

Arizona is Going Strong, Let's Not Stop Now

A COVID-19 Resource Update
Center for Health Equity Research

August 12, 2020



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On August 6, 2020, the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) offered recommendations for data-driven decisions to assist public schools and business such as bars, restaurants, and gyms regarding (1) determining the level of community spread of COVID-19 in their community and (2) assist in decisions about teaching modalities, operations, and occupancy capacity (i.e. "opening up"). ADHS defines levels of COVID community spread with the thresholds based on a two-week COVID-19 case rate, percent positivity, and percent of hospital visits for COVID-like illness outlined below, including, minimal, moderate, and substantial community spread of COVID-19 (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Arizona Benchmarks for Defining Communitywide Spread of COVID-19, ADHS

Benchmarks	Minimal	Moderate	Substantial
Cases	<10 cases/100,000	10-100 cases/100,000	>100 cases/100,000
Percent Positivity	<5%	5-10%	>10%
COVID-like Illness	<5%	5-10%	>10%

ADHS has deemed community spread of COVID in Arizona at the Substantial level, meaning the COVID-19 two-week case rate per 100,000 people is currently greater than 100, our percent positivity rate is greater than 10%, and the percent of hospital visits for COVID-like illnesses is greater than 10% (Figure 2). Two new Data Dashboards are now available to determine community widespread and assist with decision making. To monitor trends over time, ADHS will update the dashboard every Thursday for the data covering the two-week period ending 12 days earlier. Data Dashboards are user friendly and can be accessed here:

School Data Dashboard: <https://bit.ly/30KXJ2g>

Business Data Dashboard: <https://bit.ly/3fPjMsO>

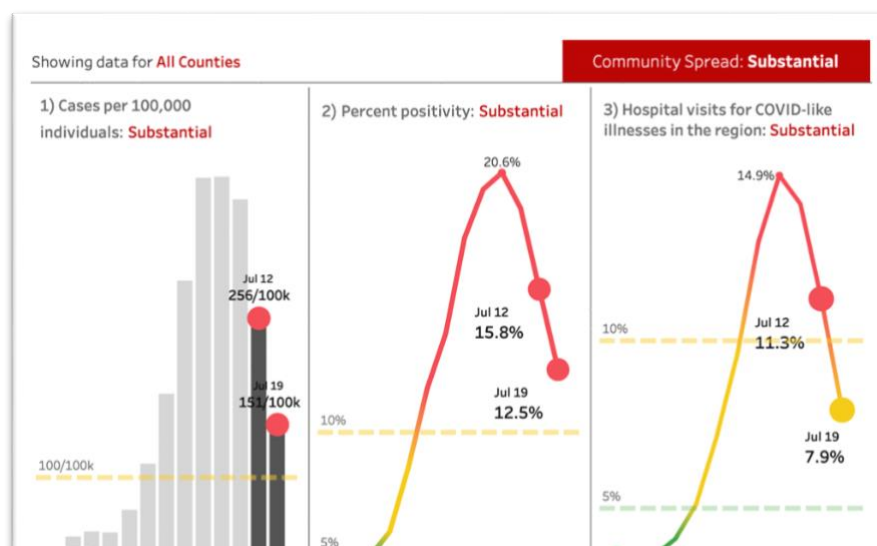


Figure 2 ADHS Dashboard: COVID Benchmark Status as of August 11, 2020

As of August 6, 2020, the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) offered recommendations for data-driven decisions on when to open public schools – you can find this guidance here in the [Safely Returning to In-Person Instruction](#) guide. According to ADHS, schools must meet the following 3 data driven benchmarks for reopening school buildings for in-person instruction:

COVID Cases

A two week decline in the number of cases or two weeks with new case rates below 100 per 100,000

Percent Positivity

Two weeks with less than 7% positivity

COVID-like Illness Syndromic Surveillance

Two weeks with hospital visits due to COVID-like illness below 10%

In addition, our Coconino County Health Department may modify a specific benchmark based on our regional public health and health care system capacity. As of today, the state of Arizona and Coconino County have not met all three benchmarks. Figures 3 & 4 accessed at [ADHS Data Dashboard](#) for Schools (Childcare & K-12) and Universities.

