# INTRODUCTION TO VIRTUAL MENTORING

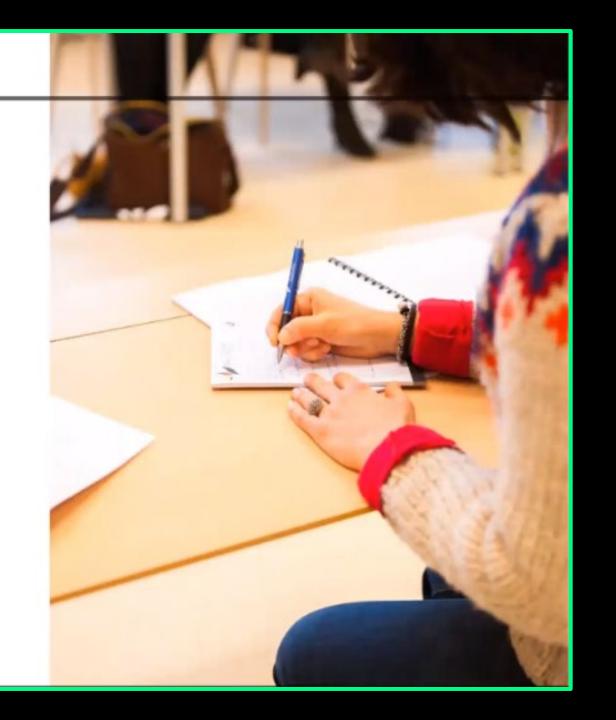
# HOW TO STAY CLOSE FROM AFAR





#### Agenda

- The Basics of Virtual Mentoring
- Your Role as a Big
  - Be Mindful
  - Be Intentional
  - Be in it Together
  - Be Communicative
- Special Considerations for Site/School-Based Matches
- Ways to Connect
- Internet Safety
- Match Activity Ideas
- Final Tips & Tricks





# **Basics of Virtual Mentoring**

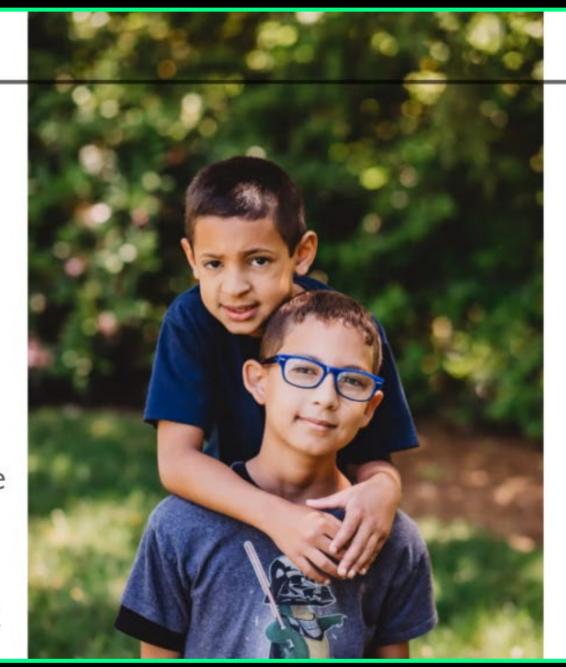
Though similar, Virtual Mentoring is slightly different from our communityand site-based programs. Specifically:

- Bigs and Littles are encouraged to connect once per week to help maintain consistency.
- Bigs and Littles are required to contact BBBSTB Staff at least once per month for match updates.
- All activities are done virtually (duh).

### Your Role as a Big

Your role as a Big hasn't changed, but:

- Be mindful of your Little's trauma and how the pandemic might be impacting them.
- Be intentional about preserving continuity in the relationship
- Be in it together and let your Little know you are in this together and are here to help.
- Be communicative about your relationship, stay healthy and strong.





#### Be Mindful

- It's important to remember the trauma impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on you and your Littles.
- Be mindful of you and your Littles' reactions that might include:



#### Be Mindful

- How to be practice mindfulness:
  - Check-in with yourself
  - Stay rooted in your match history
  - We all will react differently to the changing world around us
  - Reach out to Match Support!

Oxygen mask before assisting others.

Seriously, you can't help

anyone if you're dead.





