**Safe, New Way to Socialize: 'Support Bubbles'**

**新型安全社交法：“保护圈”**

Are there safe ways to spend time with friends during the pandemic?

大流行期间有跟朋友安全共度时光的方法吗?

To answer this question, health experts have been looking at one method, called a COVID-19 “support bubble.” They found that forming such a group -- or bubble -- with a few close friends can be safe.

为找出答案，卫生专家们尝试研究使用一种叫做新冠肺炎“保护圈”的办法。他们发现几个朋友小聚时使用这种圈子关系有利于保护大家的安全。

Support bubbles are also known as “quarantine pods.” Experts claim these groups may help to fight off loneliness and fear after months of social distancing.

“保护圈”也被称为“隔离舱”。专家称，这些“圈子”或将帮助人们在数月的社交隔离后消除孤独感和恐惧感。

United States health officials define social distancing as keeping space between yourself and people from outside your home. With social distancing, people should stay at least two meters, or about two arms’ length, from other people.

美国卫生官方将社会距离定义为保持自己与外界的距离。社会距离要求人们与其他人保持至少两米或者大约两臂长的距离。

The Associated Press reports that the idea for support bubbles started in New Zealand. It calls for two people or families to agree to socialize in person only with each other. The numbers are kept small to limit the risk of infection.

美联社报道称，“保护圈”的想法始于新西兰。它要求两个人或两个家庭保证只跟对方面对面交流。通过保证人员数量的限制来减少感染的风险。

Experts give this warning: Do not try forming a support bubble unless everyone agrees to follow social distancing rules while away from the support bubble ’s members.

专家给出警告称：不要试图自我形成 “保护圈”关系，除非大家达成共识——即使在接触非特定人员时依然遵守保持社交距离的规则。

One of those experts is Aaron Milstone, a doctor at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He used a swimming pool for a comparison.

亚伦·米尔斯通就是其中一位专家。他是约翰·霍普金斯大学医学院的一名医生。他将此比作一个游泳池。

“You are now swimming in the same pool with not just that person,” he said, “but all the people those people are interacting with.”

“你并不仅仅是同某个特定的人在同一个游泳池里游泳，”他说，“同时，你还在和那些与这些特定的人有过接触的所有人在同一个游泳池里游泳。”

As many places begin to re-open, support bubbles are already becoming more popular in the U.S. and other countries.

随着许多地方开始重新开放，“保护圈”的使用在美国和其他国家已经变得越来越普遍。

In Britain, Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced this month that adults living alone, or single parents, can form support bubbles with another household.

英国首相鲍里斯·约翰逊本月宣布，独居或单亲的成年人可以与另一个家庭形成“保护圈”关系。

Members of a support bubble can meet, inside buildings or in outdoor, open spaces – without staying two meters apart. They can also stay overnight in each other’s homes as if they were members of the same household.

形成“保护圈”关系的成员可以在建筑物内，室内或室外的开放空间见面，同时不需要彼此间隔两米。他们还可以在彼此的家里过夜，就像他们是同一个家庭的成员一样。

The British government website notes a few other rules. Support bubbles must be exclusive. You should not change who is in your bubble or have close contact with anyone you do not live with. Also, if you or someone in your support bubble is showing signs of the coronavirus, or is living in self-quarantine, everyone in your bubble should stay home.

英国政府官网还提到了一些其他规则。“保护圈”关系网必须保证其唯一性。所有人不得改变“圈子”内的成员或者与不同住的进行密切接触。另外，如果你或你的“保护圈”关系里的某个人有感染冠状病毒的迹象或是处于自我隔离中，那么“保护圈”关系网里的每个人都应该进行居家隔离。

It is too soon to say whether support bubbles will work with larger numbers of people. But a recent study showed that bubbles with more limited contacts worked better to flatten the curve of infection compared with other methods. One such method is limiting contacts to your own neighborhood.

现在还无法说明“保护圈”关系网能否对数量较大的人群起到保护作用。但最近的一项研究表明，与其他方法相比，接触更为有限的“圈子”人员更有利于感染曲线的平稳化。其中一种方法是将联系人限制在自己的邻里范围内。

Per Block of Britain’s Oxford University is one of the writers of a report on the study.

英国牛津大学的佩尔·布洛克是这项研究某个报告的作者之一。

He says there is no guarantee of “complete safety” when people have “face-to-face contact with others outside their household.”

他表示，只要人们“与家人以外的人面对面接触”就无法保证“百分百安全”

But he added that limiting interactions to one other family presents a much smaller risk than going back to traditional methods of socializing.

但他补充道，与另一个家庭保持一定的互动与回到传统的社交方式相比风险要小得多。

I’m Anna Matteo.

安娜·马特奥报道。

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