

Mask Desensitisation

(older child/teens)

General Information

Using graded exposure for a new task offers the learner a chance to feel comfortable with and make sense of what is required, before having to do the task itself. Graded exposure/desensitisation may take minutes, days, or weeks, depending on the learner's apprehension in relation to the task. If you have sufficiently adapted your methods and the process remains difficult, it may be that the learner is not yet ready to achieve this goal.

Try to engage the learner in graded exposure tasks daily where possible. It is important to gauge the learner's interest and tolerance levels in the task and work in a supportive role with the child or young person to alleviate any anxieties. Please note you should only move onto the next stage as the learner is comfortable.

The following are suggestions for graded exposure to wearing masks:

Mask desensitisation

- tasks for teens -



STAGE 1

- Watch video clips that introduce and explain the concept of wearing masks (see prior Facebook post)
- Draw masks on preferred characters
- Make a mask (use visual instructions to support)
- Adults and siblings model wearing masks – as appropriate/ without causing distress
- Observe and identify others wearing masks when out driving in the car



STAGE 2



- Practice holding a mask in front of the face when in front of the mirror

- Timed trials - try to wear a mask for 5 seconds up to 5 minutes (increasing intervals based on capacity)

- Take with and without masks photos of individual members of the family or of the family group together



- Share with and without mask photos with extended family and friends

STAGE 3

- Make short movies with characters wearing masks (i.e. ninja/doctor/ superhero)

- Family guessing game: How am I feeling behind my mask



- Identify 2 places to wear the mask in public. Increase time spent wearing mask as capacity increases. You could use a visual timer and/or schedule to support time spent wearing the mask.