

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER



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New City, NY 10956



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tel:(845) 634-2199

To find out how to become a mentor or how to enroll your child(ren), please contact our Program Supervisor, Sarah Arras, at 845-634-2199 x 4 or email at sarras@bbbsofrc.com!

To donate to help support our mission, please visit our donate page at www.bbbsofrc.com/donate



@big-brothers-big-sisters-of-rockland-county



@BBBSofRC

"THE DELICATE BALANCE OF MENTORING SOMEONE IS NOT CREATING THEM IN YOUR OWN IMAGE, BUT GIVING THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE THEMSELVES."

Steven Spielberg



USE THESE HASHTAGS FOR ALL YOUR BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS:

#BBBSRC #DEFENDERSOFPOTENTIAL #IGNITEPOTENTIAL

OUR MISSION:

To build and support **one-to-one** relationships to ignite the biggest possible futures for youth.

POTENTIAL

IS EVERYWHERE



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Big Brothers
Big Sisters®
OF ROCKLAND COUNTY



MEET OUR STAFF!



Gillian Ballard
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Sarah Arras
Program Supervisor



Saira Vargas
Director of Operations, Supervised Visitation



Anne Nissen
Match Support Specialist



Karen Lewis
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**At-risk children need our help
-now more than ever!**



NOT BUYING CANDY THIS YEAR?

Please, do help us by making a most generous gift today and help us reach our \$30,000 goal. Your generosity can help a lot of children in need.

LEARN MORE AT: WWW.BBBSOFC.COM/FUNDRAISER



CONGRATULATIONS GILLIAN

The Board of Directors of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County is proud to announce that its very own CEO, Gillian Ballard, is a 2020 recipient of the Assembly woman Ellen Jaffee (D-Suffern), Women of Distinction Award.

Gillian has directed BBBS for 24 years and has been the recipient of many awards and recognitions over the years, but being a NYS Assembly awardee is the icing on our cake.

Well done, Gillian, and please know how grateful we are for your leadership and governance ! We look forward to many more years with you at the forefront of our organization.

Jennifer Sislin, Board Chair.





GREETINGS FROM GILLIAN:

As we work to strengthen communities, we must listen to, and lift up, the voices and experiences of impacted people and communities, particularly the voices of young people in those communities who will lead future generations. When we center and address the needs of the most marginalized, we recognize their humanity and advance equity and opportunity for all.

BBBS is committed to achieving a more comprehensive approach to justice and safety that invests needed resources into schools, child care, mental and behavioral health, affordable housing, job training and other supportive programs and services that contribute to healthy, strong, safe and vibrant communities. Societal goals of racial justice and public safety are best achieved when communities have the resources to match crisis situations with an appropriate response, whether that be mental and behavioral health, social service, police etc.



My responsibility as the CEO is to share updated information about our organization, and with that in mind, I am proud of the part Big Brothers Big Sisters plays in helping our community both by recognizing racial and ethnic disparities that persist across economic, education, healthcare, criminal justice, disability and other sectors of the community.

The role that BBBS plays in equalizing past discrimination, and advancing equity within our communities is, acted out through providing quality mentors who help our youngsters beat the odds and break negative cycles through positive life choices.

It takes family members, teachers, religious leaders, coaches, neighbors and so many others to add to the mix and my task in this equation is an easy function as I fully believe in equality and mentoring and am proud of the part we are playing in helping our community at home and at large.

On a personal note and in closing, I am sorry to report to you, dear readers, that our great loss this past month was Lenore Schlissel. Lenore was the wife of founding father, Norman Schissel, and Lenore's passing is so very sad to our organization but, in particular, to the Chair of the Board of Directors, Jennifer Sislin, her daughter, and who, I should like to add, carries her parents' torch in demonstrating the same generosity and commitment to the BBBS Mission.

To complete this season's letter, here's a statement found from a 2008 newsletter and which I dedicate to the memories of Lenore and Norman:

"A 'once-again' thank you is extended to Board Member Norman Schlissel and his wife Lenore for hosting a fabulous Pool Party in August. With over 100 guests, Norman, Lenore and friends, were busy cooking, handing out cold drinks, supervising swimmers and all the other duties that successful parties undergo."

Rest in peace Lenore and know that you are sorely missed.



