



COMMUNITY RESILIENCE & PPE

A trauma-informed community response to COVID-19

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WHAT IS PPE?
WHEN DO WE USE PPE?
HOW DO WE RESPOND IN OUR
COMMUNITY AS A CERTIFIED PEER
SPECIALIST*?

*This is a model used by Certified Peer Specialists, but can be adapted for other workforces and professions

PPE stands for Personal Protective Equipment, and can include masks, gloves, body suits, or other wear to help prevent the spread of illnesses, such as COVID-19.



PPE IS LIKE A HARD HAT, OR SAFETY GOGGLES

If you have ever worked at a construction site, or in a lab, you know that sometimes these environments can include extra dangers, and to work safely, you have to wear special equipment, such as a hard hat or safety goggles as a precaution.

When you leave the lab or construction site, you don't have to continue wearing the protective gear.



WHEN TO USE PPE



Just like with the hard hat or safety goggles, PPE is used to keep us, and our community, safe from illnesses such as COVID-19.

We use PPE in:

- Public Settings, such as shopping centers, grocery stores, pharmacies, parks or anywhere where you may be in close contact with other people outside of your home
- Some Group Living Environments (GLEs) may have different policies

WHEN SHOULD I WEAR PPE?



I'm at home!

Is your home...

Private

No need to wear a mask or other PPE

a Group Living Environment

Check in with a supportive staff member, but PPE is probably not required

Where are you?

I'm in public!

Yes, wearing PPE will protect yourself and your community!

YES!

Are you over the age of 2?

NO!

Children under the age of 2 cannot safely wear PPE

OUR VALUES AND PPE



Some of the Guiding Principles within our community and within peer spaces are community & connection, respect, mutuality, and safety.



When we wear PPE we are choosing to uphold our guiding principles

PPE PROTECTS
OUR WHOLE
COMMUNITY,
MORE THAN
JUST OURSELVES

In our community, we often talk about self-determination and the dignity of risk. These are very important values. When we hear that we *have* to wear PPE, some of us may wonder where these values fit in.

The values of self-determination and dignity of risk apply to ourselves. That is, each individual has the right to choose their own path in life and has a say over their own body.

Because we can be sick or carry COVID-19 without knowing it, when we wear PPE, we protect *other people* in our community from harm and illness, more than we actually protect ourselves from sickness.

When we wear PPE, we are respecting the rights of other people to continue to live a self-determined life.



THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

Thinking of COVID-19 as a collective experience of trauma

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

Trans and Queer Communities

- Being home around family members who do not know they are trans or queer can lead to increased anxiety, stress, isolation and barriers to virtual supports.
- A hold on hormones or procedures.
- A loss of physical connection to community spaces.

Black, Brown, POC, and Indigenous Communities

- Overt acts of racism/racial violence while going outside
- Disproportionate access to medical treatment
- Aid and resources promised to indigenous people have not materialized in many cases; these recent experiences add to the immense historical backdrop of oppression, broken treaties, and use of disease as a weapon.
- Higher rates of death, and subsequent loss of culture and language

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

Disability Communities

- Immunocompromised or chemically injured people are at higher risk
- Less access to physical spaces; many public spaces that are wheelchair accessible have been closed, while remaining public spaces that are open, such as trailheads, may be inaccessible, leaving fewer outdoor options
- Inaccessibility of virtual spaces (lack of closed captioning etc.)
- Largely ableist society making decisions on behalf of people with disabilities without input from those impacted

Spiritual and Religious Communities

- Sikhism, Islam, and sects of Judaism, encourage or require men to keep beards. To lower COVID-19 viral exposure trimming or shaving a beard be needed. Masks may also obstruct the visibility of facial hair.
- A loss of physical connection to community spaces
- Less ability to access materials used in sacred rites (for example, some indigenous people have not been able to access materials needed for smudging)

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

Lower, Working Class, and Poor Communities

- Not having enough money to support themselves, families, and or chosen families during financial devastation and shortage of necessary supplies. Loss of income at large, and from closed bottle return stations.
- People living without a home, or in very small living quarters, may not be able to physically distance.
- Hygiene supplies are harder to obtain as well as hard to afford.
- No kitchen/cooking stations, & severe limitations on access to pre-made food.

