March 17, 2020

Dear Volunteers, Families and Friends,

As we all learn and understand more about the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), we wanted to share guidance and recommendations that we feel will help protect everyone connected to our BBBS family and community. We’ve been in the business of long-term relationships with kindness and the safety of those we serve being at our core for over 116 years and we will be better together when we come out on the other side of these uncertain times.

Your safety is important to us, so we are currently taking steps to prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) into our community. BBBS has developed a plan to operate remotely beginning Wednesday, March 18th through Friday, April 10th. At this time, we recommend all matches cease in-person activities and match outings. Please feel free to contact me, reach out to your Match Specialist or Kelly Qualls, our VP of Programs if you would like to discuss your particular situation or to discuss creative ideas for continuing to build your match relationship without seeing each other in person for a short period of time. Everyone’s contact information while we work remotely is listed below. Aside from in-person meetings and special events, we will remain fully-operational to support you.

At a minimum, we ask all Bigs, Parents/Caregivers, and Littles to do the following:

- Review and follow the Center for Disease Control’s recommendations, (CDC) for preventing the spread of illness.
- Postpone all Community-based match outings until further notice. Community-based participants are encouraged to communicate with each other at least weekly by talking to each other by phone, email, texting, etc. during that three-week period. Respecting our recommendation is vital to keeping everyone safe.
- **VERY IMPORTANT:** UPDATE your Match Specialist NOW with your current contact information: phone, address, email, and other important contact information.
- Our team will still be contacting each of you to see how we can best support you during this difficult time. We are prepared to refer those we serve to outside services so please let us know how we can help.
For our School-based participants and Corporate Big partners, with schools closing today, we will follow up with you individually on creative ways for you to stay connected with your Littles. We are currently researching virtual options for our School-based matches.

We will continue with volunteer and family recruitment, orientations, screening and enrollment at this time and will communicate the steps we are taking to make our process virtual directly with individuals going through our enrollment process.

Follow us on Facebook (@BBBSSA), Twitter (@BBBSSouthAL), and Instagram (@bbbssouthal) for updates


NPR produced this coronavirus comic for children which may be helpful.

As the situation around the Coronavirus evolves, we will send future communications with additional recommendations. We'll also be sharing additional updates regarding the special events we had planned that are critical to our entirely donor supported mission. Most importantly, please know we are here for you and your family, and we are always ready to serve you.

Thank you, as always, for choosing to be a part of our Big Brothers Big Sisters family.

Gratefully,

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