

Tips for getting younger kids to wear a mask as new mandate goes into effect



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(WXYZ) — Michigan's extended mask mandate for kids ages 2-4 goes into effect on Monday, but we all know getting kids to do things they don't want to

is tough.

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Kids ages 2-4 are now required to have face coverings while in public spaces and places like camps or daycare centers. Previously, the rule only extended to kids as young as 5.

Many know it's going to be a challenge to get kids to wear masks, and it's hard enough convincing some adults and teens to wear them.



HELPING YOUNG CHILDREN WEAR A MASK

- **USE CHILD-FRIENDLY LANGUAGE**
(SIMPLE, POSITIVE, GENTLE)
- **MODEL MASK WEARING**
- **PRACTICE THROUGH PLAY**
(PLAN AHEAD THROUGH PRACTICE THAT FEELS FUN)
- **LET THEM CHOOSE THE MASK**
- **TAKE BABY STEPS**
(CONSIDER GIVING A SMALL PRIZE OR TREATS IF THEY'RE ABLE TO WEAR A MASK FOR A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF TIME)

SOURCE: MICHIGAN HEALTH



Here are ways parents can help make the transition a little easier.

- Use child-friendly language. Keep it simple and compare it to something they already do, like wearing shoes when they go outside
- Model mask-wearing. If your toddler sees you do it, they're more likely to also
- Practice through play. Have your child put a mask on their favorite doll or stuffed animal
- Let them pick their own mask and get creative

“Maybe finding a mask in their favorite color, maybe they have a favorite cartoon character that they could find a mask with that. Anything you can do to get a child to let them make choices... compliant with what we need them to do,” Lucy McGoron, an assistant professor of research at Wayne State, added.

Another idea is letting your kids pick a place in your home where masks are kept. They can decorate, leave them in charge of keeping it tidy, and make them feel like they're part of the process.

Experts warn also to take baby steps and avoid punishment, but rather stick to positive reinforcement for when your child does wear the mask properly.

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