

## Vaxx to School? Three-quarters of Canadian parents believe teachers, school staff should be vaccinated

*Nine-in-ten parents prefer in-class learning; majority of parents comfortable with kids back in school*

**September 3, 2021** – Back to school was once a time of excitement, but as parents prepare for a third school year impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become a season of apprehension.

As COVID-19 cases rise during Canada's fourth wave, students across the country return to unvaccinated classrooms as younger children are still ineligible for the vaccine. But new data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds most parents of school-aged children – regardless of their kids' ages – are comfortable returning their kids to in-person learning. Three-quarters of parents with a child aged 12 to 17, and two-thirds of parents with a child aged five to 11, say they are comfortable putting their kids back in classrooms.

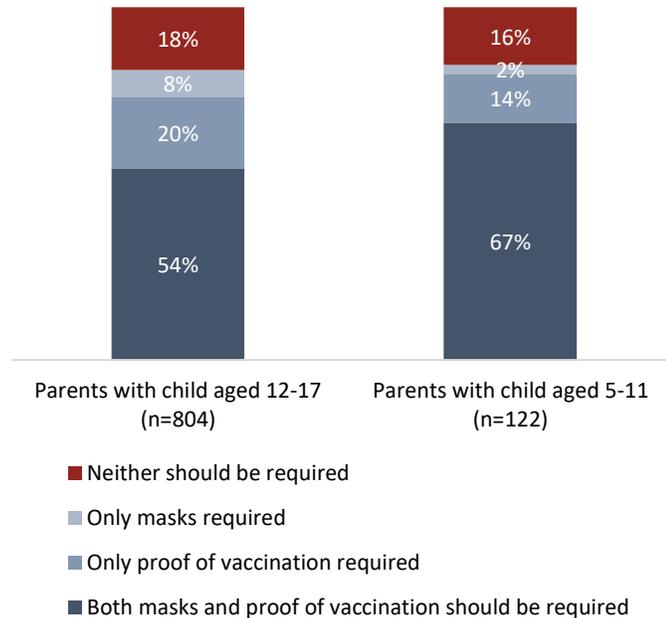
Still, parents want additional safeguards. Three-quarters (74%) of parents with older kids, and four-in-five (81%) parents with kids aged five to 11 (who are still ineligible for the vaccine), believe vaccines should be mandatory for school staff including teachers.

A majority of both groups of parents are worried about their children getting sick from COVID-19. Those with children ineligible for the vaccine are the most worried with one-third (34%) of parents with a child aged five to 11 saying they are "very concerned" their children might get sick from the virus.

Even parents whose child is vaccinated fret about the virus. Three-in-five with a vaccinated child aged 12 to 17 say they are still worried about their children getting sick from COVID-19.

Despite all the concern, in-school learning is vastly preferred to online. Nine-in-ten (88%) of both groups of parents prefer their children learn in-person rather than online.

### For teachers/principals/etc., do you think:



### METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from Aug. 24-30, 2021 among a representative randomized sample of 804 Canadian parents who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

The Angus Reid Institute also conducted an online survey from Aug. 29-30, 2021 among a representative sample of 122 Canadian parents who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

### CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 [dave.korzinski@angusreid.org](mailto:dave.korzinski@angusreid.org)

---

## More Key Findings:

- A majority of both groups of parents (65% with a child aged 12 to 17; 64% with a child aged five to 11) want to see vaccine mandates for students as well, though that won't be possible for kids under 12 until a vaccine is made available to them.
- Regionally, a significant minority are not on board with masks or vaccines for students. One-third of people living in the Prairies and one-quarter of those in Quebec believe neither masks or vaccines should be mandatory for students.

## About ARI

The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.

## INDEX

### Part One: In-class versus online

- Parents are comfortable returning kids to school in-class
- Parents strongly prefer in-class learning to online

### Part Two: Should vaccines be mandated in schools?

- Majority believe teachers, staff should be vaccinated
- Parents want vaccine mandate for kids, too

### Part Three: Concern over infection

- Majority of parents concerned about kid becoming sick from COVID

### Part One: In-class versus online

Kids return to school against the ominous backdrop of the rising fourth wave of COVID-19. Still, many provinces are forgoing the bans on extracurricular activities, school common area closures and extensive cohorting which factored into last fall's plans to limit the spread. Instead, mandatory masks is the most common precaution schools across the country are taking.