Youth and Young Adult Communities

- Staying at home with parent/guardian creating relationship tension.
- Being abused by parent/guardian and not being able to go anywhere for support.
- Impact on access to education, life milestones, and physical community spaces.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES



Older Adult Communities

- Immunocompromised/suppressed impact on their health.
- Reemergence of trauma related to lived experience.
- The concern of mortality and time.
- A loss of physical connection to community spaces.
- Isolation from family, friends and loved ones who cannot safely visit

Survivor Communities

- All previous examples of communities could be called and are survivor communities whether a person identifies with survivorship or not.
- Trauma survivors may have preexisting health concerns. Wearing a mask can lead to reemergence of trauma, reminders of being smothered/hand over face.
- Trauma survivors who may just be healing, may feel like their freedom is being taken away all over again.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS AROUND PPE IN OUR COMMUNITY

The role of trauma, education, and environment in wearing PPE



REASONS SOME PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY MAY NOT CURRENTLY BE WEARING PPE



Safety Concerns; some people may be in a living situation or environment where they may be actively shamed, mocked, or belittled for wearing PPE, or may feel pressure not to.

Access; some people may not have access to PPE currently

Language Barriers; wearing cloth or non-transparent masks may prevent some people from lip reading, which impacts Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities more directly.

Misinformation; some people may believe COVID-19 is a conspiracy to try and take away American civil liberties

Re-traumatization; being told that PPE is not a choice, or that it is restricting, may bring up past experiences where someone felt they had no control. PPE may feel like being smothered, or having a hand over their face

Physical Discomfort; some people may feel unable to breathe, or that PPE hurts their nose, cheeks, ears or other parts of their face

Personal Concerns; some people may feel that PPE conflict with other obligations in their life, or do not know how to safely wear PPE given other cultural or religious practices

COMPASSION, CURIOSITY, CURATE APPROACH

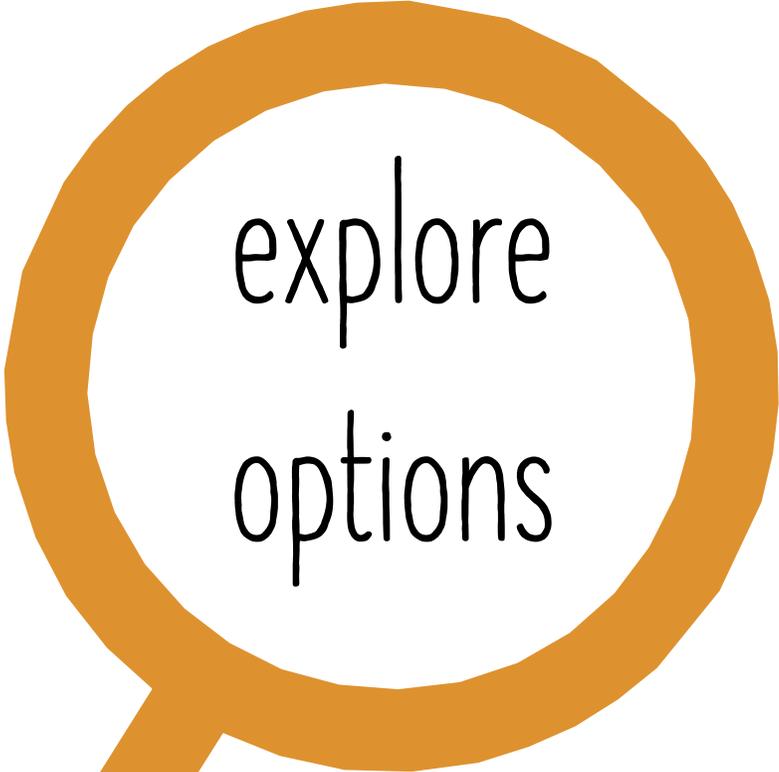
Remember to always approach an individual with compassion. It's okay to feel frustrated, fearful, or anxious that someone is not wearing PPE, but compassion is our biggest tool for being a change agent. Leave shame at the door.



