

Tips to Help Children Wear Masks

Explain why it is Important to Wear a Mask

- Keep it simple and positive
- Use a Social Story for visual learners
- Remind the child that wearing a mask keeps germs from spreading
- Try a kid friendly video to explain mask wearing:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4KRuP1QGmhU&feature=youtu.be>



Give Children Choices



- Let them choose their own mask (e.g. theme, color, pattern)
- Decorate the mask with stickers or fabric markers
- Make sure fits properly and comfortably, taking into consideration the size, shape, material, fit around the ears
- Make it FUN. Have them practice putting masks on stuffed animals, dolls, superheroes, etc.

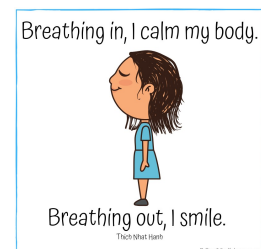
Start Mask Wearing at Optimal Times

- Practice when your child is well rested and in a good mood.
- Start by having your child explore it by touching it, smelling it, and even simply holding it to their face to increase comfort level
- Wear the mask at home for increasing periods of time
- Wear the mask when your child is doing something they enjoy. It takes time to adjust and this can help your child get comfortable wearing the mask.



Take Breathing Breaks

- Find a safe place to take the mask off and take a few deep breaths



Encourage Children to Express Their Feelings

- Providing opportunities to express their feelings can help children gain a sense of control over this new experience.
- Acknowledge their reactions and frustrations and validate their feelings

Provide Positive Reinforcement

- Provide lots of compliments and praise for wearing masks
- Provide incentives as needed such as stickers, extra playtime, screen time, television, favorite snack, etc.

Be a Positive Role Model to Set a Good Example – Stay Healthy and Strong



Social Stories Links:

1. <https://www.autism.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/I-can-wear-a-mask-1-1.pdf>
2. https://www.ucuccdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/I-Can-Wear-a-Mask-Social-Story_FINAL.pdf
3. https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/We_Wear_Masks_COVID-19.pdf