

## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

# Preventing COVID-19: Tips for Children Attending School

This fact sheet provides infection prevention and control information for parents, guardians and caregivers to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in elementary schools. Children with any [COVID-19 symptoms](#) or who are self-isolating should not attend school.

## Talk to your child

- Teach your child the best way to prevent COVID-19 by:
  - Washing their hands at least 5 times a day; before and after eating, playing, and after using the toilet. Hands are to be washed for at least 15 seconds, using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water (teach them to sing the ABC song or Happy Birthday while washing their hands to get an idea of how long this should be)
  - Coughing or sneezing into their elbow, sleeve or a tissue
  - Avoiding touching their face and/or mask as much as possible
  - Following their school and teacher's instructions on giving space to others (e.g., staying 2 metres apart when possible)
- Talk to your child about changes that they may see when they return to school, such as their teachers wearing a mask and not sharing food, books, papers and other items with classmates.



## Think about Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizer

- Your child's school may allow you to provide your child with personal hand sanitizer. If sending your child to school with hand sanitizer:
  - Avoid hand sanitizer that does not contain alcohol and those containing technical grade ethanol.<sup>1</sup> Ensure hand sanitizer contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - Purchase an approved, commercially-made hand sanitizer. Do not attempt to make your own or buy other home-made hand sanitizers.
  - Do not add essential oils or other products to the hand sanitizer.
  - Label hand sanitizer with your child's name.
- Do not top up the hand sanitizer. Throw the empty container away.
- Do not send your child to school with disinfectant spray, liquid or wipes.



## Encourage wearing a mask or other face covering

Depending on your child's grade, a mask or face covering may be required or encouraged to be worn while on a school bus and/or at school. Teach your child:

- How to properly put on and remove their mask or face covering, handling only the straps and avoiding touching the outside of the mask.
- To clean their hands before putting on and after taking off their mask.
- Not to trade or share their mask with other children.
- To store their mask in a labelled, clean and dry bag or container (e.g. paper bag or pencil case) when taking it off for lunch, break or other periods of the day.
- To change their mask when damp or visibly soiled. Store your clean and used masks separately.

## Tips for choosing and wearing a non-medical mask or face covering

- Children who are unable to wear or remove a mask, or who have a medical condition that prevents their use, do not have to wear a mask.
- Choose a mask that fits the child's face with no gaps around the nose, cheeks and chin.
- Choose a mask that is made of two or more layers of tightly woven material (such as cotton or linen). Adjust (e.g., twist or tie) ear loops to ensure a snug fit.
- If your child wears glasses, wear them on top of the mask to prevent fogging.
- Consider sending several masks and keep dirty and clean masks separate
- Launder reusable masks daily, using the warmest possible temperature setting and normal laundry detergent. Dry masks thoroughly.
- Launder or clean mask containers daily using soap and water.

### References:

1. Health Canada. Technical-grade ethanol for the manufacture of hand sanitizers and hard-surface disinfectants during the COVID-19 pandemic: risk assessment summary report [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2020 [modified 2020 Jul 09; cited 2020 Aug 20]. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/natural-non-prescription/legislation-guidelines/covid19-technical-grade-ethanol-hand-sanitizer/risk-assessment-summary-report.html>

### Learn about the virus

COVID-19 is a new virus. It spreads by respiratory droplets of an infected person to others with whom they have close contact such as people who live in the same household or provide care. You can also access up to date information on COVID-19 on the Ontario Ministry of Health's website: [ontario.ca/coronavirus](https://ontario.ca/coronavirus).

For more information please contact: \_\_\_\_\_

The information in this document is current as of September 14, 2020