

Information Sheet

Mask Wearing & Social Distancing

There are times when you might need to wear a facemask, both indoors and outdoors. Some autistic people find it difficult to wear facemasks for a variety of reasons, such as sensory sensitivities, coping with change and difficulty communicating while wearing a mask.

Wearing a mask is strongly advised by Public Health Tasmania as it helps prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Tips and Tricks

- » The Australian Government has created a [video guide on how to wear a mask](#).
- » The Tasmanian Government has a [website with advice and resources on wearing a mask](#).
- » SBS has created a guide on [how to comfortably wear a mask](#). They include tips to stop your ears hurting, glasses fogging and more.
- » Sometimes it comes down to finding the right mask for a person – there are a variety of shapes, styles, brands and fits. People have told us that masks that sit off the face are easier to tolerate. Some masks are designed to sit off the face. You can also get a silicon insert that you put under the mask that can help it sit off the face.
- » Also, for those whose ears get irritated from wearing masks with ear loops – you can try masks that go behind the head or devices that hold the ear loops at the back of the head.
- » Aspect has put together a simple resource on [making mask wearing more successful](#) based on three steps – plan, practice and praise.
- » ASERT has put together a [social script to help explain why we need to wear masks](#). This resource includes pictures and a video in several languages.
- » For people who have a physical or mental health condition or disability that makes wearing a mask difficult or unsafe. Examples include people who have trouble breathing, a serious skin condition on the face, an intellectual disability or people who have experienced trauma.
- » When engaging in activity where physical distancing is not possible but wearing a mask is not feasible. Examples include:
 - Personal services e.g. beard trimming, facials, make up application.
 - Physical exercise e.g. group fitness classes, personal training, playing contact sport.
 - Performance e.g. singing in a choir, playing a musical instrument in an orchestra, acting or singing in a play.
- » When eating and drinking.

Exemptions and Exceptions

The Tasmanian government public health advises that masks are not recommended in the following circumstances:

- » For children under 12 years of age who do not feel comfortable wearing a mask.

Children under 2 years of age should never wear a mask.

Speak to your GP

If you find it hard to wear a mask you can talk to your doctor (GP) about it. Your GP might be able to help you find a way to wear a mask comfortably, or provide a letter of support or exemption for you not to wear a mask.

Here is an article from the RACGP on [what GPs and patients should know about mask wearing](#).