



Use of Face Coverings in Schools

UPDATE: On August 1, 2020 an Emergency Order issued by the State of Wisconsin, has mandated the use of face coverings, including in schools, for individuals over the age of 5.

Wearing a face covering in schools will not only help reduce the spread of COVID-19 among students and staff but will also reduce the chance that they spread it to their families and the community.

Background:

COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), therefore the use of cloth face coverings is particularly important in settings where people are close to each other or where social distancing is difficult to maintain. As of August 1, 2020, the [State of Wisconsin issued Emergency Order 1](#), mandating the use of face coverings for individuals over the age of 5.

Cloth face coverings are recommended by public health experts and the CDC as a simple barrier. Cloth face coverings help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling through the air and onto other people when the person coughing, sneezing, talking, or raising their voice is wearing a cloth face covering. This is called source control. This recommendation is based on what we know about the role respiratory droplets play in the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, paired with emerging evidence from clinical and laboratory studies that shows cloth face coverings reduce the spray of droplets when worn over the nose and mouth.

Proper Use of Face Coverings:

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily

Cloth face coverings should **not be worn by:*

- *Children younger than 2 years old*
- *Anyone who has trouble breathing*

Special Circumstances:

Based upon information from the American Academy of Pediatrics, recognizes that mask usage may not be practical for students of all ages, especially the very young. Schools and school districts should consider age, physical abilities, developmental, respiratory, tactile aversion, other conditions and needs, and grade level of students. For certain populations, the use of cloth face coverings by teachers may impede the education process. These include students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students receiving speech/language services, young students in early education programs, and English-language learners. For more information on the State of Wisconsin Emergency Order mandating the use of face coverings, visit the [State of Wisconsin FAQ](#).