



bigbrobigsis.com

May 29, 2020

Dear Big, parent/guardian,

We have been uplifted by your continued efforts to stay connected as we navigate this pandemic. Although many of you have identified ways to meet virtually, we recognize that as restrictions are loosening across the state, many matches are looking forward to meeting in person. As we consider all guidelines set forth by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Big Brothers Big Sisters is making decisions with the utmost consideration for the safety and well-being of all our Bigs, Littles and families.

Effective Friday, May 15, parts of Virginia moved to Phase One of its plan to address the Coronavirus and to begin safely reopening the State for economic and social activities. (*Richmond will only begin Phase One on Friday, May 29.*) There are still many restrictions in place and further progress may be delayed if there is a significant increase in infections or other evidence that loosened restrictions are significantly endangering public health.

In light of this change, *Big Brothers Big Sisters strongly recommends that Bigs wait until **Monday, June 15** before resuming in person outings with Littles.* This is the new guidance, subject to change if the State modifies its restrictions. We realize this is beyond the re-opening date, but we are operating with an abundance of caution during this time, and making these decisions in the best interest of all parties.

It is important to note that while the typical expectation of Big Brothers Big Sisters is for matches to meet 3-4 times per month, we actively encourage matches to continue connecting virtually and do not expect any matches to meet in person at this time.

## Guidelines:

1. As restrictions are lifted, there may be safe activities available to matches. If any party – Big, Little or parent/guardian – is uncomfortable with in person meetings at that time, whether for specific, personal reasons or due to more general safety concerns, we ask you to not meet in person.
2. If any match party is at heightened risk for an illness, you should not meet in person at this time.
  - Heightened risk factors include advanced age, heart illness, respiratory illness, diabetes and immune system suppression, among many others. *Please consider the health of other family members living in your home as you make these decisions for yourself.*
  - The CDC has further guidance at this link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
  - Continue to make use of our virtual match activities which can be found on our website at [www.bigbrobigsis.com](http://www.bigbrobigsis.com).

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- If any party is suffering from a current illness or has a current illness in their home, you should wait until everyone is well and symptom free before having an in-person outing.
3. If you do start in-person outings the week of June 15, please follow reasonable safety precautions:
    - Bigs and Littles must adhere to state and local guidelines regarding safety for themselves and others.
    - While traveling together by car, each person should wear a mask. Littles should sit in the back seat of the vehicle.
    - Meet in open spaces.
      - i. Play catch, volleyball, make masks together at a park, go for walks, etc. Contact your Match Support Specialist for outing ideas.
      - ii. BBBS recommends you avoid going out to eat. Consider picking up or making a meal and having a picnic outside.
    - Avoid crowds of more than 10 people.
    - Wash hands before and after outings and bring along hand sanitizer.
    - Continue social distancing guidelines. Avoid physical contact, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet whenever possible.
    - Stay local and keep outings to a reasonable length at this time. We suggest keeping outings to about an hour.
  4. Guardians should communicate any restrictions they require and give specific approval to the outing. Bigs should be clear on planned activities when communicating with parents.
  5. Please make use of the attached checklist prior to any outings. While a match may decide to meet at one point, circumstances can change and this needs to be intentionally revisited each time you consider meeting in person.
  6. **Prior to the first time you meet in person, you must inform your Match Support Specialist that you have received and understand these guidelines.**

Matches **are not required** to meet in person, and in fact, are strongly encouraged to continue virtual contact at this time. Should your match meet in person, please follow all social distancing guidelines. If you have any questions or want to discuss a specific possible outing, please contact your Match Support Specialist.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time.

Your Big Brothers Big Sisters team.

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