THANK YOU LIA TOYOTA OF ROCKLAND

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County acknowledges the fantastic support of Lia Toyota of Rockland for the matching corporate grant of \$10,000.

Pictured from left to right:

John Vitro, General Manager, Lia Toyota of Rockland
Gillian Ballard, CEO, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland
Scott Milich, Board Member, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland



GRATITUDE TO ASSEMBLYMAN KEN ZEBROWSKI

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County expresses gratitude to Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski for the much-needed donation of Hand Sanitizer.





THANKS TO BIG SISTER GAIL TERRELL GREEN

Thanks to Big Sister Gail Terrell Green for dropping off some much-needed school supplies at the BBBS office along with headphones to aid our families with remote learning this Fall. It is much appreciated!



As always our agency is grateful to Denise Spar of the Backpack Foundation. Every year she comes through -donating much needed school supplies to our families. This year Denise called to find out the needs due to remote learning and really came through with headphones with microphones to support our Littles.



SPECIAL THANKS TO: Career Exploration in the Arts.

Big Sister Aaris Sherin, Graphic Design Professor at St. John's University, who on Monday, 7/13 at 7pm held a Career in the Arts Exploration Workshop. Also Thank you to Little Sister Quensi, who showed an interest to inspire us to hold this event.



SUPPORT US WITH AMAZONSMILE

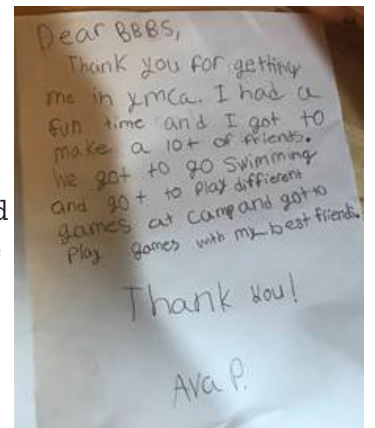
Everyday purchases through AmazonSmile have generated over \$200 million in donations to charities worldwide so far. Please sign up and shop at smile.amazon.com on behalf of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland.



1-1 PROGRAM SUPERVISOR

by: Sarah Arras

Summer 2020 was so unique and challenging for all of our Families and Bigs this year. Our agency was so relieved to be able to connect 6 children with the opportunity to attend camp this Summer. This would not have been possible without two amazing people: Judie Greenstein, BBBS Summer Camp Scholarship Coordinator and Elaine Hirsch, National Council of Jewish Woman. Both of these ladies are passionate about working closely with our agency to give families an opportunity for their children to attend camp. This year more than ever, there was a significant need for kids to attend camp and our staff was privileged to assist in this process with all the necessary PPE, of course!





One major loss for our agency is not getting to see our Senior Littles graduate from the program in person at the Rockland County Legislature. I have to say - this is my favorite occasion every year, not only for the celebration of our Littles graduating and moving on to college, but to hear how the Match relationships have impacted both the Bigs as well as lives of the Littles. Please see our graduates' stories in this newsletter and help us celebrate each one. Thank you for sharing your stories with us!

Our hearts are with our 2020 Graduates as their families celebrated bittersweet graduations and uncertainty if their universities would be opening in person, or remotely.

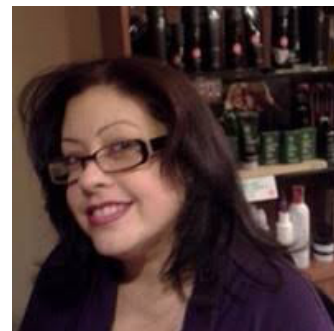
Our office always wants to hear your stories as you change and grow and wishes you the greatest success and the agency cannot wait until you return to us as a Future Big.



COURT ORDERED VISITATION PROGRAM

by: Saira Vargas, Director of Operations, Supervised Visitation.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County is committed to reuniting estranged parents with their children, and this era in which we are living makes our program ever more important for the families we serve.



In order to ensure parent/child relationships remained intact during the pandemic lockdown period (March – July for our organization), we developed a virtual visitation program which has been a proven success and remains as one of our services to date.

This method of communication proved to be a valuable resource for the families during those uncertain times and continues to be an essential service for Rockland Family Court.

Since our office re-opening in July, we recently resumed in-person visitation for the parents and children in our supervised visitation program and are looking forward to expanding our services in the near future.

As we continue to adhere to safety precautions to remain healthy, we hope you are too. Stay safe and be well.



IF YOU HAVE A SPECIAL SKILL, OR CREATIVE WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED DURING THIS TIME, PLEASE REACH OUT TO SARRAS@BBBSOFRG.COM TO DISCUSS FURTHER DETAILS.

As our Bigs and Littles support each other in this return to activities, whether they are virtual or in person, our staff cannot wait to hear what you are up to. Please send us pictures and stories of your celebrations and let us know how we can support you.



HELPING YOUTH COPE WITH ANXIETY WORKSHOP- TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13TH AT 5PM- RSVP BY OCTOBER 6TH TO SARRAS@BBBSOFRG.COM

Presented by Rockland Coalition on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependency, with presenters Margarita Santana, BA, CASAC-T, Prevention Program Coordinator; Kayla Cabacungan, BA, Information & Referral Specialist; & Eric Angeles, BS, CHSE, Prevention Educator.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

by: Anne Nissen, Match Support Specialist

It's been a thrill for all of the staff in the 1:1 Program to begin to transition some of the matches that had been meeting virtually due to Covid-19 to in-person matches, able to go on real outings – wearing masks and maintaining social distance, of course. Several matches that started during the shutdown had never met in person. The Bigs, Littles, and parents in these matches have been coming to the BBBS office to get the information they need to make this transition. We stayed six feet apart and everyone wore masks, of course. Staff couldn't see what was going on under their masks -- but we bet OUR smiles were the biggest ones of all! It is heartening to picture our Bigs and Littles doing something as simple as taking a walk and chatting in the great outdoors.



BIG AND LITTLE MEET & GREET

Little Sister Nicole, on Thursday, June 18th, inspired BBBS to hold a Big and Little Meet & Greet where Nicole shared her interests and suggested online activities to help Bigs engage Littles. Thank you for helping us build our resources!





BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF ROCKLAND IS "MOVING FORWARD" PER ALL NYS GUIDELINES

Since lockdown in March, our first "in Person" match activity took place between Big Sister Colleen and Little Sister Ashley. How happy they both seem and how gratifying to see such twinkling sets of eyes.



CONGRATULATIONS TO A'AYANAH & LISA

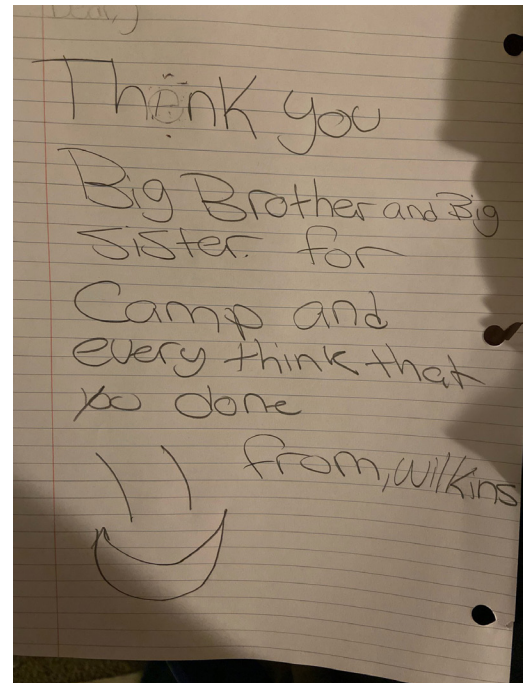
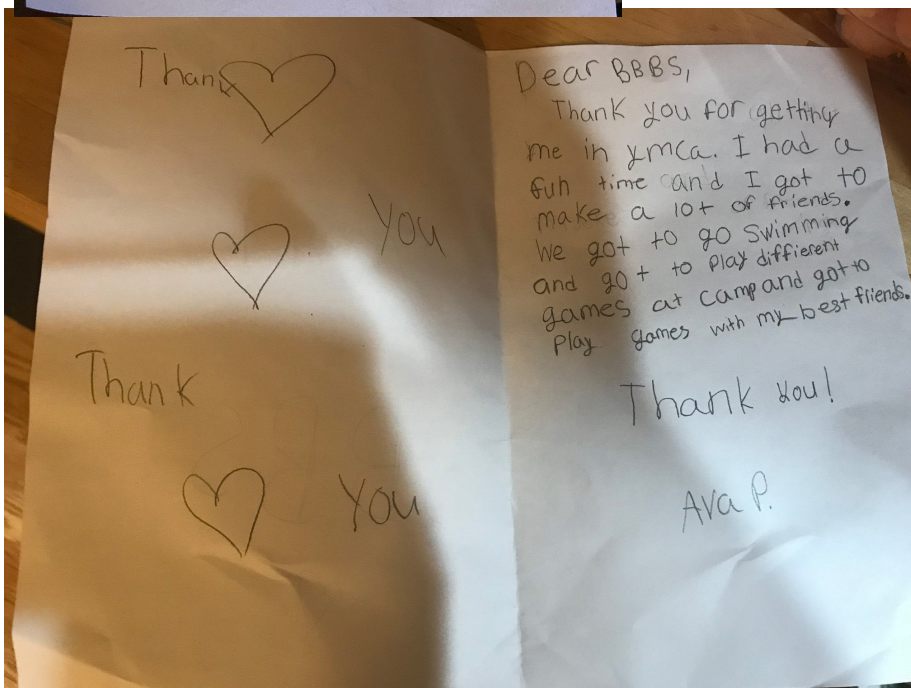
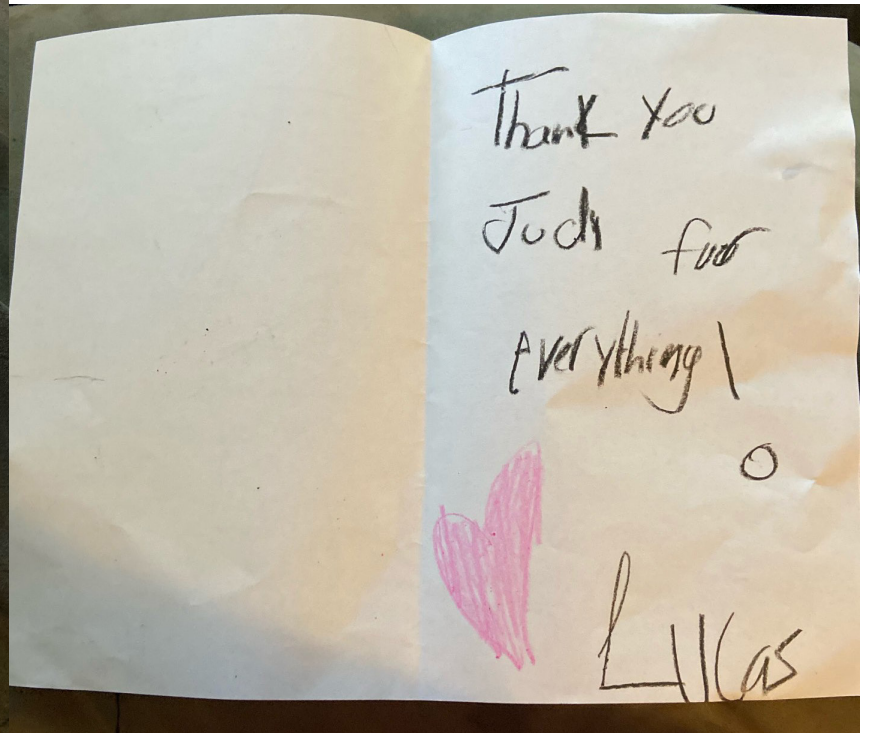
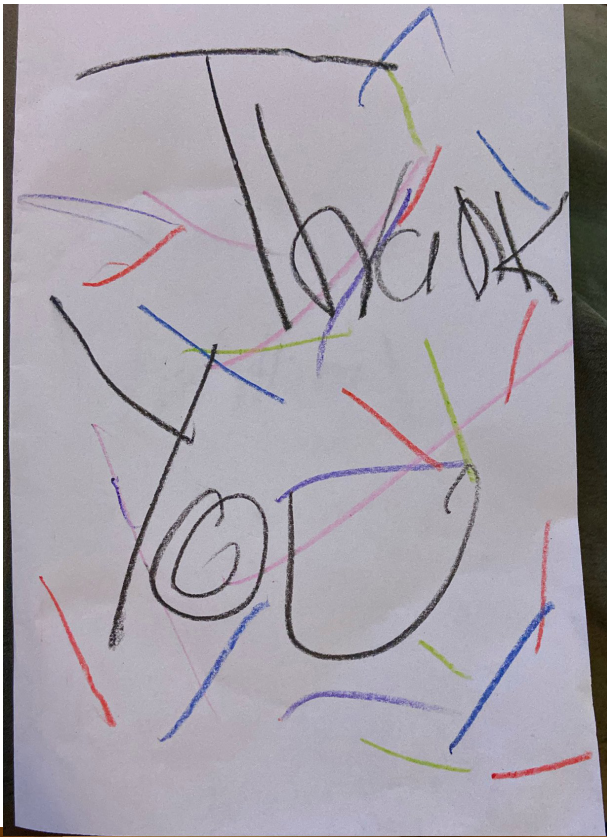
Our office loves seeing smiling faces as we bring Bigs and Littles together. Congratulations A'Ayanah & Lisa!!!





BBBS SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

This summer 2020, through the combined efforts of the National Council of Jewish Woman, and private donations to the BBBS Camp Scholarship Fund coordinated by office volunteer Judie Greenstein, Big Brothers Big Sisters was able to assist Six Littles to attend camp through the Rockland County YMCA. Also Congratulations to Shawn & Anthony that returned to be counselors at Deerkill Day Camp after several years of being campers. Below are thank-you notes from BBBS Little's Ava, Lucas, and Wilkins. Thank you to all our donors who brightened this summer for our Littles and their families and to volunteer Judie for her efforts!!!





CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES



Little Joseph graduated in the top 5% of his class, is a member of the National Honor Society and 6 subject Honor Societies, received the New York State Seal of Biliteracy, and was student government treasurer and a member of Leaders for Life club. He played 4 years of Varsity lacrosse as well as varsity soccer and winter track. Joseph will attend Kings College in the fall, studying Business or Engineering. He was admitted to the Honors Program. Joseph will play lacrosse at Kings College. Joseph was in a 7 year Match Family Partnership with Big Brother Steven Phillips & Big Sister Jacqueline Phillips. The BBBS family wishes you the best as you head off to Kings College.



Little Arlene attended Tappan Zee High School where she participated in student leadership roles with Dignity for Alliance student groups. She plans on going to college next year, but has not made her final decision. Arlene was in a short term match of 1 year with Big Jackie Smalls due to coming to us in her senior year. Her Big Sister Jackie wanted to say the following: "Although Arlene & I were matched for only a short time, we devised a plan and carried it out! I believe we made good use of our time together while having fun. I can't wait to see what Arlene achieves in the next 10 years." The BBBS Family wishes her the best as she moves on to college next year.



Little Diego graduated from North Rockland High School after a hard year. He worked hard to get out of the alternative school he was making up credits he had lost in the previous year. He has struggled all his life with academics because of ADHD and other issues. This year he demonstrated he's a super student achieving all this in three months. Unfortunately he missed the graduation pictures which we couldn't make up due to COVID-19. However, he was able to take a quick picture with his number 1 fan, Ms. Karlinsky, when he drove by to pick up his diploma. He's planning to go to RCC where he applied and was accepted next year. Diego has been in a match with his Big Brother Gabriel Lewis for the past 2 years. The BBBS family wishes you the best Diego as you move on to RCC next year!



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES



Little Elijah attended Nyack High School where he participated in Nyack Football (team captain), Heroes and Cool Kids Club, and the Business Honor Society. Elijah's future plan is to attend SUNY Brockport for Football and he wishes to study to be an Athletic Training Coach and have a marketing minor. Elijah was in a three-year match with Big Brother Jeffrey Coseo. The BBBS family wishes you all the very best, as you move on to Brockport!



Little Melissa attended Ramapo High School. Melissa received a Seal of Bi-Literacy and a Certificate of College Level courses while in high school. Her future plans include attending Rockland Community College and she has plans to join the Military. Melissa was in a 5 year match with Big Sister Robin Wren. Her Big Sister wanted to share that she is "Beyond Proud" of what her Little Sister has accomplished! The BBBS family wishes you the best Melissa as you move on to your plans to attend Rockland Community College and join the Military after graduation!



Little Jasmine attended Ramapo High School. Participated in Softball & Step-Up. Her Future plans include attending Dutchess Community College to pursue a career in Forensic Psychology. Jasmine was matched in a short term match with Big Sister Sheila Guerrero due to coming to us in her senior year. Her Big Sister wanted to share the following: "I'm so proud of Jasmine graduating high school. It's a big accomplishment and she worked hard. I have no doubt she will achieve the dreams she reaches for." The BBBS family wishes you the best Jasmine as you begin at Dutchess Community College.



**Big Brothers
Big Sisters®**
OF ROCKLAND COUNTY

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County is looking for adult male volunteers to serve as Big Brothers to boys and young men who want a male role model. Make a big difference starting today!

To apply, go to:

- 1. Go To bbbsofrc.com**
- 2. Click "Volunteer"**
- 3. Click "Become a Big Brother"**
- 4. Enter your zip code and hit "Search"**

or call (845) 634-2199.

**YOU CAN
CHANGE
TWO LIVES:**

**THEIRS
AND YOURS**



BECOME A BIG NOW



**Big Brothers
Big Sisters.**
OF ROCKLAND COUNTY



Won't You Be Part ^{of} our Success Story?

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland is a non-profit organization supported through the government of Rockland County, its villages and towns. Federal, state and corporate grants, as well as fundraising, to directly support the children in your community.

When you donate to Big Brothers Big Sisters, you help make a difference in the lives of young people. Your financial support helps us provide programs and services throughout the Rockland community so we can nurture more college graduates, community leaders and entrepreneurs. In addition, your support enables BBBS to:

- offer cultural and social activities to enrich the opportunities and lives of children.
- recruit new Big Brother and Big Sister volunteers.
- cover the costs of background checks, while ensuring trained professionals match Littles to responsible Bigs.
- provide ongoing supervision and relationship support for every Big, Little and Little's family.



TIPS ON SOCIAL DISTANCING AND OTHER PRACTICES TO HELP REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), the WHO (World Health Organization) and other leading health authorities, social distancing is one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses. The following are tips to help you practice proper social distancing at work and at home.

Everyone should know of the importance of practicing everyday preventive actions that can help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- If it is necessary to go to work or visit a public place, stay approximately six feet or more away from others
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles)

How do you disinfect surfaces for the coronavirus disease?

For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.

Can you contract the coronavirus disease by touching a surface?

People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects – and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

How should I get food?

While food markets remain open and restaurants are available for take-out only (in most locations), the best option is to have your food delivered.

If I do go shopping at a market or pick up food at a restaurant, what additional precautions should I take?

When you get home with your food, you could take it out of the containers, throw those out, and then wash your hands thoroughly before eating.



What about people in good physical shape and under the age of 30?

While the elderly and those with pre-conditions are the most vulnerable, every demographic group (age, background, etc.) is susceptible to contracting the virus, especially if in close contact with others who have the disease or have been exposed. Once again, social distancing should be practiced by everyone.

What about children?

Cases in children tend to be milder. A new study in the journal Pediatrics finds that 13% of children with confirmed cases of COVID-19 didn't show symptoms. Subsequently, children and others with mild or unnoticeable symptoms can often be carriers of the disease.

Should I visit my elderly relative or friend?

Probably not. Older individuals are the most susceptible population. Distancing yourself from elderly people protects your loved one and yourself. However, be aware that social isolation is a concern for people who live by themselves or cannot see others. Make sure to use tools at your disposal to stay in touch with others - phone, social media, video conferencing, etc.

Should I visit outdoor public places like parks and playgrounds? Can I exercise outside?

Only if social distancing can be practiced. Families can stay together, but there should be sufficient distance - six feet or more - from all other people. In general, people may go outside, but should limit their exposure to any public place.

Playgrounds in particular can be places where the virus can be transmitted through clustering or contaminated surfaces. Team sports like basketball, soccer, etc. are also discouraged at this time.

Is it OK to get together with my friends at my or someone else's house? I know everyone and they are all healthy.

Gathering in groups of just a few people, whether indoors or outdoors, is strongly discouraged. Now is not the time for social groups, parties, get togethers, etc.