In Western Canada, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta are [recommending rather than legislating](#) protective measures for kids going back to school. By contrast B.C. is making [masks required](#) for students and staff in Grades 4 to 12. Canada's most populous provinces are being the most cautious. Both [Ontario](#) and [Quebec](#) are requiring masking for Grades 1 to 12. To the [east](#), masking will be required in most schools in Atlantic Canada except in Newfoundland and Labrador, which could bring them back if there is a high risk of community transmission.

---

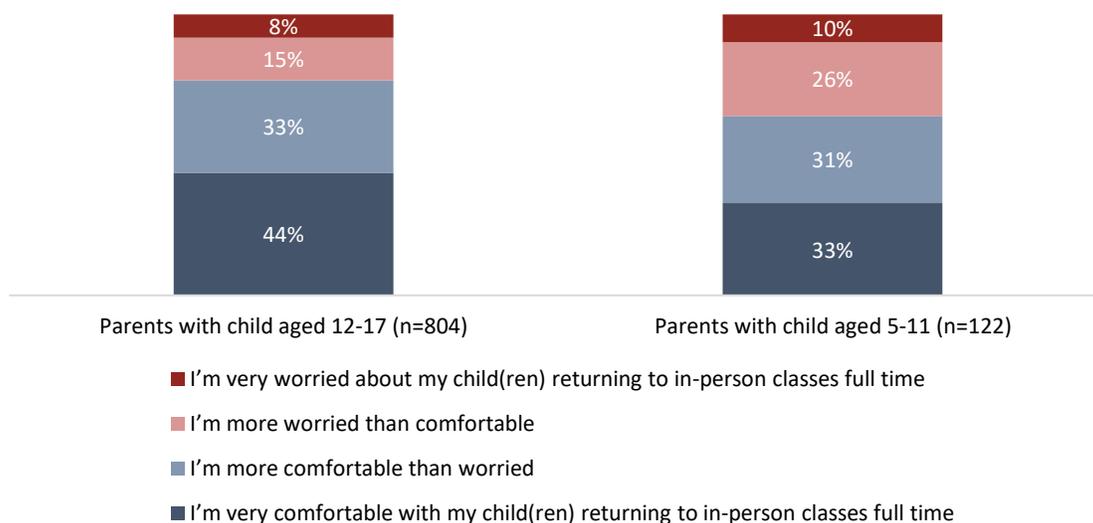
## CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 [dave.korzinski@angusreid.org](mailto:dave.korzinski@angusreid.org)

**Parents are comfortable returning kids to school in-class**

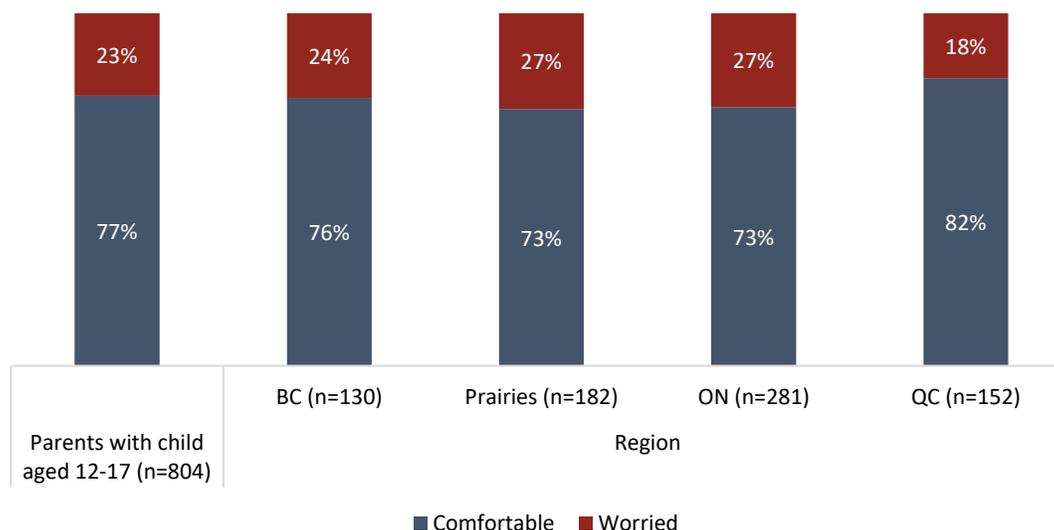
The lack of restrictions doesn't seem to be bothering Canadian parents, who are more comfortable than worried with their kids heading back to class in the face of rising cases driven by the more infectious Delta variant. Three-quarters (77%) of parents with a child aged 12 to 17, and two-thirds (64%) of parents with a child aged five to 11, say they are comfortable with the return to school:

