

# Helping Children with Sensory Sensitivity

## Wear a Mask



- Give the mask to the child first to hold, feel and press the masks against their face.
- Let the child choose a favorite face mask that they find cozy or colorful, and keep in mind the mask sizes and shapes.
- Show how to wear a face mask using a stuffed animal, a doll, or a family member.
- Choose mask materials with a neutral scent or no scent at all.
- Use a calm and reassuring voice when talking to the child about wearing a mask and reminding them to wear it.



- Practice wearing a mask for short periods of time in a place your child feels safe. Slowly increase the amount of time they wear the mask and start practicing it in other places.
- Introduce the different sensory parts of the mask separately. For example, wear the mask below the chin to get used to feeling the straps behind the ears. Or, try a gator or scarf to get used to having part of the face covered before introducing the straps behind the ears.
- Consider wearing clear face masks; these masks allow the child to see your mouth and improve communication.
- Reward your child for each time they successfully wear their mask. This can be a small reward, like a sticker or small toy.



**Maryland**

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH