TO: All Families and Bigs
FROM: Kate Dopuch, Chief Program Officer
DATE: March 16, 2020

RE: Important Things to Know

Since our email and text communication on March 11 regarding how our Bigs and Littles might spend time together, the guidelines have evolved. Based on our informed sources, social distancing is the best way to slow down the spread of COVID-19 (the coronavirus). This strategy will not get rid of the virus, but will potentially slow the spread. That will give our communities time to prepare to support the possible demand on our public health and social service systems.

Please stop all outings at this time. We know this presents challenges, but it is essential. If you want to talk through how to manage your relationships, please reach out to your relationship specialist. It’s as easy as a phone call, text or email. Staying in close touch with each other is important.

Tips for Bigs and Littles to stay connected

Please use tools like the phone, texting, FaceTime or Skype, to stay connected. Although we often forget, a note in the mail is a very powerful way of staying in touch. Here is some guidance for your conversations:

   Be mindful. As the news around COVID-19 spreads and change is constantly happening, it can cause stress and worry for young people. Let them know you’re there for them. Also, don’t cause more stress by being overly dramatic.

   Communicate virtually. Healthy and supportive relationships are key at times of uncertainly. Create a plan between Big and Little about how to stay in touch while following these new guidelines. Your relationship specialist is there for you.

It is important to know, our staff will be working remotely, right now and our physical offices are closed. We will maintain our regular, full work day and will be responsible for our typical duties. Although the means of our work might be different, our intent is the same – to do everything we can to continue our vital support to you.

As school routines change and other common places we visit are limited, please let us know how we can understand your concerns and challenges.

Key Reminders

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and hot water, at least 20 seconds.
- Try not to touch your face.
- Take steps to limit your time in community, especially where people gather.
- Only use public transportation when necessary and create space between yourself and others in public.
- Make sure your prescriptions are filled and that you have the essentials.
Additional Resources

- [COVID-19 Virus Fact Sheet](http://www.cdc.gov) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention PDF)
- [Talking to Kids About the Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov) (includes video)
- [Coronavirus (COVID-19): How To Talk to Your Child](https://www.cdc.gov) (includes audio)
- [Stop the Spread of Germs](http://www.cdc.gov) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention PDF)

Thank you for all that you do! Take Care.