

# FAQs: Face Masks at School

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) has answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the use of face masks at school, as well as the care and use of face masks.

## Q: What does LVHN recommend regarding face masks at school?

A: LVHN urges compliance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, which recommends universal masking based on regional transmission data regardless of vaccination status. All counties in our area currently are experiencing “high” spread of COVID-19 transmission.

### RESOURCES

CDC school guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

CDC transmission map: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html#county-view>

## Q: When would face masking not be needed?

A: When the transmission rate is low, then universal masking may not be necessary. Low transmission is defined through one of these criteria:

- <10 new cases per 100,000 in the last seven days
- <5% of tests are positive in the last seven days.

### RESOURCES

CDC transmission map: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html#county-view>

## Q: What about mask breaks at school?

A: LVHN also encourages schools to have mask breaks in a socially distanced way. In most circumstances, masks are not necessary when outdoors.

## Q. What mask should my child be wearing?

A. Studies have shown that masks are safe and effective in children over age 2. One of the most important things when it comes to kids and masks is making sure a mask fits the child well. A mask should be snug and cover both the nose and mouth.

## Q. Are disposable masks better because of material breakdown in cloth masks?

A. Cloth masks are effective but need to be replaced after frequent washing. It is important to look at face masks after each wash to make sure the fabric isn't wearing thin. If it is, the mask should be replaced.

## Q: What other strategies can help slow the spread of illness?

A: LVHN encourages increasing ventilation in schools. Also, people who are ill are reminded to stay home.

[Learn more about back-to-school safety at LVHN.org/schoolpartners.](https://www.lvhn.org/schoolpartners)



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