



**HELPING KIDS
LEARN TO
WEAR MASKS OR
FACE COVERINGS
and have fun doing it!**

HOW TO INTRODUCE A MASK

- Find a mask that is comfortable for your child. Consider starting with a 3-ply paper mask and ask the child to wear it for a brief period of time, possibly less than 60 seconds.
- It is extremely likely that if you demonstrate anxiety about your child wearing the mask, they will be anxious with you. Instead, make it fun!
- With your child, make a list of times that your child would like to try using their mask for brief periods of time. Steer clear of physical activities. Instead, direct them toward distracting activities like reading a book, watching a program on television, playing a video game, getting involved with an art or craft activity, or even playing a short card game like Uno.
- Once you and your child have decided on an activity, have them start the activity to get involved with it and then nonchalantly have them put on the mask for a brief period of time.
- Remember to keep each practice session short, but slowly increase the duration over time.
- When the child exhibits symptoms of discomfort (trying to take mask off or requesting to remove it), ask them for 10-30 more seconds. This can help them through those initial thoughts and help them learn that a little more time isn't a bad thing.
- Create a "World Record" chart for your child. This might include the date, time started, time ended and total time spent with the mask on. Each time you practice, you can review with your child how well they did last time and ask them if they want to attempt a new world record.
- Practice wearing on short trips, even if that is just in the car. Or, if you felt comfortable taking them to run an errand or buy a treat, they can wear the mask in that scenario as well.

KEEP IT FUN & LOW PRESSURE!

The key to all of these experiences is to think of a way to make it fun for your child, include some kind of reward for the behavior, and most importantly to never let it get to a point of frustration, all while increasing the time your child spends in the mask. Any amount of time is a starting point and a success. There is no failure!

We can't emphasize enough the importance of keeping this low to no pressure. We have lots of time before the start of school, and you shouldn't feel any internal pressure to achieve this quickly.

Remember that Keystone students will not be indoors with a mask on all day! We will be taking breaks outside and also learning in our outdoor classrooms mask free, so you only need to build up about 20 to 30 minutes of mask-wearing endurance.

We also know there are some kids who may need more special considerations, and we are happy to assist with that. If your child has a particular struggle and you feel you need help, please feel free to contact John or Jenny to brainstorm some ideas specific to your little one.

BONUS! MASK SCIENCE EXPERIMENT

Put ground pepper on two plates (preferably outside!). The pepper represents the potential germs inside our breath. Ask your child to blow on the first plate of pepper (careful not to get too close or inhale sharply) and see how far the flakes go. Then, have them put on a mask and try to blow the pepper again. Not only does the pepper barely move, but they are now no longer at risk for inhaling it!

This demonstrates how masks prevent germs from moving around and getting inside our bodies.

