

Masks work, even for kids. But sometimes science isn't enough. | Gothamist

By Nsikan Akpan

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Masks are the most visible reminders that we are still in a pandemic, and the debate over their use and other public health measures has been present since March 2020, largely along partisan lines.

But as nearly a dozen Democratic governors — including in New York and New Jersey — announce an easing of mask mandates for schools and indoor business, it signals an overwhelming desire across the political spectrum for normalcy, regardless of the continued spread of the coronavirus.

Until last week, the removal of public health measures has essentially been happening in areas with Republican leadership, and public polling and academic studies have shown conservatives were much less likely to engage in social distancing, wear masks or support vaccination. Researchers who study partisanship, public health and human behavior say a new coalition is forming. The camp that never wanted COVID measures is being joined by people who've followed the rules for two years. They're vaccinated; they're boosted and they're ready to return to normal.

[...]

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