**Tips for Parents – Kids and Masks**

**Talk to Kids About Why We Wear Masks**
- Explain doctors and nurses recommend everyone wear a mask to protect others and ourselves.
- Explain terms like coronavirus and COVID-19 in kid friendly ways:
  - Coronavirus is a virus that can cause a person to feel sick.
  - It gets its name from the crown-like spikes seen under a microscope.
  - It spreads easily when people cough or sneeze.
  - Some people can spread it even if they don’t feel sick.
- Wearing a mask keeps our germs with us – not shared with others.

**Give Kids Choices**
- If you are making masks at home – let kids be involved in choosing colors and fabrics.
- To make a mask more comfortable sew buttons to a hat or headband and loop ear straps around the buttons.
- If your child wears glasses attach buttons to the temple tips of your child’s glasses with two small elastic bands - loop ear straps.
- If your child has hearing aids opt for a mask with straps rather than ear loops and/or look for masks with clear fronts for lip reading.

**Practice**
- Model wearing a mask around the house for short periods of time and when going out in public.
- Allow school age children to express their feelings about wearing a mask – these conversations help them have a sense of control over the situation.
- Play games trying to read each other’s emotions by looking at eyebrows for expression.
- Remember it is the work of kids to play - allow kids to play while wearing their mask to help them adjust and feel more comfortable.

Taking time to talk to your child and practice wearing a mask now will help the transition back to school and other out of school time activities in the fall.