

# FACE MASKS AND CHILDREN: HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW



The CDC recommends the use of a cloth face covering when in public as a tool to reduce

the spread of COVID-19. Here's some frequently asked questions about cloth face coverings and children.

## Should all children wear cloth face coverings?

Face coverings and masks can be safely worn by children in grades PreK-12. If your child has a health condition, consult with your pediatrician about wearing a mask.

Children under 2 years old should not wear cloth face coverings due to suffocation risk.

## When do children need to wear cloth face coverings?

Children in grades PreK-12 should wear face coverings when they are:

- **In child care or at school.**
- **Unable to stay 6 feet away from others. Activities include school, child care, a playground, park, grocery store or doctor's office.**

If there are at-risk or older adults that could contract COVID-19 at-risk adults and children live in the household, families may also want to consider wearing face masks at home to help protect them.

## What if my child is scared of wearing a face covering?

Here are a few tips on helping your child overcome the fear of wearing a face covering.

- **Use a stuffed animal as an example**
- **Get a fun mask for them to wear**
- **Show photos of other children wearing masks**
- **Talk to your child about wearing a mask**
- **Practice at home as a family**

**For children under 3:** use simple language to help them to understand the importance of wearing a cloth face covering. Example: "Some people wear masks when they are sick and some people wear them so we don't get sick. We are all helping each other stay healthy."

**For children over 3:** Focus on germs. Educate your child on how we all have germs that are special for our body and some are good and some are bad. Bad germs can make us sick if we don't protect ourselves by washing our hands often and, in this case, wearing a face mask.

Most importantly encourage your child that we are all wearing masks to help our community so that they do not feel different.

## How can parents teach young children not to tamper with their cloth face covering?

Practice at home in a setting where children are comfortable. Practice in short periods throughout the day. As it becomes more routine and they observe family members and others in the community wearing them, they will become more and more comfortable wearing masks.

SOURCES | AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS | [www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Cloth-Face-Coverings-for-Children-During-COVID-19.aspx](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Cloth-Face-Coverings-for-Children-During-COVID-19.aspx)



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