

Children unlikely to pass COVID-19 to each other, says provincial health officer ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Children are unlikely to pass COVID-19 to each other, but should still keep social interactions limited to small groups, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry said in her daily news briefing on Tuesday.

Citing a scientific research paper written in the Netherlands, Henry said there is a growing accumulation of evidence that while children can sometimes pass the virus on to each other and adults, they are far more likely to become infected from the adults they are closest to.

"For young children in particular, they don't seem to be as affected by it. They don't seem to have as severe illnesses, and they don't seem to pass it on to adults as effectively," said Henry.

"Most of the transmission to children has been from a family member, from an adult to a child, in those close family-contact situations."

Henry said that this trend appears to apply to children under the age of 10. As children grow into teens, they seem to react to COVID-19 more like young adults.

She said the study is reassuring as B.C. continues with the reopening of schools and that while some children in B.C. have tested positive for the virus, none of those cases were linked to the school system.

"That is reassuring to us, [but] it's never absolute. You do need to be careful, and you need to make sure that if your children are going out, going to school, going to play dates, summer camps, make sure to check them, to make sure they're not sick, to keep their groups small," she said.

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