

Having Visitors Over in a Time of COVID-19

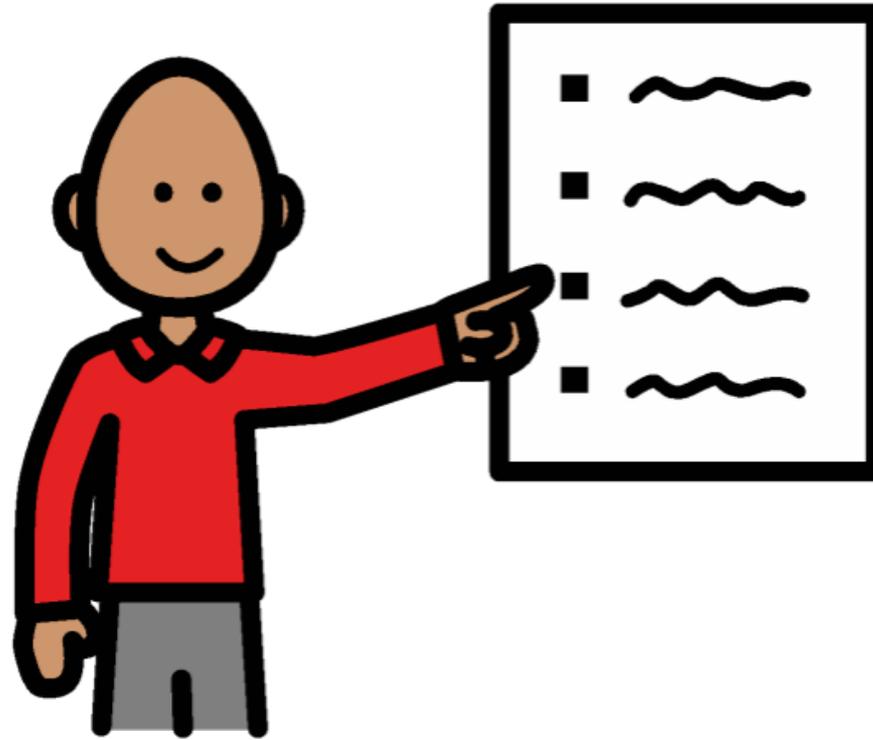


A Story about Recent Changes to the Visitor Policy

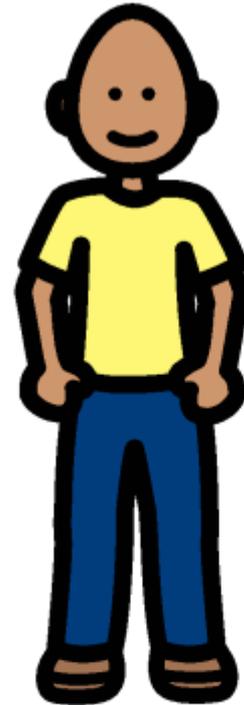
by Shannon Sousa, MS, CCC-SLP of Community Autism Resources



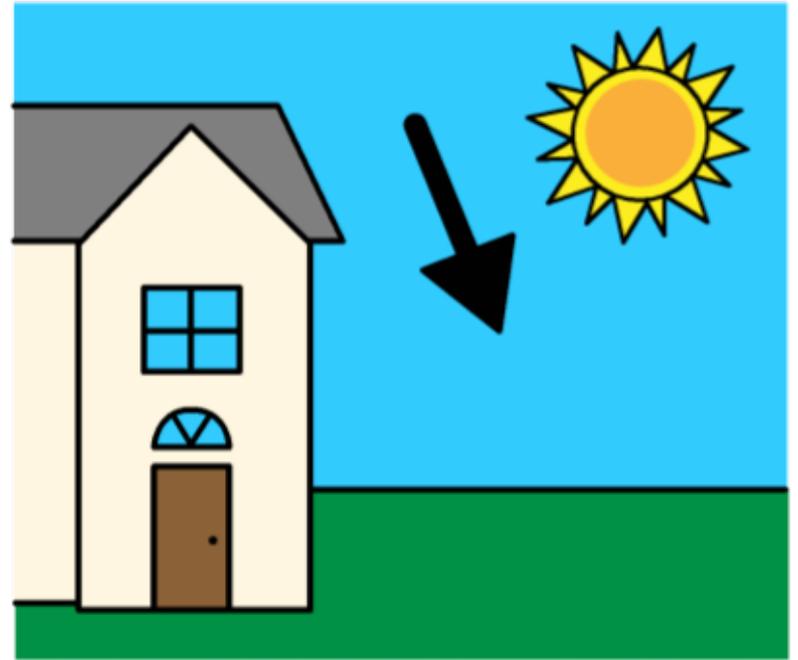
Community Autism Resources
A place to start...A presence on your journey.



