Twitter Thread by Adam Hamdy



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1. I find it remarkable that some medics and scientists aren't raising their voices to make children as safe as possible. The comment about children being less infectious than adults is unsupported by evidence.

> I find it remarkable that a section of society not rejoicing that children very rarely ill with COVID compared to other viruses and much less infectious than adults
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> Instead trying prove the opposite!
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> Why??
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> — Michael Absoud \U0001f499 (@MAbsoud) February 12, 2021

2. @c_drosten has talked about this extensively and @dgurdasani1 and @DrZoeHyde have repeatedly pointed out flaws in the studies which have purported to show this. Now for the other assertion: children are very rarely ill with COVID19.

3. Children seem to suffer less with acute illness, but we have no idea of the long-term impact of infection. We do know #LongCovid affects some children. @LongCovidKids now speaks for 1,500 children struggling with a wide range of long-term symptoms.

4. 1,500 children whose parents found a small campaign group. How many more are out there? We don't know. ONS data suggests there might be many, but the issue hasn't been studied sufficiently well or long enough for a definitive answer.

5. Some people have talked about #COVID19 being this generation's Polio. According to US CDC, Polio resulted in inapparent infection in more than 99% of people. Severe disease occurred in a tiny fraction of those infected. Source: https://t.co/Wpfrk9qsHJ

6. In the US, the peak of severe disease came in 1952 when over 20,000 people in the US suffered paralysis. As this fascinating case report shows, mild illness as a child could be followed by severe complications many years later.

https://t.co/psnsLaHAZM

7. Did people focus only on the 99% who survived the disease? Did people seek to minimise the experiences and suffering of the unlucky few? No. The world came together to eradicate the disease. I'm not suggesting #COVID19 is as serious as

Polio.

8. But I am saying there are many unanswered questions. Polio didn't burst onto the scene. It took decades for the disease to reach its peak & for scientists to properly understand it. We've been living with COVID19 for less than a year. It seems cavalier to dismiss risk.

9. It also shows a lack of empathy to sideline parents who are struggling to understand what's happening to their children. Until there is good data on prevalence of #LongCovid in children and evidence that explains the mechanisms of the condition, risk cannot be quantified.

10. And I say mechanisms because possible explanations for #LongCovid could be organ damage, neuro invasion, viral persistence, or the development of autoantibodies. Until we understand the condition better, I'm not sure why we'd celebrate ignorance.

11. Does this mean we have to hibernate until science catches up? No. But it would seem prudent to minimise risk whenever possible. The UK is almost alone in not mandating masks in classrooms. It has not implemented many of the aerosol mitigation measures seen around the world.

12. We're not taking reasonable steps to protect children. Steps that would also benefit the community at large by slowing transmission. If we've learned anything from the past year it's that precaution is the better approach.

13. For some reason the issue of child safety has become politicised, with fringe groups arguing against safety measures adopted in almost every other developed country. If we want our schools to stay open, we need to make an effort to make them safe.

14. Reduce risk as much as reasonably possible while science catches up on a new disease and medicine vaccinates or treats the problem into irrelevance.