



# GETTING READY FOR MASKS WITH YOUR FAMILY

When wearing a face mask, make sure it covers both the nose and mouth. After using the face mask, remove it and be sure to wash hands. Disposable masks should be thrown in the trash and fabric masks should be washed in the washing machine.



## HOW CAN PARENTS HELP THEIR CHILD TO WEAR A MASK?

Masks or cloth face coverings on adults and children over 2 years old can help slow the spread of the virus. Here are some ways to help children wear masks when you go out:

**HELP CHILDREN GET USED TO MASKS.** As much as you can, give children time to practice wearing their masks before they might need to wear one outside of your home. Teach them how to put them on and take them off.

**ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO DECORATE THEIR MASKS.** This might help them feel a sense of ownership and control over the situation. A personal touch can help make it more of a normal part of their routine and make it more likely they'll want to wear their mask. Depending on the type of mask, children can draw on it with markers or put stickers on it.

**MAKE THEM TOGETHER.** If you make masks or cloth face coverings at home, let older children help you. There are no-sew masks that are easy to make, often with materials you probably already have (T-shirts, bandanas, etc.). If you sew masks, maybe children can select the fabric or patterns for the masks they'll wear. Visit Health Canada at [Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca) to learn how.

**HELP MAKE IT FUN.** With younger children, introduce a sense of play. Children can pretend to be a doctor or nurse while wearing their masks. They might want to use a doctor kit and "take care" of a stuffed animal or doll.

**HAVE A FEW MASKS HANDY WHILE CHILDREN PLAY.** This lets them use their imagination about how to use them during playtime. It also helps make masks a more normal part of their everyday world. You can ask your child to put a mask on a stuffed animal and then ask follow-up questions about why the stuffed animal is wearing the mask. Depending on your child's response, you can clear up any confusion and offer reassurance.



# HAVE MULTIPLE MASKS, SO YOU CAN WASH THEM DAILY AND HAVE BACK-UPS READY.

## CHOOSE MASKS THAT.....

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- Completely cover the nose and mouth
- Are secured with ties or ear loops
- Include multiple layers of fabric
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- Can be washed and machine dried without damage or change to shape

## REMEMBER TO.....

- Label your child's masks clearly in a permanent marker so that they are not confused with those of other children
- Practice with your child putting on and taking off cloth face coverings without touching the cloth
- Explain the importance of wearing a mask and how it protects other people from getting sick
- Explain how to take the mask off when eating/drinking or going outside for recess/phys. ed. Hands should be clean before putting the mask on and when taking off. Use the loops to put the mask on and to remove; avoiding touching the fabric
- Explain when a mask will need to be worn. For students in 100V – Grade 3, wearing a face mask is encouraged and for students in Grade 4 – 12, a mask is mandatory. Please remind students who are taking the yellow school bus or ETS, that a mask is to be worn while on the bus
- Consider talking to your child about other people who may not be able to wear masks for medical reasons (e.g., asthma)

## TIPS TO HELP CHILDREN BECOME COMFORTABLE WITH MASKS.....

- As a family, model wearing masks, especially when you are in situations where physical distancing is difficult to maintain or impossible
- If you have a young child, help build their comfort wearing a mask and become comfortable seeing others in masks
- Praise your child for wearing a mask correctly
- Put a mask on stuffed animals
- Draw a mask on a favourite book character
- Show images of other children wearing masks
- Allow your child to choose a mask that meets any dress requirements your school may have
- Consider providing your child with a container (e.g., labeled resealable bag) to bring to school to store their masks when not wearing it (e.g., when eating)

