



Staying Active Outside

During COVID-19

Resources and Ideas for BPS Families & Students

Getting outside is a great way to keep your family physically and mentally healthy during this stressful time. This document includes ideas for staying active outdoors, along with resources for helping kids stay safe while walking and biking. It is best to stay close to your home; some of the greatest walks are right outside your door.

While school is out, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) advises that children should not have in-person playdates with children from other households. Even as Massachusetts “reopens”, it is best to continue to only interact closely with the people you live with. Only use parks when you have the ability to remain six feet away from others. Physical distancing (also known as “social distancing”), handwashing, and wearing a face covering are still the best ways to stay safe and healthy. For up-to-date information, please visit the City of Boston website at www.boston.gov/news/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-boston.

It is very important that while we are outside, we still practice physical distancing and take these actions to protect ourselves and others from the coronavirus.

1. **Wash your hands** with soap and water before leaving the house and after you return home
 - Take hand sanitizer with you in case you need it
2. **Wear a face covering** (face mask)
3. **Keep six feet away** from those not in your household
 - Six feet is about the length of an adult-sized bicycle



Allow 6 feet of space per person

4. **Cover coughs & sneezes** with your elbow even when you’re outside
5. **Do not use shared equipment** like playgrounds & benches.
6. **If a park or trail is too crowded** to safely practice physical distancing, save that walk or ride for another time, or go to another place.

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If you are feeling sick, PLEASE STAY HOME

WALK AND BIKE SAFELY

Safe Walking

- Choose a route with sidewalks and few street crossings; Try to avoid high traffic streets.
- Keep a 6-foot distance from others and share the sidewalk; Walk in a single file and try to move to the side so that others can pass quickly. Do not walk in the road.
- Don't walk along the curb; Do not push, shove, or chase each other, Don't run across the street or walk in the road.
- Look for cars and trucks in intersections as well as coming out of driveways and parking spaces.
 - Look all around for traffic before crossing a street:
 - Look left, right, then left again;
 - Check what might be coming from behind or in front of you.
- Be Safe and Be Seen: wear bright colors and carry a flashlight when it is dark or hard to see.
- Obey traffic signs and signals.
 - If you need to use a walk light, use your elbow to push; use an alcohol-based sanitizer if you do touch the button.

BE AWARE: Even though there are fewer cars on the road, people who are still driving tend to drive faster and may be distracted.

For additional advice, this resource from the National Center for Safe Routes to School provides age appropriate recommendations: [Teaching Children to Walk Safely as They Grow and Develop](#).

Safe Biking

- Be sure to do an [ABC Quick Check](#) to make sure your bike is safe and ready for riding.
 - At this time, bike sale and repair shops remain open. Please [check here](#) for the most recent updates
- Also do a helmet fit test:
 - Eyes: helmet should fit low on your forehead, 2 finger widths above your eyes. When you look up, you should see your helmet.
 - Ears: when buckled, the straps should meet in a V shape just below the ears.
 - Chin: when buckled, you should be able to fit two fingers between your chin and the straps.
- Helpful tips for parents and caregivers about biking in English and Spanish:
 - [Helping Your Child be a Safe Bicyclist](#)
 - [Ayudando a su hijo a ser un ciclista seguro](#)
- [Boston Bikes tips for safe riding](#)
- [Bicycle education videos](#) for various age school children in English and Spanish.



WALKS, TRAILS AND HIKES

Art & History Walks

- [Rose Kennedy Greenway](#): A path that runs through Downtown Boston with many installations of public art and gardens along the way. Take a stroll and admire the beautiful exhibits on display.
- [HarborArts Shipyard Gallery](#): A free outdoor sculpture gallery in East Boston that covers 14-acres.
- [Black Heritage Trail](#): A 1.6-mile trail with historic sites relating to life within a free Black community prior to the Civil War. [Watch the City of Boston's video tour!](#)
- There is history in each neighborhood! See if you can identify special historical spots near you.

Nature Walks/Trails

- [Safe Hikes to Take During the Coronavirus Crisis](#): A list of 10 hiking trails in various Boston neighborhoods. Curated by DigBoston.
- [Emerald Necklace](#): Parks, greenery, and trails that pass through many parts of Boston from Jamaica Plain to Downtown. It includes Arnold Arboretum, Franklin Park, Jamaica Pond, Olmsted Park, The Riverway, Back Bay Fens, Boston Commons, and Boston Public Garden.
- [Urban Wilds](#): Locations throughout the city that preserve Boston's native wildlife. They are a great refuge from city scenery. If you live near an urban wild, consider planning a walking route to stop by.
- [Boston Parks and Recreation](#): This website has information on all Boston parks organized by neighborhood. Boston parks remain open at this time. Playing group sports or activities is not allowed in city parks. Visit the Parks and Recreation's [COVID-19 webpage](#) for the latest reopening updates.

BIKE TRAILS AND ROUTES

Boston offers a variety of trails for biking. Read the ideas below, or click the "bicycling" option in [Google Maps](#) to discover a new bike route near you. It is best to stay in your own neighborhood.

- [Boston Blue Bikes](#) put together a list of their favorite biking paths around the city. Many of them are great for kids.
 - [Family-friendly Bike Trails](#): More Boston area-family friendly bike paths.
- [Charles River Bike Path](#): Access this riverfront path via Back Bay neighborhood.
- [Pierre Lallement Bike Path](#): Also known as the Southwest Corridor. This path runs through Jamaica Plain, South End, and Back Bay.

THINGS FAMILIES CAN FOCUS ON WHILE OUT WALKING AND BIKING

Other Outdoor Activities

- [MassAudubon Science Walks](#): Ideas for outdoor exploration in your neighborhood. Be a local botanist: Look out for the different types of flowers and their colors as you walk through your neighborhood. If it is safe, draw the flower on a sketch pad or write a poem about what you see.
 - *Please note: All MassAudubon sites are closed until further notice.*
- [MassAudubon Nature Bingo Cards](#): First one to get BINGO wins!
- [Boston Bird Bingo Card](#): See how many birds you can spot. [Learn some Boston bird watching tips.](#)
- Grab some chalk and draw pictures, murals, and more on the sidewalks in your neighborhood.
- Create a scavenger hunt walk using different neighborhood sights. The leader makes a list of locations or objects, and participants take a picture next to each one they find!
 - Other [scavenger hunt walk ideas](#).
- [Seek by iNaturalist](#): Seek is an app you can use to help learn about the wildlife in your neighborhood while on walks. No user data is collected so it is safe for kids and families.
- [BPS Moves Together Walk/Bike/Roll Challenge](#): Through August 7th, 2020, you can participate in a challenge for the chance to win some prizes!
- [Boston Parks Summer Fitness Series](#): Free outdoor and virtual fitness sessions available for all ages

Mindful Walking & Daily Routines

Add a walk (or two) to your daily routine with your family. Make it a habit to walk before and/or after school activities for the day. Getting outside and in touch with nature can clear your mind, reduce anxiety, and reset your behavior. For added benefit, try adding a mindfulness practice to your walks with this in-depth [guide](#) to mindful walking created by Minneapolis Public Schools.

Be sure to follow the most current guidance from the [Massachusetts Department of Health](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) on keeping yourself, your family, and your community safe from coronavirus. As always, be sure to stay home if you are at all sick.