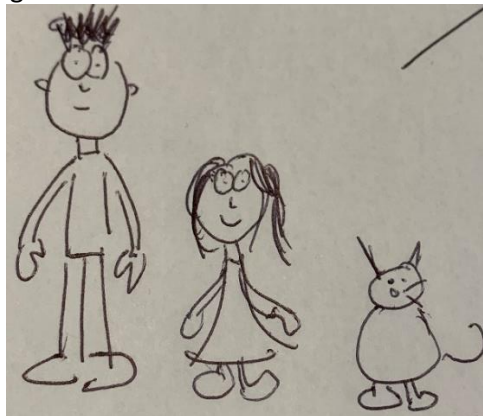
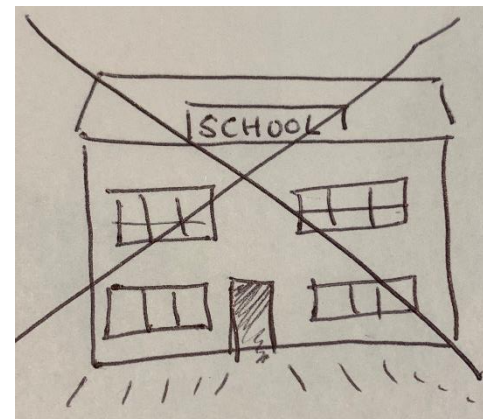


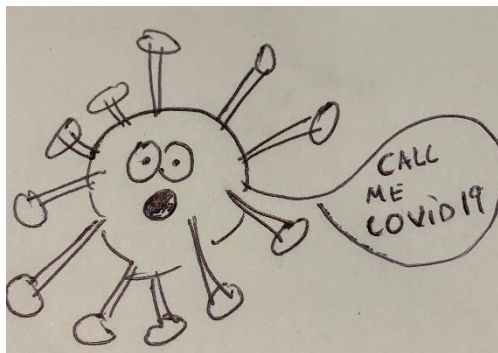
This is a story about a brother and sister called Billy and Sally. Sally loves unicorns, going to the playground, reading and chocolate. Billy likes swimming, playing Lego with Sally and running races. They cannot live with their Mum and Dad so they live with Molly and Frank and their cat Tabby. Molly and Frank are foster carers. Sally and Billy also love going to school but .....



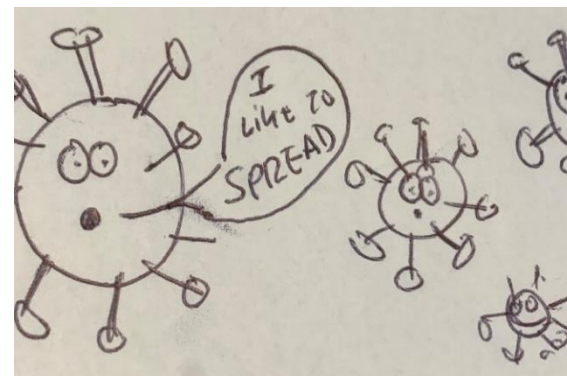
They can't go to school now because it is closed. Like all the other schools in Ireland, and in lots of other countries, their school had to close because of the Coronavirus. There are lots of other changes for everyone and some of these have made things very different for Sally and Billy.



For the last few days, Sally and Billy have been hearing lots about the Coronavirus. Some people call it Covid19, it's the same thing! The people who help to run our country like the ones working in the Government, the President, the bosses of the hospitals and schools have made lots of changes to try and keep people safe. They want to stop the virus spreading!



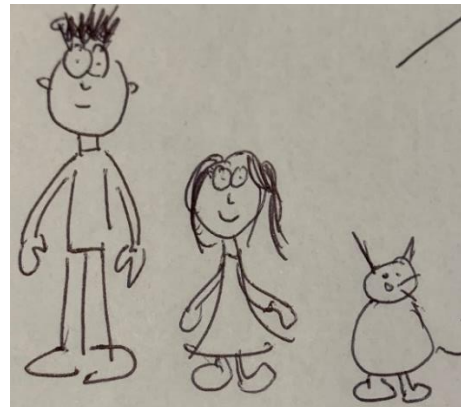
The Coronavirus is a bit like a bad cold or flu. Most people who catch it get better after staying at home resting. Some people need to go to their doctor or need to stay in hospital but most get better without going to hospital. The problem is, this virus really likes to travel and it's spreading quickly. The doctors and nurses will have a hard time looking after everybody if everyone gets it so it's really important we stop it spreading.



