USING DESENSITIZATION FOR MASK WEARING

Some students may find it very challenging to wear a mask due to sensory, intellectual, or behavioral issues. Desensitization is an evidence-based practice that can gradually build up tolerance for mask wearing and other targeted behaviors.

When using desensitization it is best practice to keep track of each attempt a student makes to engage in the target behavior - mask wearing. This procedure can be used with any untolerated behavior in which an increase in frequency or duration is desired.

HOW TO BEGIN:

1. Follow the recommendations outlined in the *Helping Students Get Comfortable Wearing a Mask* document found on the MSSE website
2. Take baseline data to determine the average amount of time the student can currently wear the mask and document
3. Gradually introduce the targeted skill through touch, smell, pictures, modeling, videos, play, etc.
4. Allow the student to engage in preferred activities while wearing the mask
5. Relate mask wearing to something the student can already do such as wearing a superhero or halloween mask
6. Practice the targeted behavior several times each day and document results
7. Gradually increase the length of time the student must wear the mask to earn reinforcement
8. Be prepared to reinforce the targeted behavior often (after every attempt with a gradual increase in the amount of time the mask is worn)
9. Use the attached task analysis to document progress and determine the next step

MASK WEARING TASK ANALYSIS

Begin with the first step and move down the chain of required behaviors. Document independent success (+), prompted success (p), and refusal (o) on the chart. Depending on the student's response you can either attempt or rehearse all of the steps in sequence or do one at a time. Practice these skills several times each day.

Steps	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Touch mask with hand								
Pick mask up								
Touch mask to face								
Hold over mouth								
Straps behind ears / head								
Wears mask # sec / min								
Takes mask off when told								