whether they want their kids to wear a mask. They shouldn't be forced to do it. Our adults should start acting like adults. The fact that adults are forcing our kids to mask while they go on living their lives largely unmasked is morally reprehensible.

"We just had a big football game in Green Bay — it didn't turn out well for the Packers — but 85,000 adults went to Lambeau and they were not masked. Yet many of their kids the next day are going to have to go to schools masked? Especially our kids who are in the most socioeconomic disadvantaged situations, whose parents can't afford to stay home, whose parents can't afford to hire tutors to make up for learning loss. They're not going to get these days, these weeks, and now these years back. We're stealing from them. You are stealing from them because you are afraid. We cannot let out fear, particularly at this point in the pandemic where Omicron is endemic, rule. We have to live our lives. We can't let our fear destroy our kids' education and in so doing destroy their future."