#### Be Intentional

- Children and youth are going to be experiencing feelings of uncertainty.
- It's essential your Little knows you are still his/her Big, their mentor. and that your intentions remain unchanged.
- Being a mentor is guiding your Little through tough situations, just like what we're all experiencing today.
  - There are several ways you can help teach your Little how to be resilient and remain focused on their goals.

#### Be Intentional

How you can practice intentionality in your match:

- Schedule regular virtual visits
- Have a plan in place, specific activities for you and your Little.
- Don't be afraid to ask your Little how you can be helpful
- Provide 100% attention
- Be consistent and reliable





# Be In It Together

- Remember, like you, your Little might be feeling alone, anxious, isolated, and even traumatized by what's going on in the world today.
- It's important that you are available to your Little if they want to talk and remind them that they are not alone.



- There are many useful resources on how to talk to your Little about COVID-19 and the anxiety/stress they may be experiencing.
  - A great place to start is our Virtual Mentoring Toolkit for links to information that may be helpful.

# Be In It Together

How you can stay together from afar throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Ask how your Little and the family are doing
- Listen and be compassionate
- Check in with the Parent/Guardian periodically, not just with your Little
- Communicate with the Parent/Guardian and with your Match Support Specialist
- Work together to help support your Little

Big, Little, Parent/Guardian, Match Support Specialist We're all in this together!





#### Be Communicative

Communication is key in developing and maintaining all healthy and supportive relationships, but especially now.

Communicate with your Little:

- Connect by phone, mail, Facetime, etc
- Practice active listening
- Be empathetic
- Be patient and open minded
- Initiate contacts

#### Be Communicative

#### Communicate with Parents/Guardian

 Can't get through, or have a younger Little? Call his/her parent directly to check-in, schedule virtual visits, and ask how you can help. Be a team.

#### Communicate with your Match Support Specialist

 Monthly updates are required, but we're here every day to be sure you and your Little have what you need!



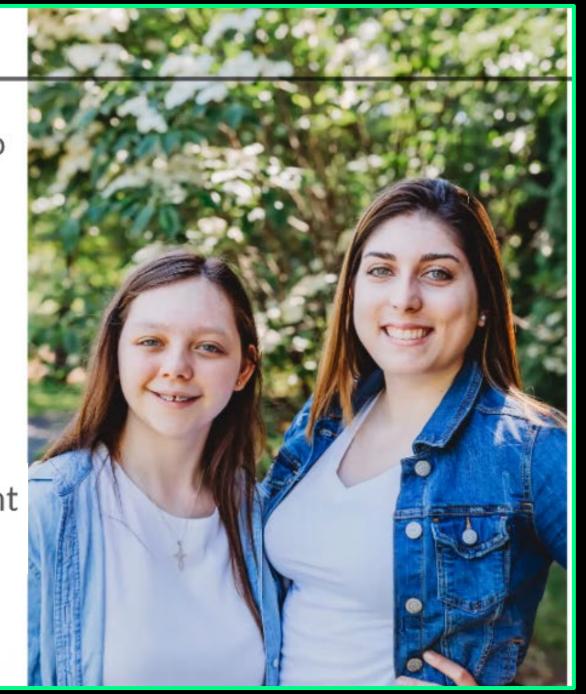


# Special Considerations for Site-Based

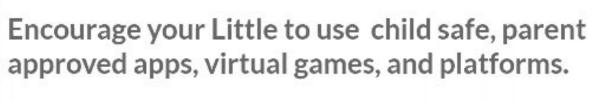
- How to get started and transition from Site-Based to Virtual Mentoring
- Once you're connected virtually and planning your first contact with the your Little and their family, here are a few things to keep in mind:
  - Communication is key! Your goal is to connect, check-in, and support; your goal is not to fix!
  - Your Match Support Specialist are here to support you!
- Thank you for your continued commitment!

