



2024

# IMPACT REPORT

GREATER RICHMOND • TRI-CITIES • HAMPTON ROADS • GREATER VIRGINIA PENINSULA

Big Brothers  
Big Sisters.



IT TAKES  
LITTLE TO  
BE BIG 

# IMPACT OVERVIEW

**221** youth served

68% youth served come from single parent home

85% youth served receive free or reduced lunch

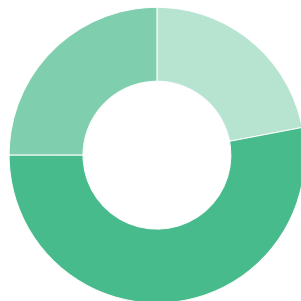
**663** lives impacted



**32,000+** hours spent together

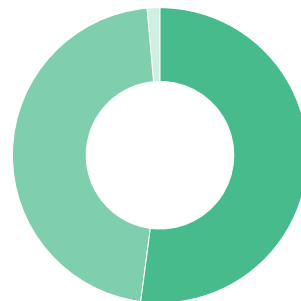


[First year-over-year growth since 2019!]



Age breakdown:

- 6 to 10 years – 22%
- 11 to 14 years – 53%
- 15 to 19 years – 25%



Gender Identity breakdown:

- Female – 52%
- Male – 47%
- Different identity/Unknown – 1%



# OPENING LETTER FROM ELLIE & CLARK



As we reflect on the past year, we are profoundly grateful for the collective efforts of our supporters, volunteers, and partners who make Big Brothers Big Sisters a powerful catalyst for change in our community. From dedicated volunteers and generous donors to steadfast community allies, your support drives our mission to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.

This year, we are thrilled to share that 221 youth were served, marking our first year-over-year growth since 2019. This milestone reflects the critical need for our programs and the resilience of our organization as we recover from the challenges of the pandemic. It is a testament to the strength of our mission and the dedication of our supporters.

This progress would not be possible without the commitment of our Bigs, who volunteered an incredible 32,000 hours of their time this year. Their dedication creates the foundation for the life-changing mentorships that drive our mission forward. Because of their efforts, the youth we served in 2024 experienced transformative outcomes:

- **98% of Littles are confident they will finish high school**, a testament to the belief and support instilled by their Bigs.
- **93% of Littles stayed on track or improved in school**, demonstrating the role mentorship plays in academic success.
- Beyond academics, **81% of Littles report stable or fewer depressive symptoms**, showing how mentorship fosters emotional well-being and resilience.
- **84% of Littles feel strong or improving connections to school**, reinforcing the value of mentorship in creating a sense of belonging.
- Most importantly, **98% of Littles see their Big as a trusted adult they can turn to in times of need**, underscoring the irreplaceable bond between Bigs and Littles.

We also made mentorship more accessible than ever by reducing the average wait time for Littles to 43 days, a 9% improvement. Innovative programs like Sports Buddies in the Virginia Peninsula brought together male volunteers to support and inspire young boys, accounting for over 20% of new

matches. Looking ahead, we are launching Big Futures, a workforce readiness program to equip high school students with the mentorship and skills they need to prepare for successful futures.

These milestones were only possible thanks to the generosity of our community, including the sponsors, donors, and attendees who supported our signature events. Sponsors played a pivotal role in ensuring the success of these events, amplifying their impact and translating every dollar raised into meaningful change for the youth we serve. Together, these events raised over \$280,000, directly fueling our mission.

Despite challenges like rising mental health concerns, economic uncertainty, and the need for greater equity in our systems, we remain steadfast. As part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters national network, we are contributing to a powerful movement to close opportunity gaps for young people through mentorship. New research highlights the profound impact of our work: **Littles earn 15% more over their lifetime compared to peers without mentors, effectively closing**

**two-thirds of the socio-economic gap.** With your support, we are fostering social capital, creating pathways to opportunity, and empowering every child to graduate with a plan for their future and a mentor whose impact lasts a lifetime.

As we close the chapter on 2024, we look ahead to 2025 with a renewed sense of purpose and a unified vision. Guided by our new strategic plan and national momentum, we are ready to expand our reach, deepen community connections, and enhance the impact of mentorship. Together, we will elevate our mission, not just shaping brighter futures for our Littles, but transforming communities and building a stronger, more equitable tomorrow.

On behalf of the entire Big Brothers Big Sisters organization, thank you for your partnership and trust. Together, we are not only changing lives. We are shaping a prosperous, brighter future for all.

With heartfelt gratitude and optimism,

**Ellie Martinez**  
Executive Director



**Clark Dugger**  
Board President





# PROGRAMS

The 2024 fiscal year had many successes as BBBS worked to fulfill our mission of igniting the power and promise of youth across Central and Eastern Virginia. This year, BBBS launched two new programs, served more Littles than the prior year for the first time since 2019, reduced wait times for matches, and doubled volunteer conversion rates compared to 2023. BBBS is changing the world, one relationship at a time. On average, community-based matches last over two years (compared to national minimum of 1 year). The agency also gained a 94% quality assurance rating, reflecting our commitment to high service delivery standards for Littles, Bigs, and families, alike.



## NEW PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

### SPORTS BUDDIES

The Sports Buddies Mentoring Program launched in the Virginia Peninsula in May 2024. This brand-new program offered mentoring for youth, particularly boys on our waiting list, through unique opportunities to participate in sports with a kind and caring adult role model. While still a one-to-one mentoring program, Sports Buddies also offered additional structure and guidance in a group setting with a BBBS staff member present. The six-month program was a major success, garnering 100% male volunteers and accounting for over 20% of new matches in the Virginia Peninsula.

### YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

The agency's Youth Advisory Council (YAC) launched in January 2024 to give Littles a safe, inclusive space to share feedback, collaborate with peers, and plan activities and events that amplify youth voices, ensuring BBBS programming meets the genuine needs of all our Littles. Seven high school Littles from across service territories were recruited to participate in a 6-month pilot that culminated in the YAC hosting a virtual summit for agency staff and the BBBS Board. During the summit, YAC members shared their stories and perspectives, and the impact BBBS has had on their lives.



# WE IGNITE



## FROM SHY TO SELF-ASSURED: LITTLE DARREES' JOURNEY WITH BIG SISTER STEPHANIE

When Darrees first joined Big Brothers Big Sisters, her great-aunt and legal guardian, Lillian, was seeking more than just a mentor for her niece; she was looking for a lifeline. Severe challenges in school had led to her being homeschooled, and her shy demeanor often caused her to withdraw from others. She grappled with self-validation and finding her own identity apart from her twin sister, Denise. Lillian hoped that a mentor could help Darrees find her voice, build confidence, and instill respect and accountability.

Stephanie, a dedicated and compassionate Big, immediately set out to meet the challenges head-on. From their first meeting, Stephanie brought a calm yet firm presence, modeling respect and accountability in every interaction. This approach had an immediate impact on Darrees, who quickly began to emulate the same behavior in her home and social circles. Stephanie didn't just focus on Darrees, but included Denise, helping both sisters grow academically and socially while celebrating their unique identities.

The transformation in Darrees has been nothing short of remarkable. Once shy and hesitant, she has blossomed into a confident and proactive young woman. Socially, she has come out of her shell, now actively participating in group settings like the Youth Advisory Council, where she contributes her voice and ideas to shaping the future of BBBS. Darrees' story is a shining example of the profound impact a consistent mentor can have.



# THE PERFECT MATCH

## AT THE PERFECT TIME

The 2024 Match of the Year was Little Jo and Big Daisy, self-described weirdos who found one another at the perfect time. BBBS connected the two in 2019, after Jo's family moved to Hampton Roads with no family or connections around. Jo and Daisy have been inseparable ever since. Having both lost a parent as children, this shared experience became the foundation of their deep and meaningful connection. From there, they bonded over their mutual love for cats, art, and all things scary, while celebrating and embracing the weird. BBBS recognized and celebrated Jo and Daisy at Big Night Out. Check out their touching story using this QR code.





# A NEW CHAPTER OF MENTORSHIP

Levetta's journey with mentorship is a beautiful testament to the resilience and support that comes from nurturing relationships. As both a former Site-Based Big and a proud parent of former Little, Eyvnn, who is now a graduate of Morehouse College, Levetta has long been committed to making a positive impact in the lives of young people. Currently working for the Virginia Education Association and with 20 years of experience as an elementary school teacher, Levetta embodies kindness, patience, and approachability, which are qualities that make her an exceptional mentor.

In 2024, Levetta reconnected with our program, eager to make a difference again. She was matched with Kyleigh, a bright young girl navigating her own challenges. Kyleigh's grandmother, Tarsha, hoped a mentor

would be an additional source of support and encouragement.

From their very first interaction, Kyleigh was quiet but full of excitement, her shy smile hinting at a budding connection. Tarsha expressed her immediate affection for Levetta, saying, "I love her already," indicating a promising start to their journey together.

Levetta's ability to create relatable teachings has allowed her to identify numerous opportunities to share life lessons with Kyleigh. The two share productive and meaningful time together, where Kyleigh exhibits an eagerness to learn, is receptive to new ideas and concepts. Levetta has introduced valuable lessons on topics such as saving money and essential life skills, ensuring each interaction reinforces the idea of stability and love. Kyleigh thrives under Levetta's firm yet compassionate guidance, appreciating the consistency she brings to their growing relationship.

In maintaining open lines of communication, Levetta has kept in touch with Tarsha, ensuring they remain aligned in their efforts to support Kyleigh's growth. Their partnership reflects the core philosophy of our



program – building strong relationships that empower youth.

As a mom to former Little Evynn, Levetta has been a part of BBBS for decades and knows its impact firsthand. She shares a heartfelt vision for the world, expressing, "If I could change anything, it would be for every child to have at least one person in their life who is there for them. So many more children need that. They deserve the best start in life." BBBS strives to do exactly that, ensuring every child has a caring mentor who stands by them, empowering them to dream big and build the foundation for a brighter future.



## SPECIAL EVENTS & THIRD-PARTY FUNDRAISERS

*Our special events and community-driven fundraisers provided opportunities to gather as a community and remind us of our purpose, each uniquely contributing to the impact of our mission.*



### **Dancing with the Williamsburg Stars:**

Since 2009, local Williamsburg celebrities and community leaders have taken the stage with professional dancers to showcase their best dance moves all while inspiring the community with their creativity and commitment to supporting Big Brothers Big Sisters and Literacy for Life. The theme for 2024 was "Dancing Through the 50's" and raised over \$50,000 to support the mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters.



**Bowl for Kids' Sake:** Since 1973, Bowl for Kids' Sake has been a signature fundraising program for Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, with over 110 agencies hosting fundraisers in 2024. Individuals and teams from across the Greater Richmond region and Hampton Roads came together for a spirited competition in March and August, respectively, striking down pins and hitting fundraising goals. Top fundraising individuals and teams were recognized for their steadfast support throughout the Bowl for Kids' Sake Campaign, receiving trophies, complimentary pizza, and a year's worth of bragging rights.



**Big Night Out at the Disco:** The 2024 Big Night Out was a night of dinner, dancing, and auctions that transported guests back in time, all while raising essential funds to support our mentoring relationships. Following the announcement and video of the 2024 Match of the Year, Little Jo and Big Daisy, guests took part in the Fund a Match campaign, raising over \$25,000 to cover the costs associated with making and sustaining life-changing connections.



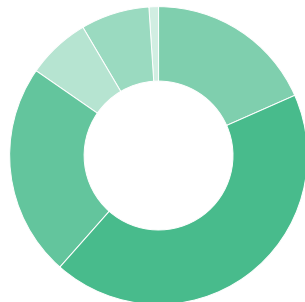
**Hable's Hope Fore the Future Charity Golf Tournament:** Heather Hable, mother of the late Alex Hable, along with Alex's Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity brothers from Virginia Tech, came together to host the inaugural Hable's Hope Fore the Future Charity Golf Tournament, a heartfelt tribute to Alex's memory and a way to support a cause deeply meaningful to them. When Alex and his family moved to the Richmond area during his childhood, he was matched with a Big, an experience that gave him a mentor to

look up to and a friend to spend time with. The impact of that relationship stayed with Heather, and she never forgot how much BBBS meant to Alex. Wanting to honor his legacy and express her gratitude, she organized the tournament to benefit BBBS, ensuring more children can experience the same life-changing mentorship that meant so much to her son.

BBBS is grateful to Heather Hable and the AJH Hable's Hope Fore the Future team – Ryan Clapman, Connor Levenson and Frank Glotfelty for their support.



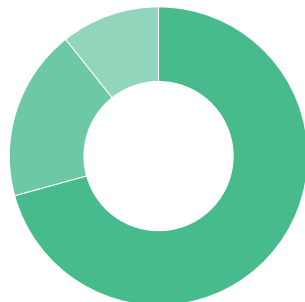
# FINANCIALS



## 2024 REVENUE

● Annual Fund	\$187,506
● Grants	\$440,233*
● Special Events	\$235,833
● United Way	\$70,176
● Third Party	\$75,996
● Other Income	\$10,549
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,020,293</b>

\*\$250,000 grant to be disbursed through FY26



## 2024 EXPENDITURES

● Program	\$589,536
● Fundraising	\$154,961
● Administration	\$89,293
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$833,790</b>



# THANK YOU SUPPORTERS



The Herndon Foundation

LJ Family Foundation

Reader Mood McClary  
Foundation

County of Henrico

City of Norfolk

Peace Frogs

Bank-to-Bank Fund

The Propeller Club of  
Newport News

New Zion Baptist Church



Advisors



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## MORE THAN A MATCH

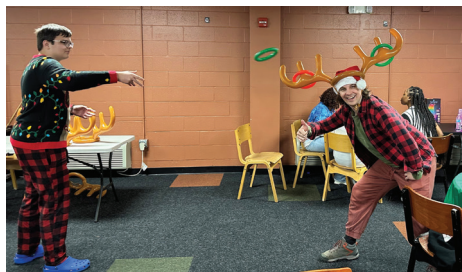
Little Jamie is part of a Gold Star family, following the loss of his father who was active in the Navy. As Jamie's family navigated the immense challenges of this loss and transition, his mother, Jennifer, sought out support for her children. A school counselor in Virginia Beach introduced her to Big Brothers Big Sisters, and she saw an opportunity to provide her three oldest children - Jo, Jamie, and Johnny - with mentors who could offer guidance and stability. (Watch Jo's story in our Match of the Year!)

All three children were matched quickly, but Jennifer had a specific goal for Jamie's Big. She wanted him to have a positive male role model to support him through life's ups and downs. And his Big, David, answered the call.

David discovered BBBS after reading about a friend's experience with the program. He had always wanted to make a meaningful impact on a child's life. While he recalled his upbringing fondly, he felt that a mentor could have helped him when he was young. When he met Jamie nearly 4 years ago, he

saw a quiet, thoughtful boy struggling with bullying, low self-esteem, and the effects of trauma. But what he also saw was potential.

Over the years, David and Jamie have become more than just a match, they have become family. Bonding over their shared love of storytelling and creativity, they found a mutual passion in Dungeons & Dragons.



Their adventures in the game became a safe space for Jamie to build confidence, work through challenges, and connect with others.

Through their match, Jamie has transformed. Once struggling to find his place, he has now entered high school with confidence, immersing himself in drama club and making friends. David, a professional

videographer, introduced Jamie to the world of film and production. Together, they create videos, sparking Jamie's enthusiasm for being both in front of and behind the camera. These experiences have not only guided Jamie toward his interests, but they have helped him find his place in the world.

When David had the opportunity to relocate to Richmond, he was faced with a difficult decision. His connection with Jamie was so strong that he was willing to cancel the move rather than end their match. However, with the support of BBBS, they found a way to make it work. Now, even with David settled in Richmond, they still see each other at least twice a month, proving that distance is no match for the bond they've built.

Jamie's story is proof that mentorship matters. It's more than just meetings and outings, it's about guidance, belief, and the impact of someone who sees a young person's potential and helps them realize it. As Jamie's mom, Jennifer, put it, Big Brothers Big Sisters has been life-changing, not just for Jamie, but for all her children and for their family as a whole.

# 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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## QUENTIN'S JOURNEY WITH BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

In 2019, Quentin joined Big Brothers Big Sisters when his mom, Stephanie, sought a positive male role model to fill a gap in his life. Quentin dreamed of a mentor who shared his love for creativity and could help him build confidence, explore new opportunities, and develop his social and emotional skills. Enter Sam, the ideal Big Brother for Quentin. Together, they've embarked on creative projects, from building sets and writing storylines to competing in Big Brothers Big Sisters of America's first Youth Voice Film Competition, in partnership with RFK Human Rights and their annual Speak Truth to Power Film Competition. Their bond has grown beyond mentorship with Sam being the officiant for Stephanie's wedding, becoming part of Quentin's extended family.

With Sam's encouragement, Quentin has flourished. He completed a student internship at the Virginia Science Museum, participated in a BBBS video project, and has grown more confident engaging with peers. Their relationship exemplifies the transformative power of mentorship, providing Quentin with guidance, motivation, and a foundation for success.

Quentin and Sam's journey is a testament to what happens when mentorship meets shared passion and commitment is a life-changing match that continues to inspire.



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