



**Big Brothers
Big Sisters®**

OF THE BLACK HILLS

Family/Guardian Orientation



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:

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Organization Information

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about OUR ORGANIZATION

With more than 360 affiliates throughout the nation, Big Brothers Big Sisters' mission is to provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring professionally supported one-to-one mentoring relationships that change the lives of the youth for the better, forever.

Our vision is that all children achieve success in life. In addition to carefully screening and matching its mentors and mentees, Big Brothers Big Sisters provides ongoing professional staff support to the volunteers, youth and parents/guardians throughout the course of their matches to keep the mentoring going strong.

The organization is backed by independent research that finds children enrolled in the program are more likely to achieve in school; avoid risky/delinquent behaviors and have higher self-esteem and aspirations.

The organization holds itself accountable for these youth outcomes.

about OUR PROGRAMS

Community Program

Our Community Based Program involves Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Big Couples (married), and Big Families from the Black Hills area. This program is designed to match children between 5 to 17 years old, with adults (18+) who can serve as a positive role model, giving a child youth 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. The CK program is intended for Littles who are waiting to be matched with a Big of their own. All enrolled Littles are invited to participate while they wait for a mentor! CK meets once a week on the South Dakota Mines campus and is led by college student volunteer leaders.

Bigs in Blue

Bigs in Blue focuses on building relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The program places each youth (ages 5 to 17) in a mentoring relationship with a police officer in the community, 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

Our professional staff work with volunteers from our community to ensure these commitments can be met by providing coaching, training, and activities to help them develop in their roles as Bigs. Based on years of extensive research that reinforces the benefit to your child, Big Brothers Big Sisters requires our volunteers to be capable of the following commitments:

MATCH ACTIVITIES + GOALS

Being in a match is about both having fun and achieving positive outcomes! Your Match Support Specialist will work with the Big, 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

We ask our Bigs to:

- Commit to a minimum of 1 year in the Community Based Program and Bigs in Blue program. A minimum of a semester is required for Campus Kids Leaders.
- Commit to spending consistent time with a Little each month (approximately 4 hours per month).
- 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.
- Bigs are required to have regular communication with the 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, pre match safety training, and background checks.

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 CHILD SAFETY

The safety of your child is our number one priority - no exceptions.

What WE do to keep your child safe:

- We conduct multi-level background checks at state and national levels for all of our Bigs as well as reference checks, home visits, and a thorough interview with our trained Match Support Specialists.
- Provide child safety training to our Bigs
- Professionally support the match with consistent match support contacts. Match support contacts will be done as needed, but not less than the following times during the match:
 - Every two weeks for the first month
 - Monthly for the first year
 - Quarterly thereafter

How YOU can further promote your child's safety:

- Participate in planning and approve activities. If you are not comfortable with an activity the Big suggests, you are encouraged to disapprove. Talk to your Match Support Specialist when you have questions.
- Communicate safety concerns related to your child's Big, school, or in the community with your Match Support Specialist.

BIG Responsibilities

When your child spends time with their Big, they will be expected to:

- Never leave your child unattended or with someone else
- Never use physical discipline or yell at your child
- Plan to utilize separate changing spaces if their activity requires changing of attire (for example: swimming)
- Never ask your child to keep a secret
- Ask your permission to buy your child a gift if they wish to do so
- Never engage in tickling, wrestling, backrubs, or asking your child to sit on their lap
- Make sure everyone in the vehicle is wearing a seatbelt
- Never drop off your child where no approved adults are present or at a location you did not agree to
- Never misuse social media, show your child inappropriate videos, pornography or sexual material. This is grounds for immediate termination of the match.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Black Hills staff are mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect. They are required to report any suspected abuse or neglect of any child.

Patterns of behavior to discuss with your Match Support Specialist:

- Your child's Big wants to spend more and more time with your child
- Your child's Big often invites other children or adults to join them
- Activities always take place in private settings
- Your child's Big takes excessive amounts of pictures or videos of your child
- Your child's Big becomes involved with your family in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.

about THE PARENT/GUARDIAN ROLE

Talk with your Match Support Specialist monthly.

Your Match Support Specialist will contact you monthly; this is called a match support contact. The match support contact is intended to get your point of view about the match and answer any questions that you may have. A monthly contact is required as it allows us to provide support, offer suggestions, and address child safety, if needed. If the parent/guardian is not an active partner in the match maintaining communication, we will suspend or terminate the match.

Participate in scheduled assessments and surveys.

Big Brothers Big Sisters uses information from assessments and surveys to make recommendations for the match, identify resources you may need, and to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of the program.

Follow all policies, procedures, and ground rules.

Without exception, it is critical to safety and healthy relationship development that you adhere to our rules, just as our Bigs are expected to.

Support your child's mentoring relationship.

The time your child spends with his or her Big can be an invaluable experience. Sticking to scheduled times, getting to know the Big, talking with your child about the experience and promoting the activities and events offered by the agency are great ways to be a partner and support your child's match.

about the ENROLLMENT PROCESS FOR LITTLES

- **Complete an application.**
- **Interviews for the Little(s) and Parent/Guardian with a Match Support Specialist + complete consent forms and media release**
- **Pre match Child Safety Training for Parents/Guardians**
- **Get matched with a Big!**

It is our job to lead the enrollment and matching process to make the best possible match. When a match is made, a Match Support Specialist oversees the relationship by providing coaching and training, ensuring safety, assisting in goal-oriented activities, referring services, and helping you and your child with needs you may have.

It is critical for you to understand that communication with your Match Support Specialist is a serious component of the match relationship development. Lack of response is grounds for match suspension and termination.

Our matches are not made on a first-come, first-served basis. Our goal is to match each child with the best possible mentor for them. There may be a waiting period but we will work with you to help keep your child engaged while they wait.

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.

about OUR DATA + OUTCOMES WITH LITTLES

20% Littles served are Native American

30% of our Littles live in a single parent household

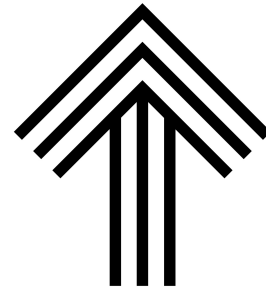
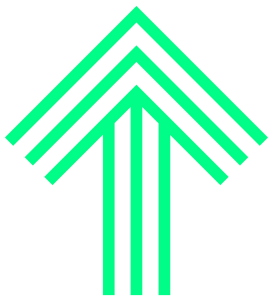
30% of our Littles are on free or reduced lunch programs

25% had a significant change in attitudes towards risky behaviors

78% of Littles experienced higher academic performance

30% have had a change in depressive symptoms since being matched

40% of Littles had a significant change in their social competence



We are happy to have you a part of our Big
Brothers Big Sisters family!
We will be here for you every step of the way.
Thank you for joining us!