**Now, it looks like many provinces will be returning kids to classrooms for school full-time this fall. How do you feel about that?**



One-quarter of parents of older kids in B.C., the Prairies and Ontario are more worried than comfortable. While in Quebec, where cases are rising but not at the same pace as western Canada's COVID hotspots, parents are the most comfortable:

Now, it looks like many provinces will be returning kids to classrooms for school full-time this fall. How do you feel about that?



*\*Due to a small sample size, data from Atlantic Canada not reported*

### **Parents strongly prefer in-class learning to online**

Though online learning reduced the risk of viral spread, it came with plenty of downsides. Kids worried about falling behind and their social life suffered as they missed their friends. Parents, for their part, struggled with balancing their jobs and keeping their kids on track.

### **Related: Kids & COVID-19: Canadian children are done with school from home, fear falling behind, and miss their friends**

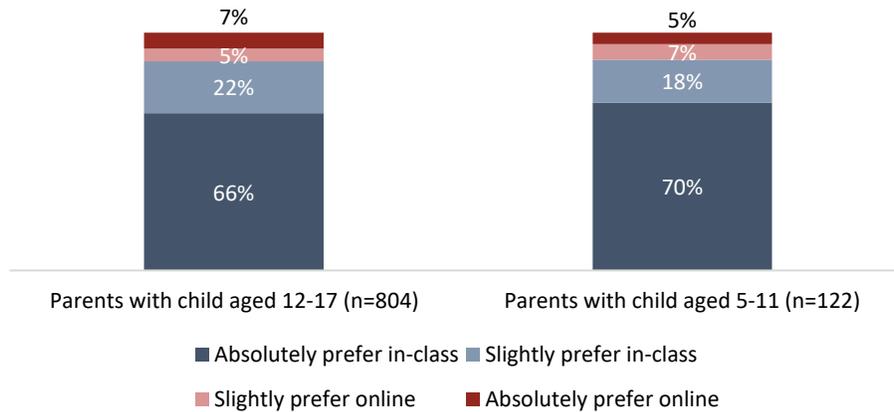
With all that in mind, Canadian parents want their kids back in the classroom. Two-thirds of parents with older kids “absolutely” prefer in-class learning over online, while seven-in-ten parents with younger kids say the same:

---

#### **CONTACT:**

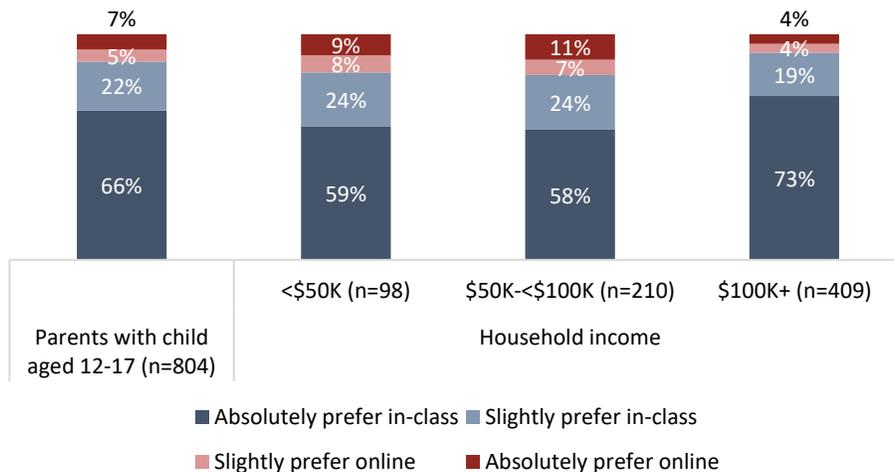
Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 [dave.korzinski@angusreid.org](mailto:dave.korzinski@angusreid.org)

**Would you prefer your child attend remotely or in-class this fall?**



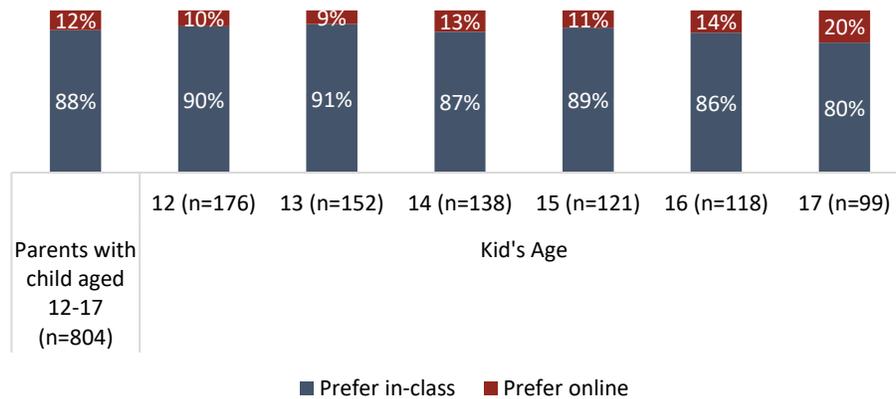
High income households were the most likely to have someone **work from home** during the pandemic. Those same households report the highest preference for in-class learning, perhaps out of the need to maintain the professional sanctity of the home office. Only eight per cent of those in households earning \$100,000 or more annually prefer online learning, half the rate of those in lower income brackets:

**Would you prefer your child attend remotely or in-class this fall?**



The preference for in-class learning is strong for parents with vaccine-eligible kids regardless of how old their child is, but parents with older teenagers are the most likely to prefer online learning. Older teens were more likely to follow subjects on their own to help keep up **earlier in the pandemic**, and perhaps that independence gives their parents confidence that online schooling won't be a drag on their grades:

**Would you prefer your child attend remotely or in-class this fall?**



**Part Two: Should vaccines be mandated in schools?**

**Majority believe teachers, staff should be vaccinated**

While vaccine passports are becoming a reality across the country – even where they were once resisted – no province has followed the lead of American and Australian school districts and made vaccines mandatory for teachers.

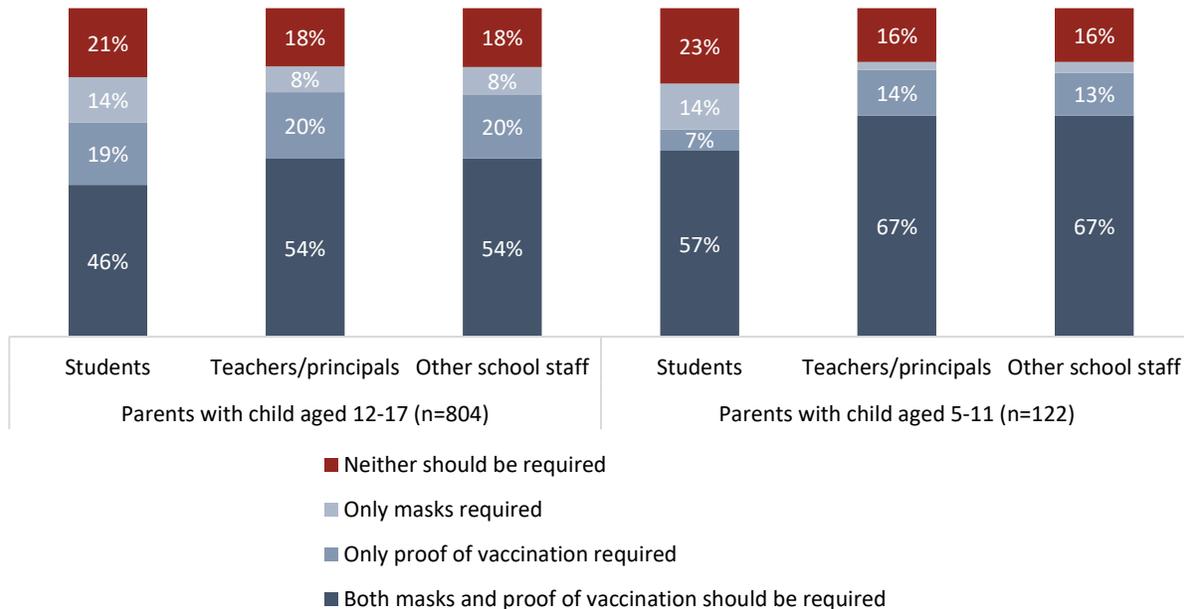
If a province were to follow-through on such a proposal, the measure would be well received among Canadian parents. Three-quarters (74%) of parents with a child aged 12 to 17, and four-in-five (81%) with a child aged five to 11, say that vaccines should be mandatory for teachers and other school staff.

