



Boys & Girls Clubs



Big Brothers Big Sisters

Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters  
of Edmonton & Area

Dear Boys and Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters Families and Volunteers,

We are writing to update you regarding the steps that our agency is taking to support the community and our members in this time of what has been declared the COVID-19 Pandemic. We know that members of the BGCBig community, which includes our children, youth, families, volunteers, and staff, are concerned about the spread of the virus and keeping families healthy and risk of exposure to the virus low.

**As of today, Monday, March 16, 2020, we are suspending all in person contact between our matches until April 3, 2020. Due to the announcement of Alberta Health Services, we believe that this is the best decision for the health of our families and volunteers. The agency will also not be approving any overnights to occur between March 16 and April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.**

We do want to recommend that matches continue to use technology to communicate and stay in touch. Please connect with each other (Skype, FaceTime, Phone, etc) to check in with each other as well as to discuss the current events.

- 1) **Play an Online Game** – A quick google search will pull up ideas around playing games online or on your phone against each other. A few ideas for your phone include: Words Chums, QuizUp, or Real Basketball. Chances are your Little is already playing multi-player games! Ask them which is their favorite and see if they are interested in letting you play as well.
- 2) **Book Club** – Reading is something that can be done together or alone. Talk to your Little to find a book they are interested in that is available for both of you either at the Library or at your local bookstore. Plan the schedule of reading and either get together or call each other to discuss. You can find resources online to help supplement your discussion time. Google and Pinterest are your friends! Search out *Book Club Discussion Questions*.
- 3) **Movie or TV Club** – Along the same lines of a book club, pick a movie or TV show to watch at home separately, and then jump online or on a call to chat about it. Depending on your technology you could virtually watch it together or text each other while watching it at the same time. Make sure you press play at the same time or else get ready for spoilers! It won't be as fun as sharing popcorn together but the discussion time and connection is the main goal here!
- 4) **Create Playlists** – Make a list of your top 5 favorite songs and share them with each other. Determine the best way to listen to the list such as YouTube or Spotify and then spend the time listening and really thinking about the songs to be able to share thoughts with each other. Come up with a list of topics to discuss on a call or virtually (again Google and Pinterest for the win!) such as similarities, genre differences, what strikes you as unexpected on the list, etc.
- 5) **Create Something for Each Other** – Discuss ideas around what you could create for each other. It could be anything! Playdough sculptures, drawings, songs, poems, etc!! Pick what you are going to create, decide on a timeline, and then schedule a time to virtually share what you have created! Think “show and tell” to



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discuss what it is, how you created it, and then spend time praising each other's amazing or *not so* amazing work.

- 6) **Journal** – Take this time to discuss the importance of Journaling with each other. Start a journal to be able to either share with each other weekly, or at the end of this time. Remember: A journal does not have to be a fancy notebook! It can be jot notes on scraps of paper. Decide what the shared purpose is going to be. Is it a journal where daily thoughts are simply documented? Is there a theme like “Top 3 Things from My Week”? Keep each other accountable with reminders and encouraging messages to ensure it is a shared experience.
- 7) **Stay in Touch!** – The amount of in person contact may be less due to the spread of the virus. In light of this how can you help ensure your Little knows you are thinking of them? Discuss how you can continue to contact each other either through phone calls or thru messages online. Ensure each other's boundaries are still being respected so have a discussion around the best manner in which to contact, the frequency of acceptable contacts, timing, etc. Can you schedule in a time during the week to Skype or call just as you would an outing? Along with discussions with your Little, don't forget to contact agency staff and the parent/guardian as well to confirm your plan. Communication is **key** during this time!
- 8) **Don't Stop Making Plans** – This will not last forever! It is important to stay positive during this time and future focused. Don't forget to continue making plans and goals for next month, the summer, next winter, etc. Use this time to enhance the communication between all of the members of the match and dive deep into some goal planning.

**Our staff are still working during this time and are available to provide you with any assistance. Please feel free to reach out to your Match Facilitator.**

We will continue to provide regular updates to all BGCBig families and volunteers. Thank you for your support as we work together to ensure that all children, youth, staff and volunteers remain safe.

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