

Big Brothers Big Sisters Board Report February 2021

Participants:

- # of School Based Matches - 30 thus far. This will increase slightly in the next month.
- # of Community Based Matches - 56. Waiting List - 140
- # of Work Place Mentoring Matches - 0 - SAS and BNY Mellon put us on pause.

Program Highlights:

- Again, our community based program continues to do well. We are slowly but gradually adding new matches, we are taking in more bigs (mostly female) and we are receiving more inquiries on how to become involved.
- Our school-based match numbers are creeping up ever so slowly. Much of our remote mentoring involves small group and large group activities. In some cases, our school-based mentor managers have facilitated an in-person meet at the request of the big and the little/parent.
- Our site-based program through BNY Mellon was put on pause. BNY Mellon could not supply any mentors and SAS has not held in-person classes since November, therefore, no students/littles were available. Although our BBBS staff was ready to provide programming and had a schedule and curriculum prepared, BNY Mellon and SAS could not participate.
- BBBS staff and our Advisory Council are planning a fund-raising golf event for summer 2021. Co-chairs Dan McGarvey and Andrew Barno have formed a committee that will be focusing on the details of the event in the coming months. The event is scheduled for Friday, July 16th. A location has not been determined as of yet.

Upcoming Events:

- Advisory Council Mtg. (remote) on Wednesday March 10th at 5:30 pm.

Success Story:

We have a little in the program...let's say his name is Jake. Jake's social skills never fully developed as he was growing up and was very much afraid to speak to anyone other than his grandparents (who he lives with). His counselors and teachers at school have had some success at instilling some confidence in Jake, but he has never been able to break out of his introverted personality. Because his lack of participation and unwillingness to speak up at school, his grades suffered. Jake never really made any friends because he always shied away from getting to know people outside of his

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immediate family. His body language and posture were direct reflections of his fear of interacting with others.

Jake's grandmother brought Jake to us hoping that having a big brother, someone he trusted and looked up to, would help him with his communication skills. We matched Jake 18 months ago with a couple, a husband and wife, from the New Hartford area. Couples matches (bigs) were just evolving at the time and have since become very common. These two individuals came to us with flowing energy. They loved to cook and enjoy the outdoors. They were very positive and were really looking forward to spending time with a little. We felt that this is exactly what Jake needed.

We pretty much knew that Jake would have trouble adjusting to any big that came his way. Changes would not come easy. But as the months went on, Jake realized that his bigs cared about him. The connection grew stronger. Jake began to look forward to his activity time with them. His grandmother saw a happier child. He was no longer awkward around them, and better yet, he felt more relaxed out in public.

Let's jump ahead to the present. Jake's grandmother says that the two bigs are like a part of the family now. She refers to them as the "perfect bigs". Jake's grades have gone up significantly and school personnel say that he is a different child.

One recent instance shows just how much Jake has grown. While at a playground in the neighborhood, there was another young man playing on the swings. Jake initiated conversation with this boy and the two had over an hour of fun together. He made a new friend. This would never have happened prior to Jake having his bigs.

Additionally, Jake knows his way around the kitchen these days. He and his bigs often find themselves trying out new recipes and creating tasty dishes for everyone to sample.

Jake has come a long way since being matched. Our hope is that all of our matches turn out as successful as Jake's.