

Media Fact Sheet

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Richmond & Tri-Cities

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Established: 1962

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Richmond's mission is to provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever. In 2010, we served 644 children in the Greater Richmond and Tri-Cities Region (Petersburg, Colonial Heights, Hopewell and surrounding Counties). Improving these measurements of quality have resulted in significant improvements for the children that we serve:

- 74% improved their academic performance
- 83% improved their ability to express their feelings
- 90% improved their self confidence
- 91% improved their ability to trust others

In Richmond, the Big Brothers program began with the help of the Richmond Jaycees in 1962. The Big Sisters program was added in 1976. Our Richmond office serves the Metro Richmond area. Our Tri-Cities office, founded in 1989 in Petersburg, is now located in Hopewell. Virginia is home to nine BBBS affiliated agencies, of which Metro Richmond is the oldest.

Although our Bigs are volunteers, an investment of approximately \$1,135 is made for each match we support:

- Mentor Recruitment: \$300
- Enrollment: \$250
- Ongoing Match Support: \$450
- Administration & Development: \$135

For more information about volunteering to mentor a child in the Richmond and Tri-Cities areas or about Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Richmond & Tri-Cities in general, please contact Mark Bowen, Manager of Marketing & Corporate Relations, or Traci Pryor, Executive Director at (804) 261-4940 or visit <http://www.bigbrobigsis.com/>.

We're Glad You Asked!

Frequently Asked Questions

What exactly is mentoring?

A mentor is an adult who, along with parents, provides young people with support, counsel, friendship, reinforcement, and a constructive example. Mentors are good listeners, people who care, and people who want to help young people bring out strengths that are already there. Mentors are not surrogate parents or social workers.

What are the benefits of mentoring?

It's fun, it's simple, and it makes a profound difference in the life of a child. Sharing the benefit of your experiences with a growing child is a great way to give back to the community. Both Bigs and Littles tell us it's the best thing they have ever done!

How do I become involved?

Visit our office, e-mail, or call us. Fill out an on-line application. Whatever method you choose we'll answer all of your questions. One of our staff members will arrange for you to attend an orientation where you can learn more about the screening and matching process.

How much time does being a Big require?

It takes so little to make such a big difference. We ask that you plan two activities or spend at least 8 hours per month with your Little for a period of one year. The time that you spend is arranged between you, the parent and your Little. You don't have to create time in your busy schedule – just incorporate your Little into your routine! In the schoolbased program you spend one hour a week visiting the child at their school for the duration of the school year.

Will it cost me anything?

Being a mentor is free. The cost of activities between Big and Littles is up to you.

How will I know what child is best for me?

Our Match Specialists are professionals. During your interviews, you will be asked a series of questions that will give us the information necessary to appropriately match you with the right Little. The more we know about you, the better we can make the match. Our professional staff is here to support you in your Match.

Who are the Little Brothers and Little Sisters?

Little Brothers and Little Sisters are youngsters who are in need of additional guidance and support from a special friend, someone outside their immediate family. The majority of children in our program are involved because their parent(s) recognized the need for specific attention. Our Littles come from every racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic level.

How does Big Brothers Big Sisters differ from other youth organizations?

Our agency deals with each child as an individual. We focus on preventing negative behavior through a team approach comprised of the Big, the parent, teachers, and our staff. Through our unique one adult to one child method, Big Brothers Big Sisters compliments without duplicating the efforts of other youth agencies.

What does it take to be a Big Brother or Big Sister?

Being a Big Brother or Big Sister is something that almost anyone can do. Each potential Big is screened, trained, and supervised to help ensure that the relationship will be safe and rewarding for everyone involved. The only requirement is the willingness to make a new friend and the desire to share some fun with a young person.