



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 19, 2021

NIH Director Admits: NO DATA on Masking Kids — but We're Recommending it, Anyway

It used to be that men of science relied on, well, science, not just anecdotes. But the director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) — which bills itself as “one of the world’s foremost medical research centers” — has just admitted that anecdotes are all they have on the masking of children to prevent COVID-19.

But they’re recommending it, anyway.

This is despite there being alarming anecdotes — and *data* — indicating that masking kids jeopardizes their health.

NIH head Francis Collins’ statements, made Tuesday on the [The Hugh Hewitt Show](#), were picked up by the Federalist. (Big Tech possible censorship note: When I put the Federalist article’s exact title, “NIH Director Francis Collins Admits Masking Rules For Kids Are Based On Rare Anecdotes, Not Data,” into Yahoo’s search engine at approximately 7:40 a.m. E.S.T., [it presented no Federalist results at all](#). According to Yahoo, the piece doesn’t exist.)

As the Federalist [writes](#):

“I wish we had that data [on the masking kids issue]. But Hugh, I don’t think you’re hearing me. It’s not just about that,” Collins said....

When host Hugh Hewitt pointed out that “based on that fear, we are accepting known substantial costs and deficits which will be lifelong in the classroom,” Collins merely reiterated his inclination to agree with National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director [Anthony Fauci](#), who was on the same show last week and repeated the mask rhetoric.

“But that’s the false choice, doctor,” Hewitt said.

“I don’t think so,” Collins replied, before admitting that there is not any data “showing that those kids are at greater risk of hospitalization or illness of serious sort from taking their mask off there.”

Collins also said, defending the CDC, that the health bureaucracy “really hates to have to make recommendations based on anecdotes” but that because of the Delta variant, “we sort of have to start



Dr. Francis Collins (AP Images)



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all over again with new data.” (Of course, their recommendations based on the old data were wrong, too.)

Host Hewitt wasn’t exaggerating when mentioning masking’s risk to kids. Studies show that masks become as pathogen-laden Petri dishes on people’s faces, that they can restrict oxygen intake and induce dangerously high carbon dioxide levels in children’s bloodstreams, and that wearers may be [inhaling unhealthful plastic microparticles](#) from them. As to the second point and Collins’s m.o., how does the anecdote below strike you, doc?

Then, in a recent *Wall Street Journal* piece, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine professor Dr. Marty Makary and Dr. H. Cody Meissner, chief of pediatric infectious diseases at Tufts Children’s Hospital, [mentioned](#) additional masking risks such as severe acne and other skin ailments. They also discussed the psychological damage the practice inflicts upon kids.

Moreover, the two physicians [write](#) that in “March, Ireland’s Department of Health announced that it won’t require masks in schools because they ‘may exacerbate anxiety or breathing difficulties for some students’ — possibly leading to *altered facial development* (i.e., “elongated face”) due to mouth-breathing.

Apparently, however, Ireland’s health authorities “follow the science” more than our own do. After all, despite the above risks and ostensibly motivated by the COVID-19 Delta variant’s prevalence, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending “universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status,” a given community’s infection levels, and even though children aren’t generally threatened by, and don’t seem to readily transmit, the virus.

(Something tells me that teachers unions aren’t able to grease politicians in Ireland the way they do here.)

Collins admitted to Hewitt that serious coronavirus disease in children was rare, but still insisted that masking them was a prerequisite for avoiding another year of virtual learning.

“It is still pretty rare, but it is not zero, and we now have more than 400 kids that have died of this,” the doctor stated. “So we have to think about that. But also, think about what’s going on in that classroom for two other reasons. Even if kids are not going to get that sick, they can certainly get infected. They don’t transmit quite as vigorously as older people, but they can transmit it.”

“Four-hundred” deceased kids sounds scary (and even one death is tragic, of course), but this is deception via omission. Even if this number is accurate — hardly a guarantee given how the government has been fudging SARS-CoV-2 data — note that this is over the course of more than one respiratory disease season. Yet [according to the CDC](#), 358 children died of the flu *during the 2009-’10 season alone*. Moreover, writes the health authority, the “number of pediatric flu deaths reported to CDC each season is [likely an undercount](#).”

Note also that, reflecting other research, a study out of Newcastle University in London, England, found that influenza is *at least* twice as deadly to children as is the China virus. Yet we weren’t obsessed with masking kids every flu season.

What’s more, Collins’s “not zero” standard doesn’t seem very scientific. Do we ever get the risk of serious pediatric flu disease down to zero? Death in car crashes? Bike accidents? Pool drownings?

You get the risk of virtually nothing down to zero. That’s asking for perfection, and perfection is not a



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thing of this world.

But forget perfection from our public “health authorities” — Collins doesn’t even demand scientific rigor. Defending the CDC’s anecdote-based, schizoid recommendations, he told Hewitt, “Give the guys a little bit of a break there. ... They’re rigorous public health scientists.... They’re trying to manage the worst pandemic in 103 years that is moving so rapidly,” and sometimes anecdotes are “what you’ve got at the time.”

Of course, all this presupposes that population-level masking prescriptions slow the virus’s spread; [this appears](#) a [dubious claim](#).

And on this issue Collins isn’t as visible as our Anthony “Flip-flop” Fauci, but may be as vacillatory. For example, earlier this month he walked back comments “suggesting vaccinated parents wear masks at HOME to protect their unvaccinated children from Covid,” [reported](#) the *Daily Mail* August 4. Yet a clue as to why these two government doctors behave as they do may lie, of course, in what Collins and Fauci both represent: the mixing of science and state. After all, the NIH proudly proclaims under its [website](#) heading, “Turning Discovery into Health,” but more likely is that it’s turning politics into “discovery.”



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