

## NOTES FROM NURSE BETH

I know that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) is causing many people to worry. Certainly all the information being shared can make you feel overwhelmed and confused. Hopefully this note will clarify the important facts and help you understand how to keep your family safe through this difficult time. Currently PPS is closed until April 27th. This may change or may not. While we are at home we need to focus on a few simple things to keep us safe and use our imaginations to entertain ourselves.

Here are some facts:

The virus causing COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. It causes a respiratory illness ranging from mild cold-like symptoms to severe pneumonia. The disease spreads by respiratory droplets that are produced when someone coughs or sneezes.

Most of the people (81%) diagnosed with COVID-19 have had mild disease, including most children.

The people who are most likely to have severe disease and complications of pneumonia are older individuals (>60 years old) and those people with other medical conditions such as heart and lung disease or diabetes.

There is no vaccine or treatment currently available for COVID-19, but the National Institutes of Health is evaluating treatments and developing a vaccine already.

For more information:

[www.maine.gov/doi/covid-19https://www.maine.gov/doi/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/Parent%20and%20Caretaker%20guide%20for%20helping%20families%20cope%20with%20COVID%2019.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/doi/covid-19https://www.maine.gov/doi/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/Parent%20and%20Caretaker%20guide%20for%20helping%20families%20cope%20with%20COVID%2019.pdf)

Here are steps we can take to stay healthy:

Social Distancing.....keep at least 6 feet from other people when out. If someone in your home is sick, maintain the same distance as much as possible. Designate one person to accomplish errands in the community. Replace usual play times with online contact. Taking outdoor walks, maintaining social distance, can alleviate that locked in feeling.

Remind each other to wash hands well, or if no soap and sink are available us hand sanitizer 60% alcohol.

Remember to properly cover all coughs and sneezes and do NOT touch your face with your hands to keep germs from nose and mouth.

Frequently clean surfaces that are touched by hands such as counters, door knobs, handles etc.

If you feel sick, begin coughing or have a fever, call your doctor and follow their advice. Most people who contract this illness stay home and recover. Symptoms are: Dry cough, fever over 100.4, sore throat and shortness of breath. And again most people experience mild symptoms.

I wish you well and encourage you to be creative with your time. We can get through this. If you need to talk to me or have questions reach me at [hartmb@portlandschools.org](mailto:hartmb@portlandschools.org) or pass on a message through a translator or teacher that you want me to contact you.

Sincerely  
Nurse Beth