Approach the conversation with curiosity. Why is someone not wearing PPE? When we explore worldview, we understand someone else's lived experience. This fosters deeper connection and allows us to address specific concerns instead of getting caught up in our own emotions.



Once we understand why someone is not currently wearing PPE, we can address these barriers. We always tailor our approach and conversation to the specific needs and concerns of the person we are supporting.



explore options

If someone is misinformed, we can ask why they believe what they believe. From there, we can address some of the underlying fears.

If someone feels unsafe in their living environment or in a relationship, and therefore is nervous or feels unable to wear PPE, what resources and supports can we offer?

If someone doesn't have any PPE, how can we get it to them?

If someone finds wearing PPE physically uncomfortable, how can we find ways to make it less painful, itchy, or smothering?

Are there ways we can work to support wearing PPE that don't work against someone's religious, cultural or spiritual practices, but work with?

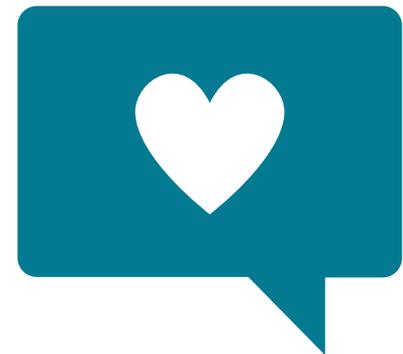
RELATED CONVERSATIONS

To protect our communities against the spread of COVID-19, there are other related conversations we must have.

Many people in our community smoke. How can we reduce potential sources of exposure when people often share cigarettes?

Some people may need assistance to bathe, eat or move around. How can we still respond to these accessibility needs in the safest way?

How do we decrease tension and sources of conflict in relationships when we may feel stressed about ensuring our needs are met?





BRINGING IT ALL
TOGETHER: OUR VALUES,
OUR COMMUNITY

We know our community cares.

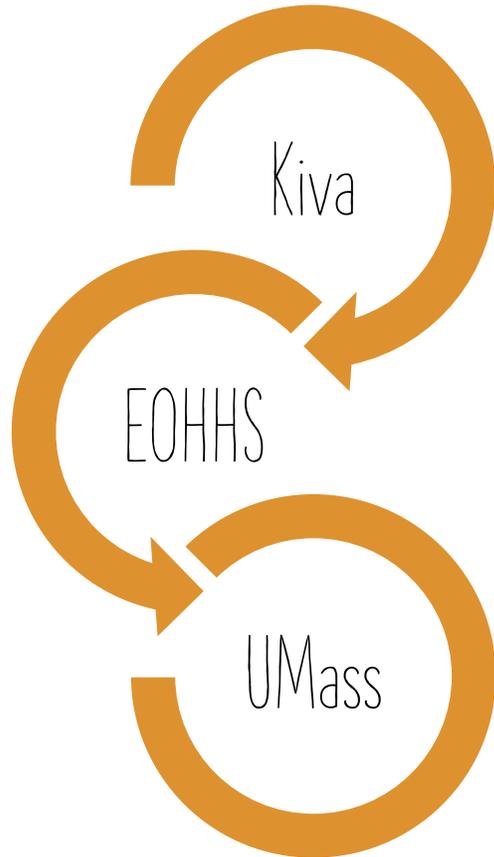
We know our community wants to heal, learn and grow
from one another.

As CPSs, our role is to support the healing, learning and
growing process through fostering connection, and having
difficult dialogues with one another.

As providers, we are strong believers in evidence-based,
trauma-informed practices and care.

Let's save lives together

AND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



Kiva Centers
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Executive Office of Health and Humans Services



Commonwealth Medicine & Graduate School of Nursing