

## IN-PERSON MATCH MEETINGS COVID-19 RECOMMENDATIONS

We recognize that it has been a challenging couple of month, as lives and routines have been altered and our social interactions limited. However, as we enter phase 2, which includes the reopening of many sectors of our economy and the voluntary part-time return to school, we are beginning to transition out of this period of self-isolation and stay at home orders, and navigating what this “new normal” looks like within the context of COVID-19. We recognize that many community based matches are anxious to resume in person meetings. The following will provide guidance and advice on what to consider prior to resuming match meetings, and how to safely participate in face to face outings.

As of June 15th, for those interested we will begin the process of resuming in person meetings for our community based matches. Prior to resuming in person meetings with your little/big, the following steps must be completed:

### **1. Participate in our COVID-19 training:**

We have prepared a training session for all community based mentoring matches that outlines considerations for in person vs virtual match meetings. Our staff team will connect with you regarding a time to complete this training. This training must be completed if you wish to resume in person meetings. All trainings will be scheduled prior to June 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **2. Create a plan:**

Before making the decision to resume in person match meetings with your little/big, it is important to carefully consider your individual situation and make informed, smart decisions to protect the health of those around you. Resuming in person meetings is a decision that needs to be made jointly between volunteers and families, so it is important to communicate with each other, as well as with your mentoring coordinator. There are many factors that may impact whether you are comfortable resuming in person meetings or if you choose to continue connecting virtually at this time. Regardless of your decision, it is important to inform each other of your concerns and respect each other’s decision.

Although the Province of BC continues to recommend that we limit the size of our social circles in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, they have indicated that we can slowly expand our social “bubbles” to include friends and family not in our household. However, we must recognize that each time we add another person to our in-person social circle, we are connecting to all of their connections, and connecting them to all of yours.

It is the responsibility of each match to make a plan about what you are comfortable with in terms of in person meetings and inform your mentoring coordinator of this plan.

## **Recommendations for Safe In Person Meetings**

If together you have made the decision that you would like to resume in person match visits, the following are considerations on how to safely reconnect with your match.

### **Guidelines from BC Health Authorities**

Our decisions as an agency will continue to adhere to the guidance and recommendations of our municipal, provincial, and federal Health Authorities. We recommend that you stay informed regarding these guidelines as they will help you make smart choices and take proper precautions to protect your health and minimize the spread of COVID-19.

As we re-emerge into community, many of the same principles that we saw under stay home measures continue to be in effect. They include:

- maintaining physical distance/minimizing physical contact
- washing your hands frequently and thoroughly
- staying home if you are sick.

For more information and updates from BC Health on Covid-19, please visit:

Health Link BC – COVID 19: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

BC Centre for Disease Control: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>

### **Physical Distancing – location of Match activities**

- We recommend that match meetings take place in outdoor spaces where appropriate physical distancing can be maintained (keeping at least two meters away from other people) and where there is adequate ventilation.
- No overnight visits will be permitted at this time.
- Avoid crowded places, which includes gatherings on the beach or in parks, basketball games, large group activities
- Avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs, handshakes). Regularly remind children about keeping their “hands to yourself”
- Non-medical masks should be used anytime you are in close quarters or appropriate physical distancing cannot be maintained.

### **Personal Hygiene Measures**

- The most important thing you can do to prevent the spread of coronavirus and other illness is to wash your hands frequently and thoroughly and avoid touching your face. Wash hands before, during and after every mentoring opportunity.
- Follow proper respiratory protocols - cough or sneeze into your sleeve and not your hands and dispose of tissues immediately.
- Do not share any food, plates, or utensils. Bring your own water bottles and supplies.
- Sanitize anything that you take on a match activity before you leave and after you return.

### **Self-Monitoring for COVID-19 Symptoms**

- It is important to not go on match meetings if you feel ill, or show any symptoms of illness. If you are concerned about symptoms, please contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further input.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them on match meetings.
- Volunteers must assess themselves for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to going on match meetings.
- You must stay home and self-isolate if any of these situations apply:
  - you have symptoms of COVID-19
  - you have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days
  - you were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak

### **Transportation/Travel**

- It is recommended that you do not travel in the same car together. If possible, please arrange to meet at the match location.
- If you do travel in the same car, as much distance should be maintained as possible (ie. Littles sit in back seat), and non-medical masks should be worn.
- It is your responsibility to sanitize your vehicle before and after each match visit, ensuring that frequently touched surfaces (ie. steering wheel, door handles, dash, etc) are wiped down.
- Avoid traveling in public transit together

### **Wearing Masks or Face Coverings**

The following information is provided by Health Canada

- Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering while out in public is recommended for periods of time when it is not possible to consistently maintain a 2-meter physical distance from others, particularly in crowded public settings, such as:
  - Stores
  - Shopping areas
  - Public transportation
- Masks alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. You must consistently and strictly adhere to good hygiene and public health measures, including frequent hand washing and physical distancing.
- If you choose to wear one, refer to
  - [guidelines on wearing non-medical masks and how to make your own](#)
  - [COVID-19 Special Advisory Committee's](#) recommendations on the [use of non-medical cloth masks or face coverings in community settings](#)