



Big Brothers Big Sisters

Description of Services

1. **Community Program**, our classic model.
2. **Bigs In School**

I. **Community Program**

Children are paired with caring adults according to common interests, compatible personalities and convenient distance from each other. Volunteers are recruited and assigned based on background checks, interviews, references and home assessments. Volunteers mentor children to enhance and further develop the child's primary strengths. This model allows the child to develop other assets at his/her pace as their confidence grows.

Bigs (Big Brother and Big Sister volunteer mentors) and their Little Brothers or Little Sisters plan and schedule activities in the community under the supervision of a BBBS Match Support Specialist. Volunteers and children discover and share mutual interests like sports and sight-seeing as Bigs work to develop a positive mentoring friendship with their mentee. Volunteers commit to see their Little for a *minimum* of one year, with many relationships lasting a lifetime. BBBS provides each match with; ongoing professional match support through the entire life of the match, initial and ongoing training, monthly calendar of free/low cost events, free admission to agency sponsored match events, and free tickets to activities, cultural and sporting events.

II. **Bigs In School Programs**

One-to-one mentoring, based on the developmental asset model, is applied in school settings where volunteers meet their mentees for one hour every week during the school year. Teachers and support staff identify the at-risk children that they feel would benefit from a mentor. Possible risk factors include poverty, single parent households, history or current incarceration of caretakers, poor academic performance, lack of parental support, poor social skills, history of or active drug abuse in the family, mental illness, death of significant person(s) in a child's life, and family history of dropping out of high school. Weekly, on site supervision is provided by a Big Brother Big Sister case manager and active dialogue between the case manager and school staff is ongoing. This collaboration allows us to adjust the program throughout the year so that the focus remains on how to best serve the child and obtain our program goals.

The time together is typically spent 50% on relationship building activities and 50% on academics related to the *individual* child's needs. Bigs and Littles also have the opportunity to "roll over" into the community program.