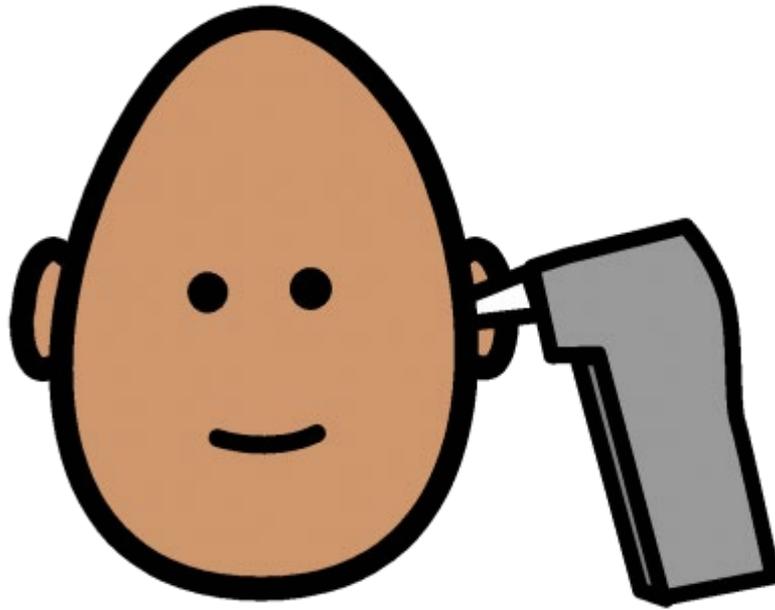
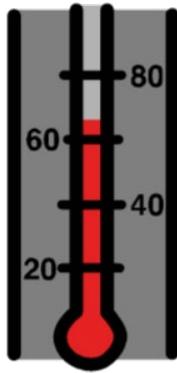
Now that COVID-19 is getting better, Governor Baker said that we can have visitors at our program homes. This is exciting news! We still need to be careful about COVID-19 germs, so there are going to be some rule changes in place.



One rule is that I can only have two visitors at a time. Visitors who are very old or very young may need to stay home to stay safe.



The visitors cannot enter the house like they usually do. There are going to be designated places outside where we can meet. Some places might include yards, porches, patios, picnic tables, or driveways.



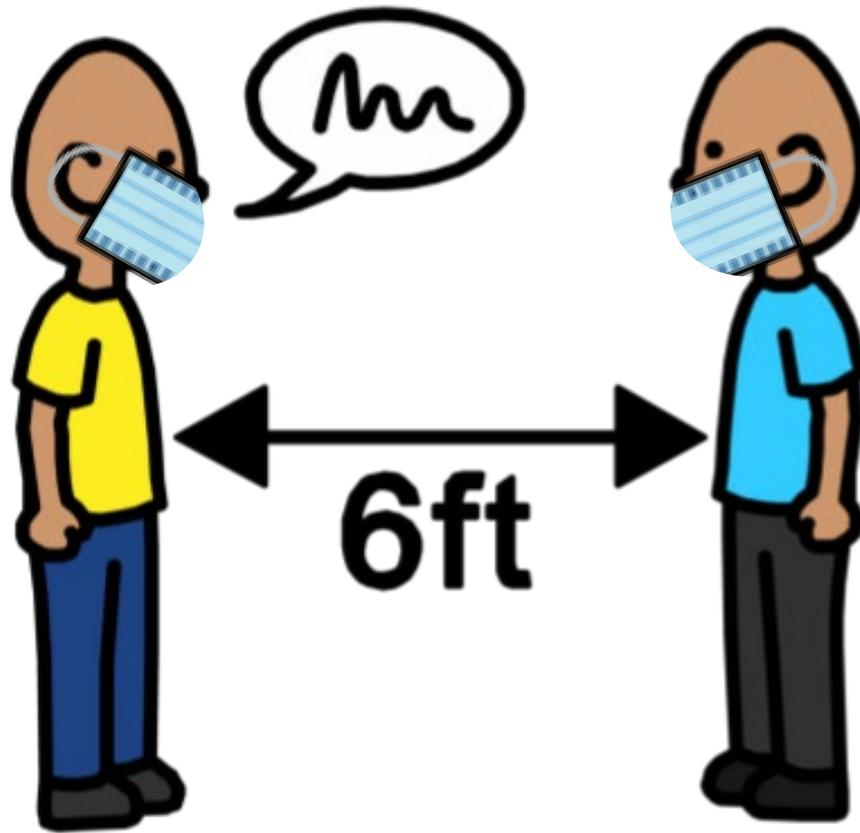
To be extra safe, all visitors will have their temperatures taken before the visit. If they have a fever or show other signs of being sick, they cannot visit. If I am feeling sick, I cannot have visitors either. We need to be very careful to not spread COVID-19.



