

Supporting Children while Wearing Masks

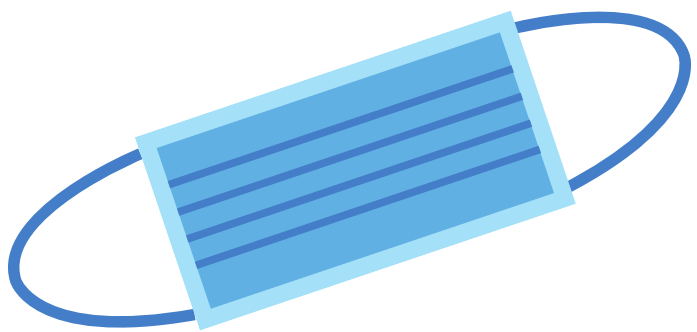
Facial features allow us to read social cues and to understand each other and directions better. While we are wearing our masks, these cues are no longer accessible for children.

Use Self Talk and Parallel Talk

Talk about what you're doing, thinking, and feeling! Talk about what the child is doing, seeing, or feeling!

Children also rely on our facial features to understand the routines of the day. Masks can muffle what we say and they also remove many subtle facial reminders we provide.

Use Visuals, Visuals, Visuals



Use visuals for all activities in your schedule. Post them and make them easily accessible for all students. Also, use more concrete cues with verbal reminders (e.g., Turn off the lights when providing a verbal warning; Play a particular song that starts when clean up starts.)

With limited access to facial cues, children might need more time to process information.

Offer More Processing Time

Pair talk with visual cues and supports. Watch and wait!

Children rely on smiles for relationship building, self-esteem, and for feeling secure.

Use **EVEN MORE** Positive Language and Actions

Continue to make positive statements and gestures all day everyday, more so now than ever. In a world a bit different than what we are used to, we want this to be their safe and comforting space away from home.