



Welcome, Big!

Our Vision

All youth achieve their full potential.

Our Mission

Create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.

Match Support Specialist Contact Information

Name:

Phone Number:

Email:

Notes



Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Black Hills

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Staff Directory

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about OUR PROGRAMS

Community Program

The Traditional Program involves Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Big Couples (married), and Big Families. This program is designed to match children between 7 and 16 years old, with an adult who can serve as a positive role model, giving a child a chance to see their unlimited potential and providing the opportunity to develop into a more responsible, successful, well-rounded individual.

Campus Kids

Campus Kids is a staff supervised group mentoring program specifically for children waiting for a Big Brother or Big Sister. It meets once a week at the SD School of Mines & Technology campus and is led by college student volunteer mentors.

Bigs in Blue

Bigs in Blue is a one-to-one mentoring program that connects youth with police in communities throughout our nation, building strong, trusting, lasting relationships. These relationships can help children develop into confident adults and help build stronger bonds between law enforcement and the families they serve.

about BIGS

Based on years of extensive research on the best outcomes for Littles, Big Brothers Big Sisters requires our Bigs to carry out the following commitments. Our professional staff work with Bigs to ensure these commitments can be met by providing coaching, support, training, and activities to help you develop in your role as a Big.

We ask our Bigs to:

- Commit to a minimum of 12 months in our Community Based Program and a school year in Campus Kids
- Commit to spending consistent, significant time with your Little each month (approximately 4 hours)
- Follow all agency policies, procedures, and ground rules. Child safety is a top priority. We consider violations of policies, procedures, and ground rules to be grounds for match suspension or termination.
- Maintain regular communication with your Match Support Specialist, including returning phone calls, emails, and/or texts. Failure to maintain contact may result in closure of the match.
- Participate in required surveys and assessments related to the match relationship and youth outcomes.
- Complete assigned training.

Research tells us that Littles achieve greater results when their Big...

- Emphasizes friendship over changing the behavior.
- Is not authoritarian.
- Decides activities together with their Little.
- Is consistent and dependable.
- Has realistic expectations about their Little.
- Is patient.
- Focuses on having fun.
- Sets boundaries and limits.
- Acknowledges that positive impact on the child comes after the relationship is built.
- Puts their Little's safety and well-being first.
- Helps form goals.



about the ENROLLMENT PROCESS

- **Complete an application.**
- **Interview with a Match Support Specialist.**
- **Submit a background check and references for review.**
- **Get matched!**

Potential Littles, along with their families, are also screened to ensure that our mentoring programs are the best fit for the Littles' needs.

Our matches are not made on a first-come, first-served basis. Our goal is to match each Big with the best possible Little for them. There may be a waiting period but we will work with you on ways to stay engaged while you wait.

Big Brothers Big Sisters retains the right to accept or deny participants, or close a match at any time. Should we notify you that you are not accepted as a Big, you may appeal by contacting the Executive Director at (605) 343-1488.

about MATCH SUPPORT

The enrollment and match processes are guided by professionals who work to make the best possible match. During this process, you'll receive training and instruction on our policies, procedures and guidelines – all of which are designed to help you have the most positive impact possible on a Little.

When a match is made, the Match Support Specialist oversees the relationship by providing coaching, ensuring safety, assisting in goal-oriented activities, referring services, and helping you and your Little and their family with needs.

It is critical for all match parties to treat contact with the Match Support Specialist as a serious component of match development. Lack of response to match support contacts is grounds for match suspension or termination, which can have a detrimental impact on the Little.

about MATCH ACTIVITIES & GOALS

Being in a match is about both having fun and achieving positive outcomes! Your Match Support Specialist will work with you, your Little, and their family to identify goals for the match which will likely fall into one or more of these areas:

- Avoidance of risky behaviors
- Educational success
- Improved self-esteem
- Higher aspirations
- Greater self-esteem and confidence
- Better relationships



about OUR OUTCOMES WITH LITTLES

100%
of our
Littles feel
socially
accepted by
their peers

85%
of our
Littles who
did not
believe they
would
finish high
school now
believe they
can and will

71%
of our
Littles who
did not
believe
college was
an option
now hope to
attend and
believe they
can
graduate

52%
of our
Littles
decreased
the number
of days they
were
absent
from school

50%
avoided
risky
behaviors

about OUR EXPECTATIONS

Match Intro Meeting

- The volunteer, child, parent and Match Support Specialist meet in-person and the meeting is conducted by the MSS in order to properly introduce all match parties.
- Go over responsibilities of each party and child safety ground rules.- Match agreements signed.
- Set first outing date/time/activity.

Communication with your Match Support Specialist (in person, phone, email, and text)

- Contact required within first two weeks of match.
- During first year – every 30 days.
- After one year – every 90 days.

Post-Match Training

- Given as needed.
- Bigs have 3 months (from time of intake) to complete scenario training.

Match Activities and Events

- Are planned, at a minimum, quarterly for match engagement.
- Are youth-centered activities to enhance the connection to the agency, match relationships and youth outcomes.

Youth Development Plan Participation

- Is developed during enrollment and carried throughout the match as a guiding light for what all parties hope the match will achieve and how the Little will grow.
- The plan will contain goals for the Little and describe what everyone pledges to do to reach the desired outcomes.
- The plan will be reviewed annually and will be adjusted as needed.

Annual Survey Completion

- Your Match Support Specialist will assess your match annually in order to be in compliance with BBBS of the Black Hills policies and procedures.
- Survey completion consists of the Youth Outcome Survey, Strength of Relationship survey and consistent match support contacts.
- Additional paperwork will need to be updated as well, such as: auto insurance forms, copy of current driver's license and a background check (if not up-to-date).



about MATCH CLOSURE

We know from research on mentoring that when relationship closure is unplanned, abrupt, premature, or handled without care and communication, Littles can be harmed. In addition, mentors may also be left feeling guilty, sad, or lacking closure.

It may seem odd or even pessimistic to discuss this stage when you are contemplating or entering a mentoring relationship. However, research shows that when mentors, parents and children (in partnership with their Match Support Specialist) are trained in how to handle match closure well and actively plan for the end of their match, it can be a positive process that allows for reflection and personal growth for both the mentor and the Little.

At the time of closure, Big Brothers Big Sisters will discuss with you, your Little, and your Little's parent about the best plan for closing your match relationship with the organization. When a match is closed, Big Brothers Big Sisters officially no longer provides professional support or guidance to the previously matched parties. At that point, the match is no longer considered an "active" match, or part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. This means that Big Brothers Big Sisters is no longer responsible for or involved in the relationship.

By this time, you and your Little have most likely invested a lot into each other and the relationship. During the closure process, it is important that you communicate to your Little your appreciation of him or her and your hope and expectation that he or she will be successful and happy.

When your match closes, talk to your Match Support Specialist about ways in which you can stay involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters. This may include being matched again with another Little, but there are many other ways in which you can support the agency. You and your Match Support Specialist should talk about the best options for you.

about OUR NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The agency aims to obey all laws concerning non-discrimination. Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Black Hills does not discriminate.