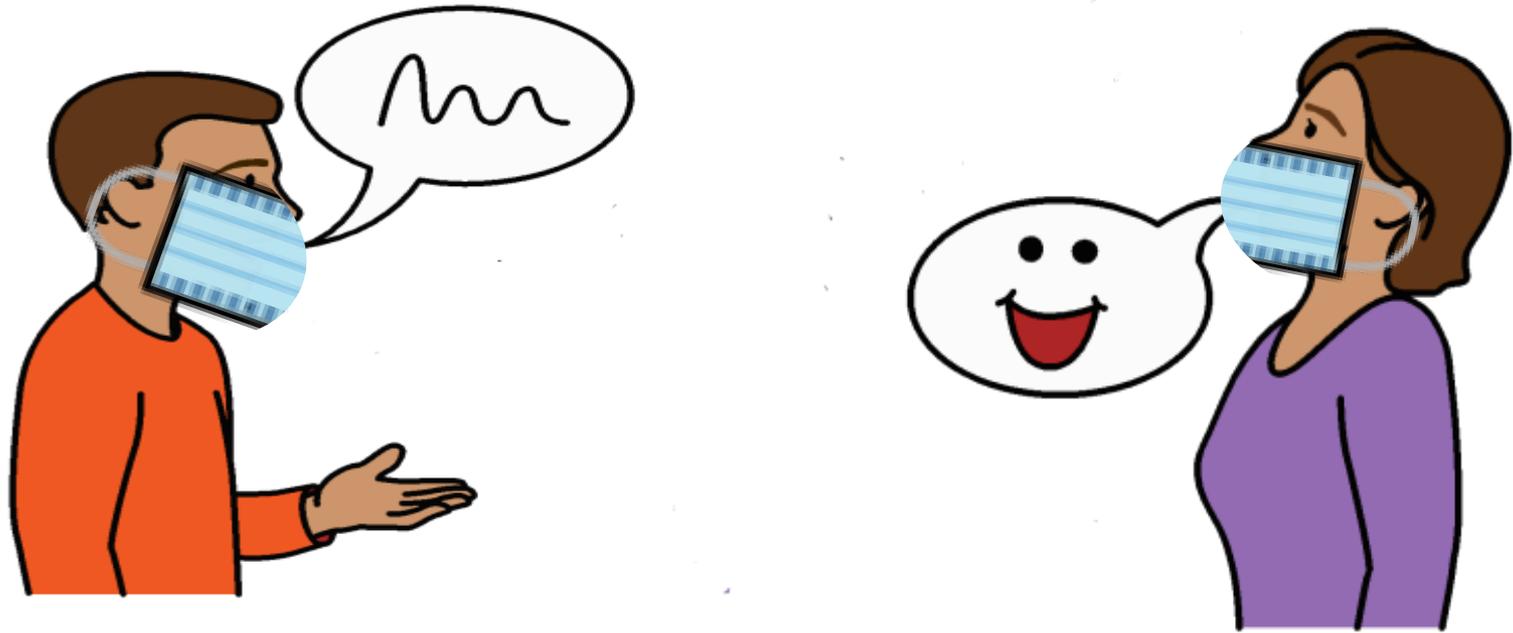
We will wash our hands or use hand sanitizer before the visit.



