



TO: DCF All Staff
FROM: Dr. Nicole Taylor, Medical Director
DATE: April 6, 2020
SUBJECT: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) helps staff protect themselves, and the children and families that we serve, from potentially infectious persons and material. PPEs includes eye protection, facemasks, isolation gowns, gloves and N95 respirators. The isolation gowns protect the skin and/or clothing and the N95 respirator and surgical face masks protect the mouth and nose. The face shields protect the entire face and gloves protect the hands.

Factors determining the type of PPE selection depend on the nature of exposure anticipated, such as splashes or sprays or large volume of body fluids that may penetrate one's clothing. The gown selected will determine if it needs to be fluid resistant, fluid proof or neither.

Gloves protect you against infectious materials. Always wash or cleanse one's hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after removal of the gloves. Avoid adjusting one's glasses, rubbing one's nose, eyes or touching one's face once the glove is contaminated. Washing one's gloves does not necessarily make them safe for reuse.

This instructional video below provides some additional information on the proper way to utilize facemasks and gloves:
<https://youtu.be/DDEofupylwc>

In our work, some special topics have also been discussed which can be explained below pertaining to facemasks:

- **Homemade Facemasks**
 - Caution should be exercised when considering this option. Homemade masks should ideally be used in combination with a face shield that covers the entire front (that extends to the chin or below) and sides of the face.
- **Implementing Extended Use of Facemasks.**
 - Extended use of facemasks is the practice of wearing the same facemask for repeated use between different clients. Limited re-use of facemasks is the practice of using the same facemask between different persons.
 - The wearer of mask should avoid touching outer surfaces of the mask during use, and that mask removal and replacement should be done in a careful and deliberate manner.
- **Re-use of Facemask**
 - Extended use of facemasks is the practice of wearing the same facemask for repeated close contact encounters with several different clients, without removing the facemask between client encounters.
 - The facemask should be removed and discarded if soiled, damaged, or hard to breathe through.
 - Staff must take care not to touch their facemask. If they touch or adjust their facemask, they must immediately perform hand hygiene.
 - Staff should leave the client area if they need to remove the facemask
 - Face masks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage.
 - The folded facemask can be stored between uses in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container.

All of us can remain diligent in protecting ourselves, our colleagues and the families and children we serve by keeping in mind the best practices mentioned above.