

Helping Your Child to Feel Comfortable Wearing a Mask

Every child deserves the protection of masking

Tips for Success

Adapted from [URMC Toolkit for Helping your Child Wear a Mask during COVID-19](#)

1. Help your child select a mask they will like and will be most comfortable wearing.

- Look for masks decorated with your child's favorite color, sports team, character, or a fun pattern.
- Make the mask more comfortable by using face mask extenders, ear savers, a headband with buttons, or a face mask with around the head tie straps. Each of these take pressure away from the back of the ears.
- Please note: Gaiters used to be recommended as a comfortable alternative mask for kids. However, new research says that gaiters as masks may not be effective to help stop disease spread.

2. Prepare your child for wearing a mask

- Start practicing mask wearing at least a week or so before needing to go out in a public setting or back to school.
- Explain to your child why it is important to wear a mask.
- Model for your child to show how you wear your own mask properly.
- Consider showing your child pictures of other people in masks.
- Consider using videos available on YouTube that help explain mask use to children:
[We Wear Masks - A Social Story about the Coronavirus](#)
[Wearing a Mask - A Social Narrative for Children](#)
- Sometimes modeling mask use and explaining why it is important may not be enough and children need extra practice to feel comfortable.



You can find more detailed information in [URMC's toolkit](#) for helping your child wear a mask.

3. Try out the following 3 strategies to help when your child goes into public with their mask:

- Set Rules:** You may find it helpful to make clear rules for your child about when, where, and why they may need to wear a mask.
- Take Breaks:** Your child may need breaks from wearing the masks. Make sure you give your child a clear way to ask for breaks if they need it.
- Give Rewards:** Your child may need positive reinforcement for doing a good job keeping their mask on. Consider setting a reward prior to an outing or bringing along something they may earn.