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# Policy & Procedure – Reduce the Risk of Transmission: Masks and Face Coverings

Last Updated on **07/30/21**

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## Policy

### Staff:

Little Sprouts highly recommends and encourages staff, educators, and children to continue to wear masks when inside a program and unable to physically distance and **will continue to monitor community transmission and state and local guidance to adjust policies in response. As of August 2, 2021, masks are required for both vaccinated and unvaccinated staff while indoors in MA, CT, and VT and unable to physically distance.** In addition, staff in NH are highly encouraged to wear a mask during work hours while inside unless local guidance states otherwise based on community transmission rates. Because the community we serve (i.e., children under the age of 12) is unvaccinated, wearing a mask is a critical step in protecting both you and the people around you from getting or spreading COVID-19 which is why we highly recommend and encourage wearing masks.

### Children:

While inside the program, children must mask according to current local state guidance. Children do not have to wear masks or maintain distance when outdoors, eating, or sleeping.

- [The CDC](#) recommends that children over the age of 2 wear a mask while in public.
- All programs will encourage children three and up to wear face masks when within the facility and around other people, unless there is a valid medical or developmental reason a child cannot wear a face mask, or if a child is unable to safely and appropriately wear a face mask even after staff and parents/guardians work with the child.
- [In Massachusetts](#), all children over the age of 5 should wear a face mask inside except while eating, drinking, sleeping, or napping.

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- [In New Hampshire](#), children over the age of seven are recommended to wear masks or cloth face coverings while within the program.
- [In Vermont](#), masks are strongly recommended for unvaccinated children when inside, throughout the summer.
- [In Connecticut](#), children three years of age and older in child care and youth camps must continue to wear masks indoors, with exceptions provided for children including those with documented medical conditions, disability or special education needs; who are eating, sleeping, or resting; are newly enrolled and working toward mask-wearing; and those who have just turned three years old and provided up to 2 months to acclimate to mask-wearing.

### **Responsibility & Accountability**

- Directors will collect and file proof of vaccinations for staff files.
- Directors will ensure staff wear a face mask where required.
- Schools should have extra masks available for staff and visitors.
- Staff will model and encourage children aged two and up to wear a mask while at the program.
- Staff will receive training on supporting children two years of age and older to wear a face mask when at the program.

### **Procedure for adults wearing masks:**

- All visitors, including family members, entering the program must wear a mask.
- Family members picking their children up or dropping them off outside are encouraged to wear a mask.
- All staff should have a clean mask accessible if needed.
- Staff should practice good hand hygiene while removing and replacing their face mask.
- Staff may take off masks outside while physically distancing.

### **Procedure for Children wearing masks:**

- Children age three and up who can safely and appropriately wear, remove, and handle face masks must be encouraged to wear face masks and must be supervised at all times while wearing a face mask.

- Children under the age of 2 years must not wear face masks or face coverings of any kind.
- Children who are required to or choose to wear a mask should arrive at the center wearing a clean face mask.
- Family should provide:
  - two additional clean face masks in a clean, **labeled** storage container/bag
  - a second **labeled** storage container/bag for soiled masks
  - each face mask must be **labeled** in permanent marker with the child's FIRST and LAST NAMES
- Staff will encourage children to avoid touching the face mask.
- Staff will support children with practicing good hand hygiene while removing and replacing their face masks.
- If a child touches the face-covering (or the face covering of another child), staff will ensure the child's hands be washed immediately.
- If a face-covering becomes soiled, staff will support a child in removing it, placing it in a properly designated storage container, and replacing it with a clean face covering.
- Children will not wear masks
  - While eating or drinking
  - While napping