And, in contrast with the policies chosen by many provinces, a majority of Canadian parents would support a mask mandate for school staff as well:

**CONTACT:**

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 [dave.korzinski@angusreid.org](mailto:dave.korzinski@angusreid.org)

**For the following groups do you think:**



**Parents want vaccine mandate for kids, too**

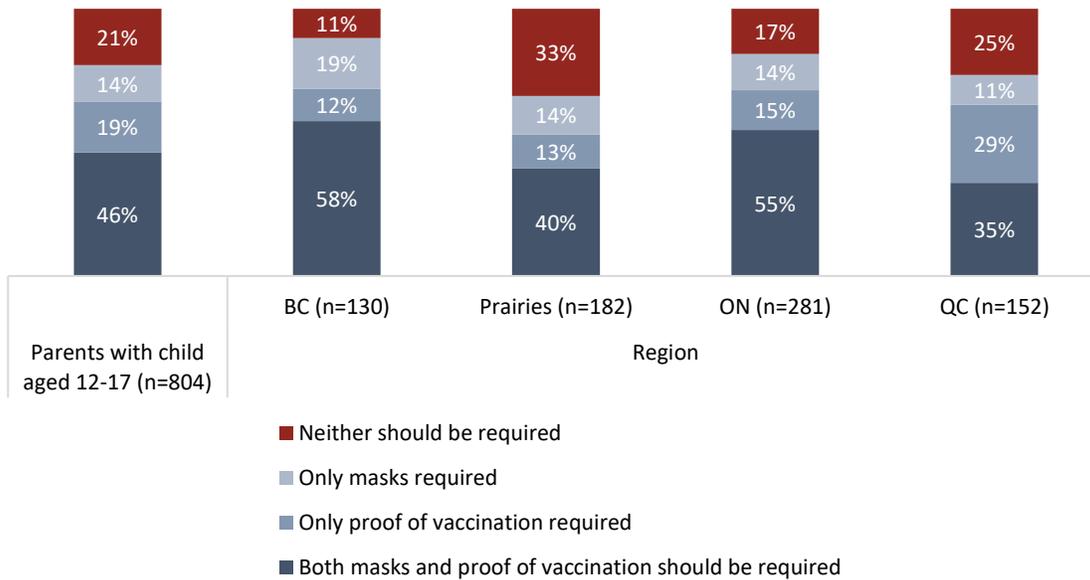
There is also strong support for vaccines to be mandatory for students as they return to school. Two-thirds of parents (65%) with a child aged 12 to 17, and seven-in-10 (71%) with a child aged five to 11, believe vaccines should be mandatory for kids returning to classrooms. That of course won't be possible for kids under 12 until a vaccine is available to them, which could be as early as [this fall](#).

A majority in B.C. and Ontario believe both a mask and a vaccine should be required, while one-third those in the Prairies and one-quarter of those in Quebec believe neither should be required to return to school:

**CONTACT:**

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 [dave.korzinski@angusreid.org](mailto:dave.korzinski@angusreid.org)

