

**BE SAFE & HEALTHY**  
**WITH POTTER THE OTTER**



**Parents Can Help Kids Slow the  
Spread of Coronavirus**

# HOW CAN PARENTS HELP KIDS WEAR MASKS?

Masks or cloth face coverings can help slow the spread of COVID-19. Here are some ways you can help your children, 2 years old and older, wear masks when you go out:

- + Help kids get used to masks.** Frequently set aside time to practice putting on, taking off and wearing masks the correct way. You may need to work on this for awhile before your child is willing to wear one outside of your home. Putting on the mask and then distracting the child with a game, song, story or a video can help them get used to the feeling of the mask on their face.
- + Encourage kids to decorate their mask.** A personal touch can help make mask-wearing a normal and fun part of your child's daily routine. Decorating a mask can give your child a sense of ownership and control as they adapt to new routines. Paper surgical masks, for example, can be customized with stickers and crayons.
- + Make them together.** If you make masks or cloth face coverings at home, let children help, either with crafting or allowing them to select the fabric or patterns. There are no-sew masks that are easy to make, often with materials you already have (T-shirts, bandannas, etc.).
- + Make it fun.** Introduce the mask as part of play, this normalizes masks. For example, kids can pretend to be a doctor or nurse and help "take care" of a stuffed animal or doll. They can put a mask on their teddy bear, or they can use their masks as part of a dress-up game where they play different characters, like a superhero or an animal. Use these games to have conversations about how your child feels about masks, answer questions they might have and reassure them.
- + Have a few masks handy while kids play.** Encouraging kids to use masks during playtime helps to normalize their use and stimulates the imagination. You can ask your child to put a mask on a stuffed animal, and then ask why the toy is wearing a mask. Starting this conversation can help clear up any confusion and reassure your child.



## QUICK TIPS THAT MAY HELP CHILDREN WEAR MASKS:

- + Be patient. Children may not feel comfortable or want to wear their masks.
- + Encouraging mask wearing by teaching children about its benefits: protects other people and themselves from spreading germs.
- + Model it. Make it familiar by wearing a mask consistently. Show children the correct way to wear a mask (e.g. covering the nose and mouth).
- + When you are wearing a mask, point it out to your kids and talk about it.
- + Use positive reinforcement. Give praise or small rewards when children wear their masks.
- + While wearing your own mask, look in the mirror and talk about the mask with them.
- + Play! Dress up their stuffed animal in a mask.
- + Decorate masks using non-toxic markers and stickers.
- + Make it a rule and explain to them that it is like putting on their seatbelts and is something that we do to help protect them and others.
- + When looking at photographs of other kids, point out mask wearing in the pictures.
- + Draw masks onto pictures of their favorite characters.





## WHO SHOULDN'T WEAR A FACE COVERING?

- + Children under the age of 2 years old.
- + Anyone with respiratory issues where mask-wearing would impede breathing.
- + Anyone unable to remove the mask without help.
- + Workers who are required to wear medical-grade mask or respirators.



**COUGH AND SNEEZE  
INTO YOUR ELBOW/  
SLEEVES WHEN YOU DO  
NOT HAVE A TISSUE OR  
MASK.**

## OPEN WINDOWS AND DOORS OR PLAY OUTSIDE

Shared indoor spaces significantly increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Increasing outdoor air circulation is one of the simplest ways to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission, so long as doing so doesn't pose a greater safety or health risk to anybody using the facility.

- + Open doors and windows to increase fresh air circulation when environmental, building, and safety conditions allow.
- + Consider using portable fans to maximize the effectiveness of open windows and doors. Position fans near doors and windows and use them to draw or blow air from the inside of the facility to the outside, instead of blowing air inside.





Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm's length) from other people who do not live in your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces. To reduce the spread of COVID-19, practice physical or social distancing in combination with other preventative actions such as wearing masks, avoiding touching your face, and washing your hands frequently.





**WASH YOUR HANDS  
WITH SOAP AND WATER  
FOR 20 SECONDS.**

## FOLLOW THESE STEPS EVERY TIME YOU WASH YOUR HANDS

- + Wet your hands with clean, running water, turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- + Create some foamy bubbles by rubbing your hands together.
- + Rub your hands together with the soap.
- + Lather the palms and backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- + Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Alphabet” song.
- + Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- + Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.





**AVOID TOUCHING  
YOUR EYES, NOSE,  
AND MOUTH.**





## TIPS FOR TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT COVID-19

- + Create a safe space by talking in a calm voice.
- + Make yourself available to listen and talk to children about COVID-19.
- + Avoid language that might blame others.
- + Provide information about the disease that is accurate, clear, age-appropriate.
- + Teach children everyday preventive actions to reduce the spread of germs.
- + If children will be attending school in person, discuss ways to protect themselves and help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

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