

Covid-19 Update

Child Care & Summer Day Camp Programs



COMMUNITY YMCA of Eastern Delaware County

July 2, 2020

You may have seen that Governor Wolf has expanded mask-wearing requirements amid the coronavirus pandemic, making it mandatory that all PA residents wear a mask anytime they leave home. In hearing this news, we contacted the Chester County Department of Health and the PA Department of Health and upon their recommendation are amending our safety protocols regarding masks. Please note, the guidelines below are subject to change.

Governor Wolf's Mask Mandate: Clarification for Y Families

What we know:

- The Governor of PA has issued a [mandatory mask policy](#) for everyone age 2 and over.
- Wearing of masks does help lessen the spread of the virus.
- It has been tried unsuccessfully with younger children in childcare programs throughout the area.
- Children tend to touch their faces more to adjust or maneuver the mask, which can spread the virus to themselves faster.
- Raises health concerns for outside play or for children with medical/mental health conditions.

What we will be doing:

- Chester County Health Dept. has advised we continue with our current guidelines in place. We will encourage masks for children over the age of 2.
- In accordance with Gov. Wolf's mandate, we are asking parents to send your child to camp/childcare with a mask DAILY. Ages 2 and over.
- We will closely monitor children for any signs of distress caused by wearing a mask and will immediately allow its removal in these instances.
- Young children will NOT wear masks during nap time.
- Outside play- whenever possible participants will maintain 6 feet or more of social distance from one another and be permitted to remove the mask.
- Stable groups will be maintained to minimize the risk.
- We cannot guarantee all participants will safely wear a mask all day, especially in cases of underlying medical conditions and mental health concerns.
- Concerns or questions: please contact your child's Camp or Childcare Director.

How Can Parents Help Kids Wear a Mask?

Cloth face coverings (or a face mask, if you have one) on adults and **kids over 2 years old** can help slow the spread of the virus. Here are some ways to help kids wear masks when you go out:

- **Help kids get used to masks.** As much as you can, give kids time to practice wearing their masks before they might need to wear one outside of your home. Teach them how to put them on and take them off.
- **Encourage kids to decorate their mask.** This might help them feel a sense of ownership and control over the situation. A personal touch can help make it more of a normal part of their routine and make it more likely they'll want to wear their mask. Depending on the type of mask, kids can draw on it with markers or put stickers on it.
- **Make them together.** If you make face coverings at home, let older kids help you. There are no-sew masks that are easy to make, often with materials you probably already have (T-shirts, bandannas, etc.). If you sew masks, maybe kids can select the fabric or patterns for the masks they'll wear.
- **Help make it fun.** With younger kids, introduce a sense of play. Kids can pretend to be a doctor or nurse while wearing their masks. They might want to use a doctor kit and "take care" of a stuffed animal or doll.
- **Have a few masks handy while kids play.** This lets them use their imagination about how to use them during playtime. It also helps make masks a more normal part of their everyday world. You can ask your child to put a mask on a stuffed animal, and then ask follow-up questions about why the stuffed animal is wearing the mask. Depending on your child's response, you can clear up any confusion and offer reassurance.

We understand that you may not agree with these new measures. However, as a YMCA we have no choice but to follow the orders mandated by the Secretary of Health or shut the Y down again. None of us want that!

Thank you for your anticipated support and compliance with these requirements as we all work to our shared goal of a healthier community.