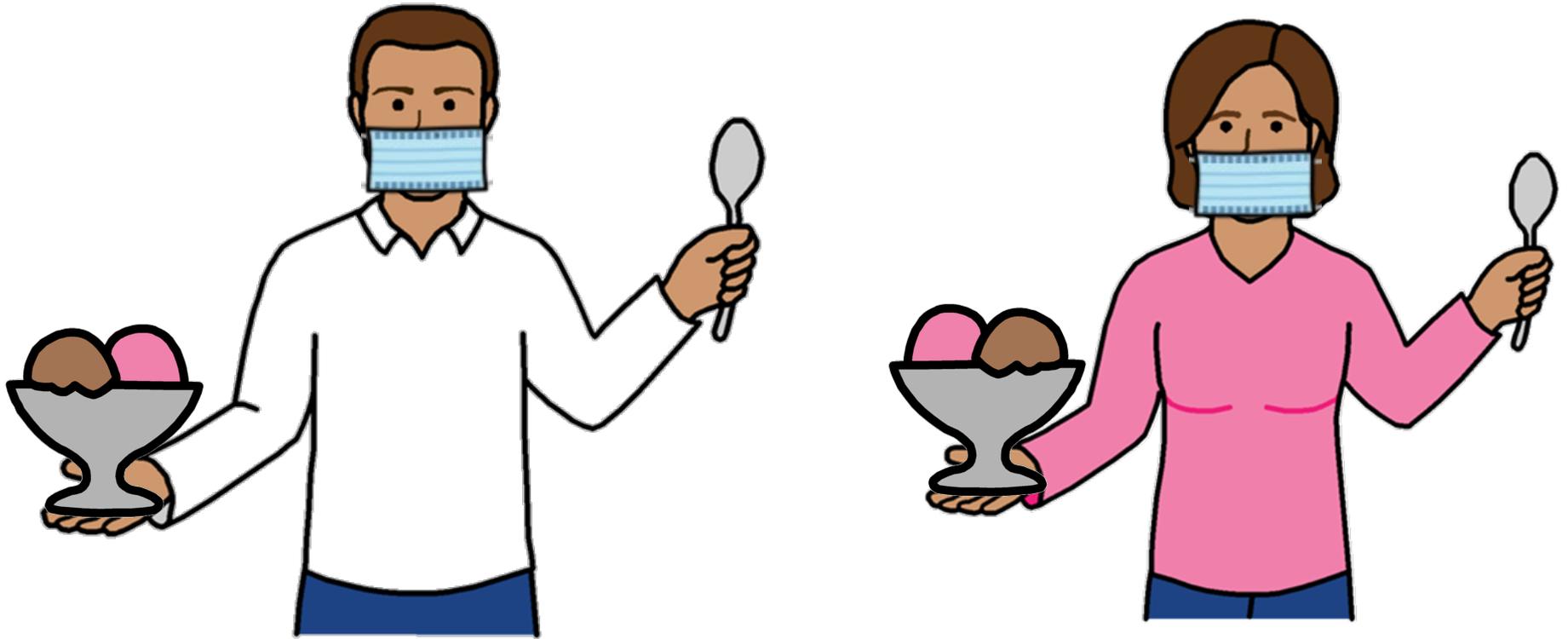
Another change is that everybody needs to wear a face mask during visits. My visitors, myself, and my staff will have masks on. These masks help to protect ourselves and others from germs.



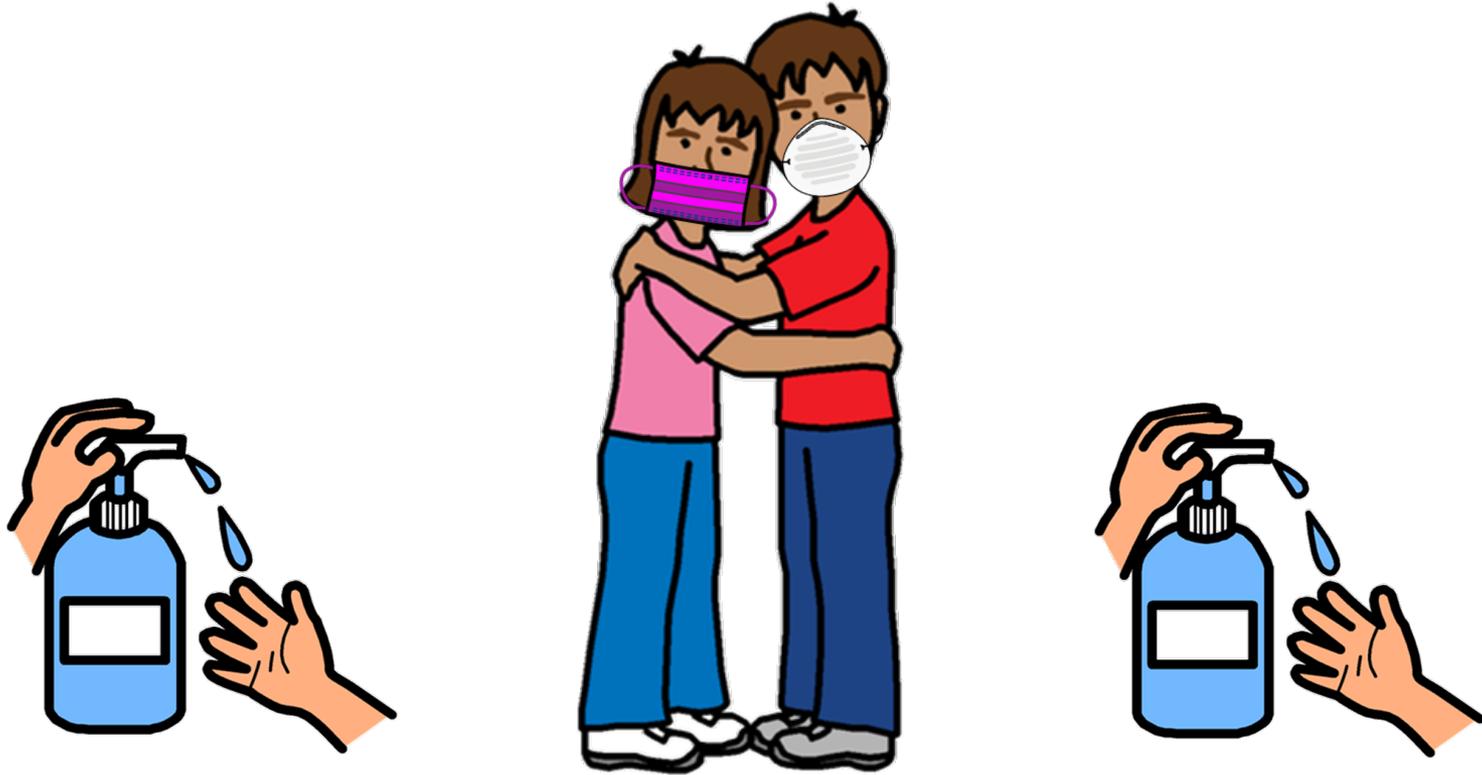
Even though we are outside, we will continue to practice social distancing. This means staying 6 feet apart from other people.



I can talk, share stories, and laugh with my visitors. We can play games that don't involving touching game pieces, such as Eye Spy and guessing games. Even though we will be 6 feet apart, we can still see each other.



My visitor might bring food to share with me, but we cannot eat from the same plate or drink from the same cup. We need to have our own plates and utensils. I might not be allowed to keep the food if it has been touched.



Because of COVID-19, we need to minimize touching. We can hug if we wear masks and use hand sanitizer before and after touching.



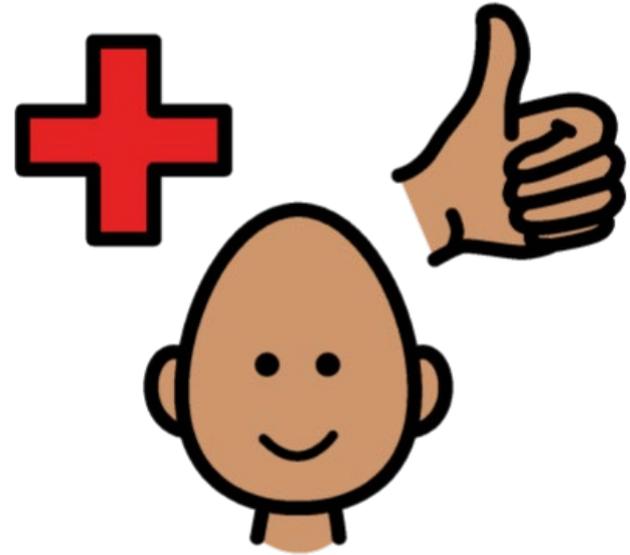
We will not kiss because this can spread germs quickly. Instead of kissing, I can blow a kiss, hug, wave, or say “I love you.”



The visit might be short because lots of people have family and friends who want to see them. In between visits, I can call, text, or video chat my loved ones.



At the end of the visit, a staff member will clean and sanitize every surface.



These changes are hard but the rules are to keep everybody safe and healthy. Sometimes it is hard to get used to changes in my routine but I will try to be flexible. Seeing my visitors in person is very exciting.