



**TOTH**  
MONTESSORI  
NAVY YARD, WASHINGTON, DC



December 29, 2021

Dear ToTH families,

I am writing to announce some changes to our return to school plans next week. As you are no doubt aware, the Omicron variant has had a major impact on the DC area over the last week and a half. Cases of COVID-19 are skyrocketing to levels far beyond anything we have seen during the entire pandemic. And while the vaccines offer good protection from serious illness, nearly every ToTH child is too young to be vaccinated. The data is now showing that young, unvaccinated children are more susceptible to this new Omicron variant than at any time in the pandemic.

In order to ensure the safest possible return to school for the children and staff we absolutely need each child to have a negative PCR test result from a test taken no more than 72 hours before their planned return to school. Given the difficulties families are having scheduling tests due to the holiday weekend and surge in cases, we will be adjusting our schedule as follows:

- **ToTH will be CLOSED for instruction January 3th and 4th to allow families more time for PCR testing.** Your child's PCR test should be administered no earlier than Sunday, January 2nd, and they should isolate as much as possible while awaiting results. Results can be emailed directly to me.

-Staff will report to work on January 3 & 4 where they will take Lucira rapid PCR tests. Staff will use this time to review health and safety protocols and make modifications to daily routines and classroom layouts.

- Friday, January 14 will no longer be a staff inservice day. To try to lessen the impact on families, we will move our January 14 inservice activities to January 4th. We hope to minimize further disruptions to the school calendar, but please know we cannot predict what this pandemic will require of us next.

TRAVEL: If your unvaccinated child has traveled outside of DC, MD, or VA, remember that they **must** isolate for at least 3 to 5 days before being tested to return to school.

FAMILY GATHERINGS: If your child has attended any mixed family gatherings or had any indoor, unmasked contact with people outside of their immediate family, we urge you to wait 3-5 days from the last contact before being tested to return to school.

CLASSROOM PODS: Those families who were with ToTH last year will remember that we had great success when families treated their classroom community like their social pod. I strongly encourage our classroom parent leaders to schedule virtual calls with their class cohorts in the next week to discuss risk levels, special considerations (I.e. an immunocompromised family member, new babies, etc), and group commitments to limit unnecessary activities for at least the next month or until we begin to see case counts trending downward.

TESTING: Other than the public testing sites, testing is available through Curative and Same Day Health. Rapid at home PCR test kits are available to be ordered from Lucira. Each kit is expensive (\$75) but you may find it handy to have a couple on hand. **Rapid antigen test results will not be accepted for return-to-school** as they are less sensitive and may not detect a positive case as soon as the PCR tests will.

<https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testing>

<https://samedayhealth.com/covid19-testing>

<https://curative.com/>

<https://checkit.lucirahealth.com/>

We will continue to monitor all developments and keep the community posted. In the meantime, we urge every family to treat this new wave of the pandemic with the utmost seriousness. It's important to remember that we have children at ToTH who are too young to wear a mask, and any positive case will necessitate a 10 day class closure. We can hopefully continue to avoid outbreaks at ToTH if families go back to treating your ToTH classroom as your pod, and limit any indoor activities to the bare necessities for the time being.

Wishing you all a safe and happy new year.

Best,  
Stephanie Sarvana  
Head of School