

#KeepItClear – Campaign for Clear Face Masks!

Until a few months ago, we thought of face masks as something doctors might wear, or something we put on to go to a Halloween party.

Now more and more people are wearing face masks in public to keep themselves and others safe, and you must now wear a face mask when you use public transport.

What's the problem?

We want people to stay safe when they're in public, and we understand why we're being asked to wear a mask – but we also want deaf children and young people to be able to communicate easily, and masks can make this difficult.

Fabric facemasks make lip reading impossible, and they hide the facial expressions used in British Sign Language.

We want clear face masks to be normal, and for people to wear them in public places.

This will make it easier for everyone to communicate!

What do we want to see?

What needs to change?

We want everyone to know that clear face masks exist, and that wearing one could make a big difference to a deaf person.

Stormont needs to make sure that clear, medical grade (extra safe!) facemasks are available for health and social care staff to wear.

We need everyone to know how to communicate with deaf people if they're wearing a mask – you can share our [five simple communication tips](#)!

How you can get involved:

1. Make two clear face masks – one for you, and one for your MLA.

You can find out who your MLA is here:

<http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/mlas/locatemla.aspx>

[Click here to find some designs for the masks on our blog!](#)

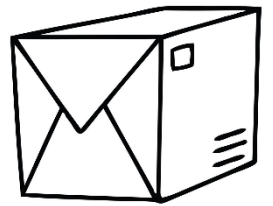


2. Write a short letter to ask your MLA, asking them to:

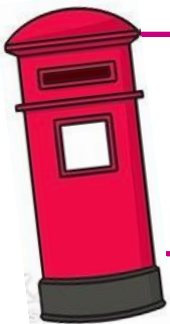
- Write to the Health Minister, Robin Swann to ask him about making clear facemasks available for health and social care workers
- Share the communication tips on their Twitter account or Facebook Page
- Post a pic on social media of them in the mask you made and ask them to tag NDCS!

If you don't know what to say, we've included some tips and an example on the next page which you can personalise.

3. Pop your facemask, your letter and the communication tips in a parcel addressed to your MLA: Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX



4. Post your parcel, and share a pic on social media to show off your unique facemask! Don't forget to use #KeepItClear on Twitter or Instagram and tag your MLA if you can.



5. Ask your creative friends and family to do the same!



6. Let us know how it goes and what response you get from your MLA.

Any questions or ideas you would like
to share with us?

Email cyp@ndcs.org.uk

Top tips for writing:

Make it personal!

Make sure you let them know they are your MLA and tell them why this campaign matters to you.

Your voice matters, so write in your own style!

Make it clear what you are asking the MLA to do.

Check what you need to include in the package.

This time you need:

Your letter, a clear face mask for the MLA; a printout of the communication tips.

You can personalise the example below to print out and send, or use it to get some ideas to write your own from scratch!

If you would like support to write your own, you can email us at cyp@ndcs.org.uk and we would love to help!

Date

Dear _____,

My name is _____, I am ___ years old and you are my MLA. I'm writing to you because....

Use this bit to tell your MLA what you want to talk about, and why it matters to you!

Next, tell them what has been hard for you or what you're worried about.

Then you can tell them why you think things need to change – if you've got a story about a time when a face mask made things hard for you, you could tell it!

In this last section you can tell your MLA what you would like them to do. Here are some ideas – you can also add your own:

- Ask them to write to the Health Minister Robin Swann about making safe clear facemasks available for Health and Social Care staff
- Ask them to take a photo of themselves in their new clear facemask and share it on social media (they can tag NDCS and use #KeepItClear)
- Ask them to share our communication tips in their office, or on social media.

Yours Sincerely,