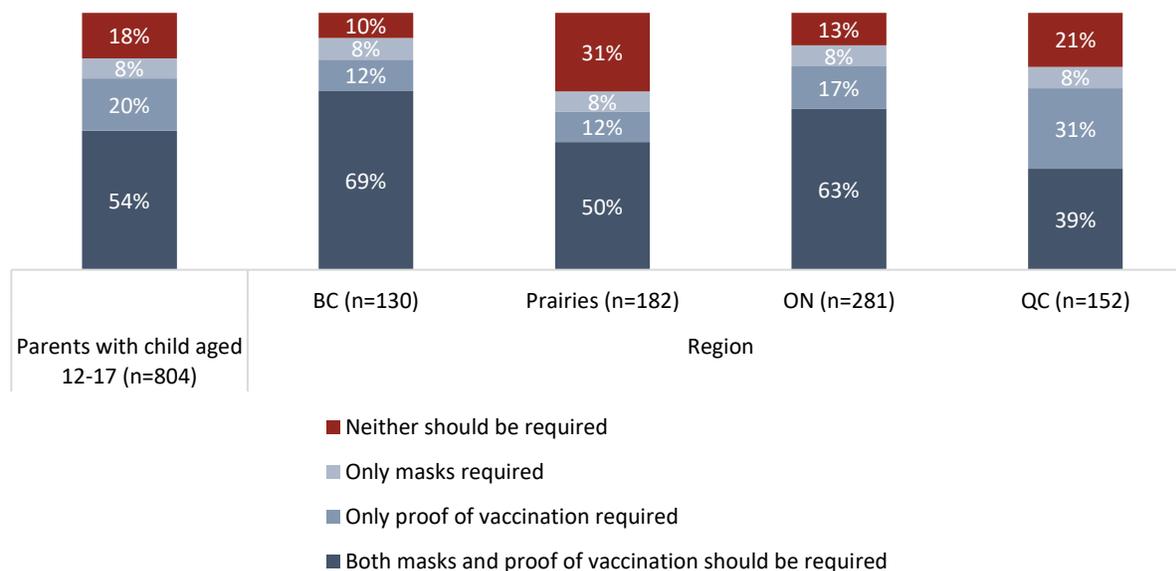
**For students, do you think:**



*\*Due to a small sample size, data from Atlantic Canada not reported*

More parents believe teachers should require a proof of vaccination, including at least three-in-five in every region. Those in Quebec are the least likely to believe masking is necessary, while three-in-ten in the Prairies believe neither should be required of school staff:

**For teachers/principals/etc. do you think:**



*\*Due to a small sample size, data from Atlantic Canada not reported*

**Part Three: Concern over infection**

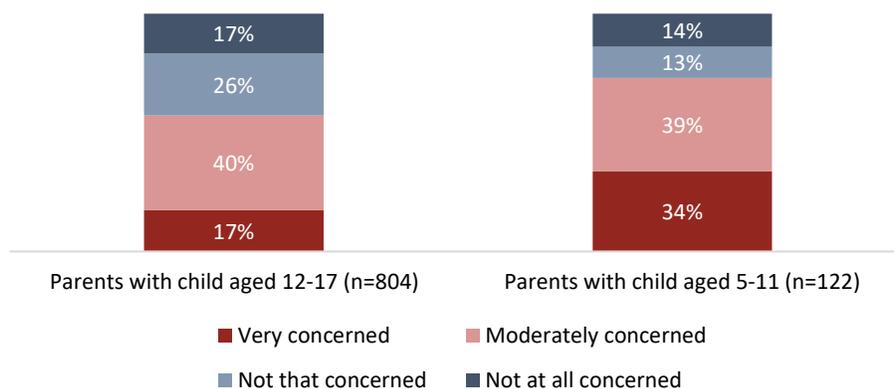
**Majority of parents concerned about kid becoming sick from COVID**

Parents may not be worried about returning their kids to classrooms, but they are worried about their children becoming sick with COVID-19. A majority of parents with a child aged 12 to 17 are concerned about their children catching the virus. Those with younger kids, still ineligible for the vaccine, are even more worried. Three-quarters (73%) of parents with a child aged five to 11 are concerned with their children becoming sick, including one-third (34%) who are “very concerned”:

**CONTACT:**

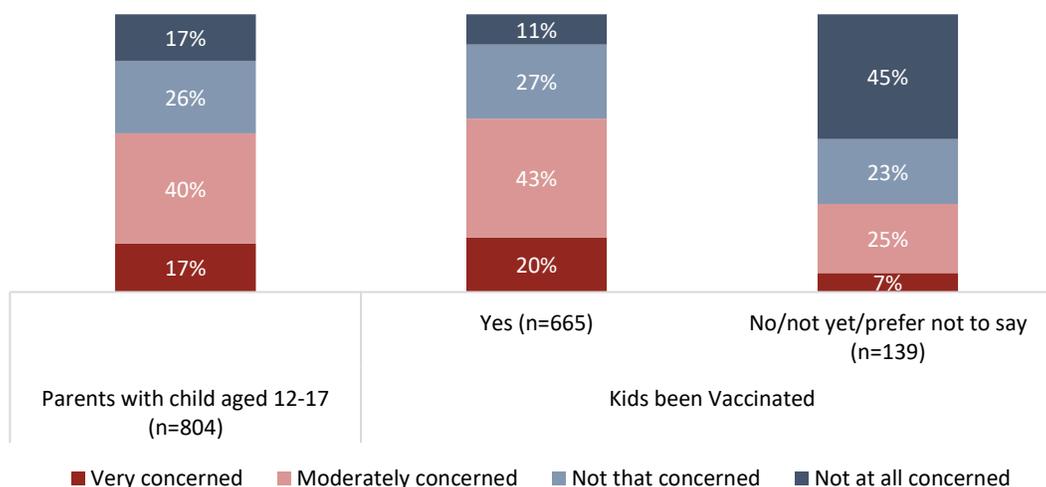
Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 [dave.korzinski@angusreid.org](mailto:dave.korzinski@angusreid.org)

**How concerned are you about your child/children becoming sick from COVID-19?**



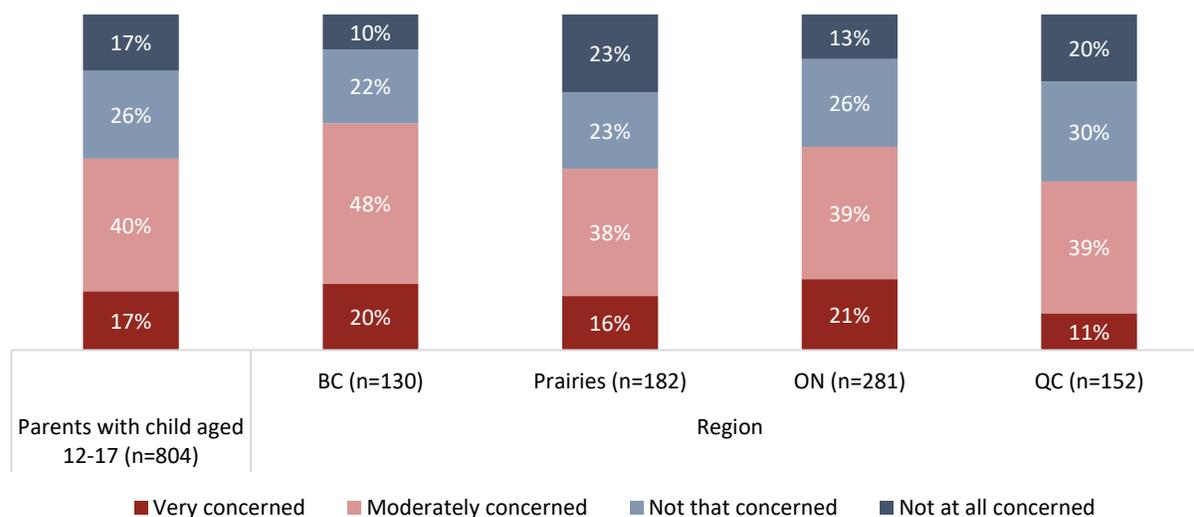
Three-quarters of Canadians aged 12 to 17 are **fully vaccinated**, but even that is not enough to alleviate parents' fears. Three-in-five (63%) with a vaccinated child remain worried about their kids getting sick, while seven-in-ten (68%) of those whose kids aren't vaccinated – or prefer not to disclose their status – are not that concerned:

**How concerned are you about your child/children becoming sick from COVID-19?**



B.C., a province which recently re-instituted **a mask mandate** as cases rise, is home to the most concerned parents, while 46 per cent in the Prairies aren't too worried about their kids becoming sick with COVID-19:

**How concerned are you about your child/children becoming sick from COVID-19?**



*\*Due to a small sample size, data from Atlantic Canada not reported*

**For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).**

**For detailed results for parents with a child aged five to 11, [click here](#).**

**For detailed results by the child's age (12-17), [click here](#).**

**For detailed results by the child's vaccination status, [click here](#).**

**CONTACT:**

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl

Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 [dave.korzinski@angusreid.org](mailto:dave.korzinski@angusreid.org)