



## **Guidance on non-medical mask use in schools**

A non-medical mask is any mask that may be homemade or commercially made. The mask is not regulated for medical use.

Wearing a non-medical mask will not prevent you from getting sick. It can help to protect others by containing droplets made when you sneeze, cough and speak.

### **The role of masks in schools**

It is recommended that students age 10 and older (Grade 4 and up) wear non-medical masks in school settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained. Masks are not specifically recommended for students under the age of 10, however they may choose to wear a mask if they wish.

Schools will decide where masks should be worn by students within each school setting. They may consider having students wear a mask in the following situations:

- Riding or lining up for the school bus
- Walking in hallways and corridors
- Other situations when in close contact with other students or staff

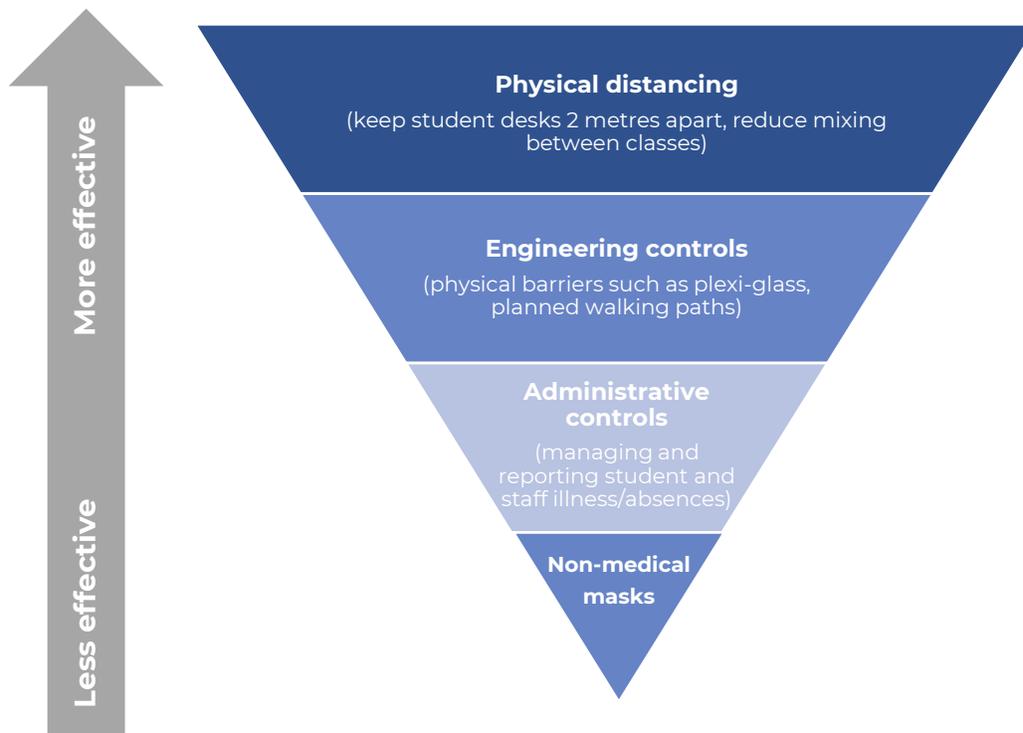
Students do not need to wear a mask in a classroom setting if they are physically distanced from each other.

### **Other critical layers of protection**

While masks can play a role in helping to reduce transmission in a school setting, they are one of the many layers of protection recommended in the [Guidelines for K-12 school settings](#).

Masks are a final layer that should be considered after other more protective measures are in place including safe spacing between students and staff, enhanced cleaning and disinfection, frequent hand washing and staying home when sick.

## Hierarchy of infection prevention and control measures for reducing transmission risk of COVID-19



### Normalizing the use of masks in schools

Parents/caregivers and teachers can help prepare students by explaining, in an age appropriate way, why it is important to wear a mask at school in certain situations.

For some students, wearing a mask or seeing their peers and teachers in masks can be frightening. It may be helpful to normalize the use of masks through play. Have them practice putting on a mask to slowly get them comfortable with the change.

With a variety of mask options available, it is important to ensure a student's mask fits correctly and comfortably.

Having a supply of several masks will allow students and teachers to change them frequently and always have a clean one available when it is needed.

Non-medical masks should:

- allow for easy breathing;
- fit securely to the student's head with ties or ear loops;

- maintain their shape after washing and drying;
- be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty;
- be comfortable;
- be made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric, such as cotton or linen (do not use plastic or other non-breathable material); and
- be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping.

### **How to safely put on a mask**

- **Step 1:** Students wash their hands in soap and water for at least 20 seconds; or with a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- **Step 2:** Students should make sure the mask is clean and dry.
- **Step 3:** Students should move their hair away from their face.
- **Step 4:** Students place the mask over their nose and mouth and secure to their head or ears with the ties or elastic loops.
- **Step 5:** Students wash their hands.

While wearing a mask, it's important that students try not to touch their mask. If they do touch their mask or face, they should immediately wash their hands. Masks should not be shared between students.

### **How to safely remove a mask**

All masks and face coverings should be removed and changed if they become damp or soiled. Homemade or cloth masks should be cleaned and changed frequently.

- **Step 1:** Students wash their hands.
- **Step 2:** If students are disposing of their mask, they should place it into a wastebasket lined with a plastic bag. If they plan to reuse the mask, they should remove the mask and place into a paper bag.
- **Step 3:** Students wash their hands.

### **Cleaning and taking care of a mask**

1. Wash it according to the directions of the original material; warmer water is better.
2. Allow the mask to dry completely.
3. Do not shake dirty masks in order to minimize the spread of germs and particles.

For more information on COVID-19 and the most up to date information on the Yukon situation visit [Yukon.ca/COVID-19](https://www.yukon.ca/COVID-19) or call COVID-19 InfoLine at 877-374-0425 between 7:30 a.m. and 8 p.m. seven days a week.