Figure 3 Arizona Benchmarks

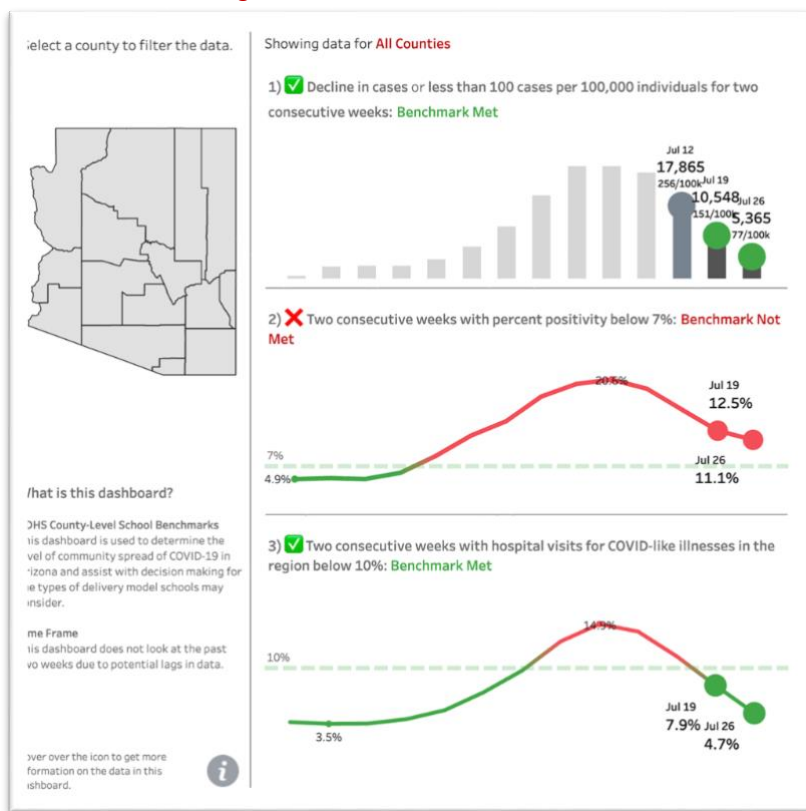
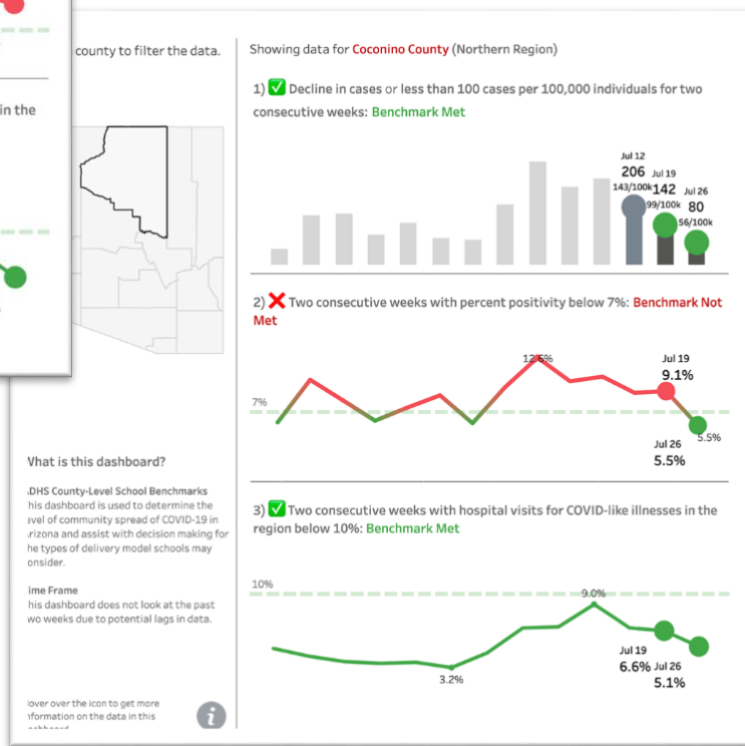


Figure 2 Coconino County Benchmarks



The ADHS also defined what actions schools should take depending on the level of community spread. Hybrid educational scenarios can be commenced once the county meets minimal to moderate community spread.