# Ways to Connect

- It's important to connect, but <u>how</u> to do so is not always so obvious.
- Here are some platforms we recommend:
  - Zoom
  - WhatsApp, Skype, Google Duo,
  - Phone calls & Text Messages
- Please remember, check with the parent on what they're comfortable with





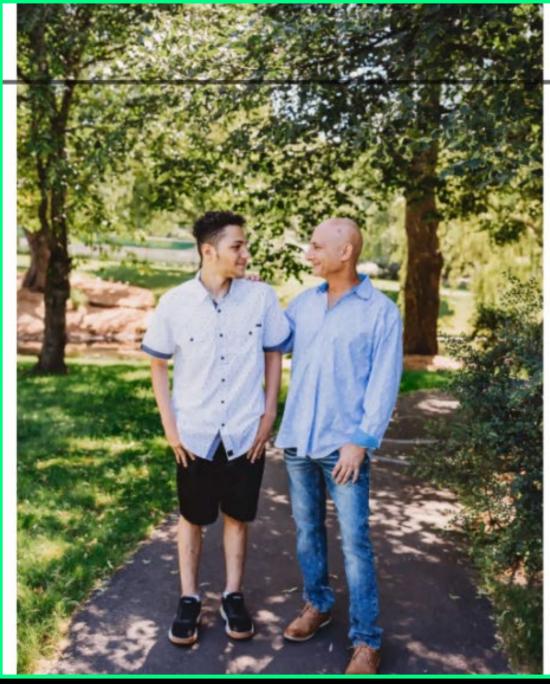


#### Explore applications your Little mentions using

- Look for pop ups that may lead to inappropriate content/malware.
- Does the app protect the Little from being contacted by people they do not know?
- Will the Little be exposed to inappropriate conversations between other users?

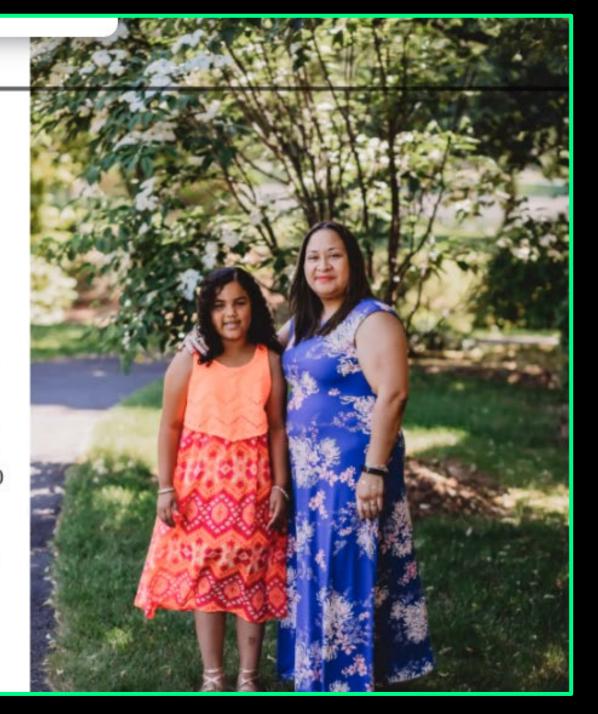
Communicate with your Little's parent and your Match Support Specialist before communicating with your Little on any new platform

- Explore the app new app yourself
- Get approval from both your MSS and Littles Parent/Guardian



# Match Activity Ideas

- Be creative, but be sure to get Parent/Guardian approval first.
- The Virtual Mentoring Toolkit has many ideas, resources and links. Here are a few highlights:
  - Take a walk together on FaceTime
  - Send coloring pages, craft kits, puzzles, or lego sets and get video or text updates on progress and finished work
  - Have a virtual movie night or book club
  - Virtually check out a zoo/museum
  - Learn a new skill/talent learn to draw, do a science experiment, cook/bake over FaceTime
  - Help with remote learning work





# Final Tips & Tricks

Remember, your role has a Big hasn't changed just because your relationship is now virtual.

- Be trustworthy. Trust is the cornerstone of all human relationships and it is maintained trust by proactive, honest communicating and problem solving.
- Be empathic. Don't just listen, seek to understand and appreciate with quick judgment or unsolicited advice.
- Be Authentic. Be you! Be honest with your feelings, be open to explanation when you don't know, and be curious to learn more when you're not sure.

# Final Tips & Tricks

Remember, your role has a Big hasn't changed just because your relationship is now virtual.

- Be patient. Provide grace and give the benefit of the doubt.
- Maintain communication. With everybody, especially now.
- Be consistent & dependable. Don't make any promises you can't keep and maintain consistent contact with your Little by checking in with your Little once per week.
- Don't forget we're here to help! Don't hesitate to call your MSC anytime.



# FOR A LIST OF RESOURCES TO HELP DEAL WITH THE CURRENT CRISIS, PLEASE GO TO



BBBSTampaBay.org