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| A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated**e-Mentoring Orientation Supplementupdated 11/9/20** |

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| Big Brothers Big Sisters of Johnson County is piloting an e-Mentoring program in response to changing community needs. In tumultuous times, young people **need us now more than ever**. This guide orients volunteer applicants, parents, guardians, and youth to our e-Mentoring program. Please provide any feedback at any time; we believe in learning for life to continually grow our impact!**ELIGIBILTY*** **No prior experience with video chatting required. Training available as desired (i.e. for the Zoom platform).**
* **All participants need a dependable Internet connection at their “base” location (home, work, or school).**
* **All participants need access to a webcam & microphone (many computers and phones have these built in).**
* **All participants need patience and a willingness to work together to navigate unanticipated technology challenges.**
* **Littles typically are 10+ years old, to allow for more developed attention spans.**
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| Not being able to see your Little face-to-face will present some new challenges to your relationship but following the tips below will help you navigate through these difficulties while continuing to help your Little reach their highest potential.**SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES*** Rely on regular phone calls and text messages, or video chats via apps like Zoom to stay connected with your match. (Responsibility is on the Big to initiate.) We will help you and your match establish a routine. Use [this resource](https://www.rockbrookcamp.com/blog/conversation-starters-topics/) or [this resource](https://www.verywellfamily.com/conversation-starters-for-kids-4160004) for great conversation starters for kids and check out [this resource](https://www.allprodad.com/the-best-conversation-starters-for-teenagers/) or [this resource](https://wehavekids.com/parenting/Conversation-Starters-for-Teens) to get chatting with teens!
* [Messenger Kids](https://messengerkids.com/) (from Facebook) is a great way to safely connect with your match via a social media platform, while keeping parents/guardians looped in. [Here's more on how it works](https://messengerkids.com/how-it-works/).
* Snail mail - still a thing!  Write letters to your Little (become pen pals!), send postcards, a homemade card, pass along some print-at-home games (like these [puzzles](https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/free-puzzles-and-games-4118920) or these [coloring pages](https://www.crayola.com/featured/free-coloring-pages/)), or send them a homemade craft (like these [bracelets](https://www.instructables.com/id/Homemade-Bracelets/), or one of [these quick/easy kids crafts](https://www.happinessishomemade.net/quick-easy-kids-crafts-anyone-can-make/))