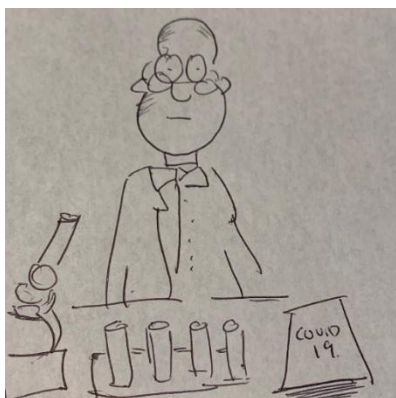
Washing your hands and using hand sanitiser helps to stop the nasty virus spreading. Another thing that helps is staying away from too many people. If people are not mixing with lots of other people, it will be hard for the virus to travel from one person to the next. This means people need to stay home from school, college and work. It also means St Patrick's Day Parades and soccer matches even had to be cancelled. It's ok to go for walks and play in the fresh air but we should try to only mix with the people we live with.



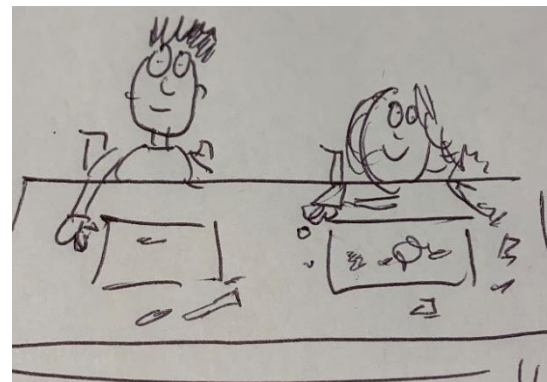
This is very hard because Billy and Sally can't do things like having play dates, going on the bus to town or going swimming. They can't go to their play therapy either. Another thing they can't do is go to see their Mum and Dad. This is a big change and they miss them. Lots of boys and girls who do not live with their Mums and Dads can't go to their visits either. If they all still have visits, the virus could spread to even more people. Some of the places where the visits happen are closed too.



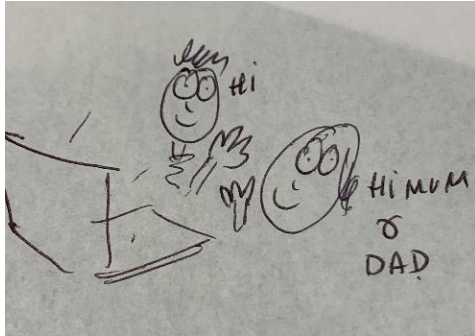
Billy and Sally's Mum and Dad hope that if we all try very hard to stop the virus spreading, soon everyone can go back to school, have their visits again and go back to activities like swimming. We know that once the Coronavirus is gone, things can go back to normal but we are not sure how long this will take. Doctors and scientists are working very hard to learn more about this new virus.



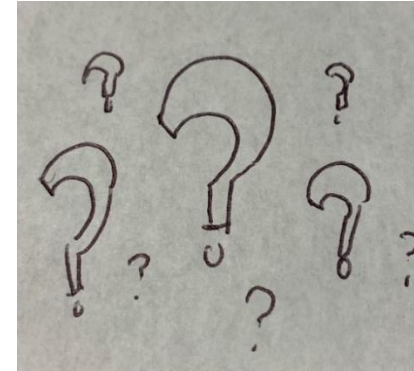
Billy and Sally have lots of time at home now and are trying to find fun things to do. They have been colouring some pictures for their Mum and Dad. They are going to post them to their Social Worker so he can post them to their Mum and Dad. Their Social Worker can't visit them at the moment either but if they need to talk to him they can call him. Some Social Workers might have to stay at home for a while if they catch the virus or have been around someone who has it.



Sally and Billy are going to have a phone call and a video call with their Mum and Dad. We know not all children will be able to do this with their families though. This situation is new for everyone including all the children, Mums, Dads and the Social Workers too, so everyone is trying to think of what they can do to help families stay in touch while they can't visit each other.



All these changes won't go on for ever, but we don't know how long it will take. Billy and Sally find big changes like this really difficult and a bit confusing. They have lots of questions about the changes so they ask their foster carers. They have some worries too and it helps to tell their foster carer about these. There is a lot of news on the radio and tv about the virus. It can be a bit scary to watch and some of the things are not always true, so it's important to ask your foster carers any questions you have.



The good news is that things will go back to normal for everyone. Nobody knows when this will happen though! In other countries like China, the virus has stopped spreading so much because everyone stopped mixing with too many people like we are doing now. For now though, it's time for everyone to think of lots of fun things they can do while they are off school!!



Billy and Sally are going to keep washing their hands lots and try to help everybody to stop this virus. Once everybody does their bit, we can hopefully all get back to normal soon. This will mean that people will be able to go and visit the people in their families that they don't live with.

