



OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

BIGSISTERBOSTON

OUR PRIORITY:

MAINTAIN SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AS WE PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified inequities in our community and put a spotlight on the social isolation of girls we support as Little Sisters. Research shows that formal mentoring programs are a critical component of girls' mental health. While the stay home advisory paused our in-person meetings, we haven't stopped providing a critical service to our community. We are still hard at work, making and supporting meaningful connections between the 4,000 women and girls we serve as Big and Little Sisters in Greater Boston.

Research has found that mentoring relationships that end prematurely can have a harmful impact on girls. Therefore, our staff and Big Sister mentors have been innovative in creating ways to keep our mentoring relationships thriving while virtual. Girls still need our support, and we are continuing to enroll and match new relationships where possible.

Until Big and Little Sisters can resume building their relationships in person, your support of our work will help our Little Sisters continue to thrive.



VIRTUAL ACTIVITY KITS

- We offer **online cooking classes and recipe sharing** so Big Sisters and Little Sisters can cook together.
- We provide **trivia games, word games, conversation starters, and virtual field trips.**
- Staff are hosting **virtual events** to engage with our matches and our broader community.



INDIVIDUALIZED COACHING

- Guidance for Big Sisters on **how to continue to be present** in meaningful ways for their Little Sisters as a mentor and friend through this season.
- General **support to our Little Sisters and their families** to provide information on food access, health care, and other resources for caregivers.



SITE-BASED GOES VIRTUAL

- Over 80% of our Site-Based Mentoring matches have been able to **continue meeting virtually** beyond school walls.
- Our Workplace Mentoring partners are **hosting group support** for our Big Sisters who are actively "meeting" with their Little Sisters regularly.



CORE WORK CONTINUES

- **Virtual Recruitment and Information Sessions** for potential Big Sisters.
- Offering our strengths-based, culturally-responsive **Volunteer Training** online.
- **Making new Sister matches** via video chat platforms.
- Virtual programs including a book club and an origami club specifically designed for **girls on our wait list.**

BUILD A SAFER, STRONGER COMMUNITY

- **Research has linked periods of economic uncertainty, traumatic events, and stress with instability in spousal and parental relationships and increased child abuse.** This makes it even more important to keep Big and Little Sisters, and families connected to our agency.
- **Little Sisters benefit from a supportive adult outside of the home** with whom they can discuss their concerns and fears.
- **In the absence of a structured environment such as their school, girls also need contact with professional staff** who have youth development knowledge and experience, to help them adjust.

To make a donation: www.bigsister.org/donate or contact Kelli-Beth Vecchione at kvecchione@bigsister.org | 617.236.5311