**MEETING SCHEDULE & TIPS*** **Bigs are encouraged to make weekly contact with their Little**. Prolonged contacts (like a video chat or phone call, as compared to texting) are encouraged at least biweekly. More often is fine if both Big and Little are desiring and available, but not required.
* Meeting length is flexible depending on factors such as Big and Little preference. Time spent together is one of the best predictors of positive impact upon a young person, **so we advise most virtual meetings to aim for 15-30+ minutes**. In addition to the resources shared here, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Johnson County provides activity ideas via email, phone calls, and social media to help Bigs and Littles keep things fresh and fun. ☺
* **Consider the other. Think through the lens of your Big or Little; what could help their experience be the best possible? For instance, before logging on to a video chat, pick a spot with good lighting, a strong Internet connection, and where there aren’t likely to be loud distractions: TV, phones buzzing, people going in and out a lot, etc. We are big fans of blankets and beverages to get cozy as well. ☺**
* **Be Consistent!** Showing up on time, consistently, is the most foundational way you can show you care and that you respect the other match participant. C**onsistency is more important to your match now more than ever. We have all had enough uncertainty to last a lifetime.** Find days, times, and methods that work best for both of you. Create a plan, set a schedule, and stick to it!  This will make it easier on you both, while giving you each something to look forward to and depend on.
* **Ask Questions!**In times of change and uncertainty, communication is even more important than ever. Check regularly with the other match participant(s) about their meeting preferences (as these may change, especially as the pandemic fluctuates), and whether they have any feedback for supporting the young person better. Regularly asking questions is one of the simplest and best ways to show you care and gauge what is happening!
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| ***MORE* ACTIVITY IDEAS*** Develop a talent, skill, or passion together!  Tons of experts are creating exceptional online content right now that can help you and your match have fun. For instance, [learn to draw](https://www.youtube.com/user/studiojjk) or [doodle](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL14hRqd0PELGbKihHuTqx_pbvCLqGbOkF), perfect an [in-home workout](https://www.youtube.com/user/Otheoryfitness), [practice ballet](https://www.instagram.com/tilerpeck/), [become a scientist](https://mysteryscience.com/school-closure-planning), [explore the world](http://www.encantosbrands.com/learning), [become a great cook](https://www.americastestkitchen.com/kids/home), [learn a second (or third!) language](https://www.duolingo.com/),[become a yogi](https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene), or [learn how to dance](http://www.clistudios.com/keepdancing?fbclid=IwAR3FfycKFIiiUKG6dB_CKm9AmbfjmC26sHNcDTmE8-TuZOA-va8Hwtns-k8)!
* Have a Movie Night! Plan to watch the same TV show or movie (here are some ideas and [some more](https://mommypoppins.com/kids/tv-film-movies/50-best-kids-movies-for-family-movie-night)) and discuss afterward, and/or during Intermission. Make sure to get movie selection approved by parent/guardian. Optional: [here are some thought-provoking questions](https://bookriot.com/2017/08/21/book-club-discussion-questions/) to get you going, just swap the word ‘movie’ in for ‘book’.
	+ Looking for an educational movie or documentary?  There are thousands available on [Kanopy](https://www.kanopy.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) or [Hoopla](https://www.hoopladigital.com/)that are free with a library card!
* Watch a virtual concert together!  There are many artists hopping on the bandwagon and hosting virtual and free concerts for their fans! Watch one live, or introduce them to a YouTube classic.
* Start a cooperative journal by using a platform like [Story Bird](https://storybird.com/member-family-plan) or [Google Docs](https://www.google.com/docs/about/) to document the day-to-day.  [This example](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mNFT2gkAAqn12jGGZ88Y7VDgCyS1fgGfpDcE4PEjCwM/edit?usp=sharing) provides a great format for this.
* Have a virtual book club!  Read to your match via FaceTime, WhatsApp Skype, or Zoom, or plan to read the same book and discuss with each other.  Here are  [great book ideas](https://www.raisesmartkid.com/all-ages/101-best-childrens-books-of-all-time-by-age) and [tips on starting the conversation](https://bookriot.com/2017/08/21/book-club-discussion-questions/).
	+ Have a library card? [Libby](https://www.overdrive.com/apps/libby/) is a great resource for accessing downloadable free e-books!
* Schedule an activity to virtually [check out a museum](https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/75809/12-world-class-museums-you-can-visit-online) or [visit a zoo](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/us/coronavirus-zoos-webcams.html) ([or two!](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE3VoxyYmyQCReOXk2ogsVg)) together. [Zoom](https://zoom.us/pricing) lets users share screens and explore together!
* Schedule game time! Using app-based games like [Words with Friends](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/words-with-friends-word-game/id804379658), [Draw Something](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/draw-something-classic/id488628250), [Chess](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/chess/id311395856) ([click here for the web version](https://www.chesskid.com/)), [Checkers](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/checkers/id321026028), or [Bowling](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bowling-king/id769737983) can be great ways to engage and connect with your Little, while enjoying some down time.  [Check out this website](https://www.gamesgames.com/games/multiplayer) ([and this one too!](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/free-online-games-for-kids)) for great games you and your match can play on laptops or desktops.
* Does the Little have homework assignments they are struggling with? Offering a new perspective on school can be a great way help!
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| **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**We are all feeling extra stress this year, especially parents and guardians. We want all our Bigs and families to know about these helpful resources:* NPR has [this helpful, interactive guide](https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus) for how to chat with kids about COVID-19.
* Our friends over at [Common Sense](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/resources-for-families-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic) have some great videos and other resources that can help families to better understand what's going in the news and how to react to it, as well as stay calm and learn at home.
* Harvard Health put together a [great article on how to talk to teenagers](https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/how-to-talk-to-teens-about-the-new-coronavirus-2020031419192) about COVID-19.
* The Child Mind Institute outline [some great resources and approaches](https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/) on how to talk with younger kids about COVID-19. Here is another [great article too from PBS](https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus?fbclid=IwAR1kJTbhlxueODlDz5sGyJM8UyXcT8mXPKy53ORWRYXzvzTp8D3D9ntGsVE).
* Need some family mindfulness amid all the disruption?  Ten Percent Happier has [a bevy of resources and daily updates](https://www.tenpercent.com/coronavirussanityguide) for families struggling to cope.
* Looking for activities?  [Here are 50 easy/cheap indoor activities to keep kids busy](https://www.hellowonderful.co/post/easy-indoor-activities-for-kids/?fbclid=IwAR1y1cRQpAM-ZWa49Uzwx1osTeNYwRYjcwma-YyRODyyw0N0eZViS-Yv-Go).
* [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](https://mcusercontent.com/372fc125a07c95a765bf33c3b/files/7633b0be-cf09-43ae-8c47-bff23bcd0dbf/response_to_trauma.pdf) offers an incredible COVID-19 Coping Guide with specific strategies and recommendations for each age group.
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***THANK YOU for learning about our e-Mentoring program.You are now 1 step closer to starting a mentoring friendship!*** |

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