

Students Ask Colleges to Prioritize Health & Safety

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Data are clear: Gen Z expects masks and vaccines as part of their college experiences, and 83% say college COVID-19 policies are a major factor in going back to school

MOUNT PLEASANT, S.C.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- A survey conducted by **Tallo**, the nation's premier online platform for connecting students with opportunities, found that the majority of Gen Z is prioritizing COVID-19 safety precautions at their colleges and universities of choice.

"The results of this latest survey are indicative of how Gen Z is preparing for the new school year," said Casey Welch, CEO and Co-founder of Tallo. "Students are taking the risks inherent to contracting COVID-19 — or passing it on to a family member who may be immunocompromised — seriously, and they expect masks and vaccinations to go hand in hand with their college experience."

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, 61% of students are excited and hopeful about the return to campus, while 13% are feeling anxious. Understandably, one in five K-12 parents — whose younger children are still unable to receive the vaccine — expressed anxiety about their child's health and safety in a **previous survey** about the return to in-person learning. But 68% of Gen Zers surveyed by Tallo have already received the vaccine, presumably explaining their comfort levels of returning to campus this fall. Another 11% of those surveyed plan to receive the vaccine, while a mere 9% aren't interested in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine and 7% remain unsure.

Just as students expect colleges to take precautions, Gen Z is already being proactive about protecting themselves: Three in four students said they were concerned about becoming infected with COVID-19 and more than 57% of Gen Z is "very concerned" about spreading COVID-19 to a family member. Four in five students say their parents approved of their decision to receive the vaccine, and over 68% indicated that they are likely to attend a college that requires vaccines for enrollment.

This generation of students appears to be unphased by mask mandates: three in four would attend a college that requires masks on campus and nearly 88% would work for an employer that requires the same. Fortunately, their outlook on the impact of masking is largely positive, with 77% saying that wearing masks wouldn't negatively affect their ability to learn.

What's more, this concern for safety doesn't end at campus gates: the vast majority (86%) believe all unvaccinated individuals should wear masks in public spaces, and 68% said the same about vaccinated individuals.

As the circumstances surrounding the pandemic change and new guidelines are implemented, these opinions may shift accordingly, but one thing is for sure: Gen Z is clear on their priorities, and COVID-19 safety precautions rank at the top of that list.

Interviews for this research were conducted online between August 9-August 22, 2021, from a national sample of 2,501 students. For more information, visit tallo.com/blog/gen-z-wants-masks-vaccines/.

About Tallo

Over 1.5 million talented individuals use **Tallo** to create digital portfolios to showcase their skills and accomplishments, connect with post-secondary institutions and companies, and access to customized career pathways and financial assistance guidance. Companies, colleges, and governmental entities work with Tallo to develop strategies to micro-target and connect with the Tallo community and build their future workforce pipeline. Tallo helps its partners understand Gen Z and Millennial talent, take a strategic approach to cultivate new and existing talent, and focus on quality matches with candidates who are the right fit. For more information, visit www.tallo.com

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