

# A Parent's Guide

## Helping your child wear a face mask

Your child may have challenges or discomfort when wearing a face mask. After talking about the importance of face masks, ask your child about what might be bothersome and any preferences in type, color, or style. Once you understand, you can help work with your child to help make the face mask more comfortable to wear.



## ABOUT FACE MASKS

### WHY

Coronavirus can be spread when we breathe, cough or sneeze. Wearing a mask reduces spread from person to person.

### WHO

People who wear face masks help prevent the virus from spreading. Children under the age of two and those with breathing challenges should not wear face masks

### HOW

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.

### WHERE

Use face masks when in public settings, especially in places where you are in close contact with others such as a grocery store, laundromat, pharmacy, or bank.

### TYPES OF MASKS

Depending on your child's comfort level and face shape



Face mask



Neck Gaiter

## GETTING COMFORTABLE

### Mask Anxiety

If your child expresses fear over the mask, address what is bothering them. This may be due to fear of the mask itself, itchiness, feeling hot or difficulty breathing.

- Include your child in making the mask or even **decorating** it with stickers or using fun fabrics
- Have a child feel more comfortable with face masks by seeing other family members wear them as well
- When creating or choosing a mask, experiment with **different fabric textures**

### Ways to get used to a face mask

Use a "**visual timer**" technique. Put a timer on and wear a mask alongside your child at home. Incrementally increase the time to allow your child to get used to the feel.



**Rewards.** Give your child a reward for practicing wearing the mask at home. For example, allow your child screen time while wearing the mask.

### How to make a mask:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/DIY-cloth-face-covering-instructions.pdf>

Be patient! It may take days or even weeks for a child to get used to a face mask. There are people around you who could help. Ask your health care provider to get the support you need.

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