Figure 4 ADHS Safely Returning to In Person Instruction Guide <https://bit.ly/31NYMhs>

Community Spread Level	Delivery Model	Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette	Enhanced Cleaning	Proper Ventilation (buildings and Buses)	Monitor Absenteeism	Symptom Screening	Physical Distancing (6 feet)	Cloth Face Coverings	Cohorting	Field Trips & Large Gatherings Canceled	Communal Spaces Closed
No to Minimal	Traditional	X	X	X	X						
Minimal to Moderate	Hybrid	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Substantial	Virtual w/ onsite support services	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Going Forward, Caring for One Another, Together

Together, we can use the interactive [ADHS Dashboard](#)s for Schools (Childcare & K-12) and Universities and Businesses to monitor benchmarks overtime and follow our County’s progress. Find your County on the map and click it for data specific to your County. The general Dashboard which updates daily can be used to explore some of these important questions:

1. What is the level of community wide spread today?
2. What age group or age groups have the highest number of COVID cases?
3. Who is most likely to get sick, to be hospitalized and die from COVID-19?
4. At what occupancy should restaurants be operating?
5. How full is our health care system due to COVID patients?

Our Unique Opportunity as a University Community

In Arizona, and throughout the US, 20-30-year olds currently fuel the spread of COVID-19 in most communities. They do this unknowingly, primarily through asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission. Basically, this age group, which may or may not be you, often never know they are infectious – they often have no symptoms and do not feel differently than they normally feel - but efficiently transmit the virus to others who are more vulnerable. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the **TOP TWO ACTIONS** all of us and especially younger people can take to stop the spread of COVID are:

1. Always wear your mask correctly covering your mouth and nose, unless you are with immediate household members
2. Avoid bars, restaurants, and parties

Until benchmarks are met for **Minimal to Moderate** community spread, we may also want to consider:

1. Participating in remote learning, as much as possible
2. Forming a [COVID pod](#) to study, play, and care for each other! <https://bit.ly/3gNODaP>

Arizona is headed in the right direction and as a community we are slowing the spread of COVID-19.

Public health prevention strategies are working – and it is clear we are correctly wearing our masks in public, we are avoiding bars and crowded restaurants and we are remaining vigilant in our handwashing and social distancing.

Let's keep up this momentum!

NAU COVID-19 Student Resources	https://nau.edu/coronavirus/covid-student-resources/
Coconino County COVID-19 Resources	https://www.coconino.az.gov/covid19
NAU Free COVID-19 Testing Registration	https://www.doineedacovid19test.com/Flagstaff_AZ_1135.html
AZDH COVID-19 Data Dashboard for School Opening	https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-schools
AZDH COVID-19 Data Dashboard for Business	https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-community
SHERC Infectious Disease Epidemiology Bootcamp	https://nau.edu/sherc/sherc-epidemiology-bootcamp/
Arizona Department of Health Services COVID-19 Dashboard	https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/covid-19/dashboards/index.php
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Resource Page	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html
The History of Pandemics	https://www.visualcapitalist.com/history-of-pandemics-deadliest/
Coronavirus Simulator	https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/coronavirus-simulator/
Real-Time COVID-19 Map	https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html
Which countries are flattening the curve	https://www.visualcapitalist.com/infection-trajectory-flattening-the-covid19-curve/
Economic damage done by COVID-19	https://www.ft.com/content/a2901ce8-5eb7-4633-b89c-cbdf5b386938
COVID-19 Research Page	https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus