



Big Brothers Big Sisters[®]

OF CENTRAL WISCONSIN

Volunteer Guide to Friendship

Our Mission: Create and support one-to-one relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.

Our Vision: All youth achieve their full potential.

BBBS of Central Wisconsin is an affiliated agency of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, which is the nation's foremost mentoring program for children. But that means very little without the help of adult volunteers. More than ever before kids need caring, competent adults in their lives—adults who can help guide them through the crucial years from six to seventeen years of age. With so many negative influences pressing on today's kids, having a positive role model is an important factor in how children fare in life, now and in the future.

We are very excited that you are considering being a volunteer with the BBBS Agency. Friendship is a powerful thing. It's fun, most anyone can be a friend and it's important. Experiencing fun activities together and forming a trusting bond with a child can have a powerful and positive impact on the child.

We partner with parents/guardians, volunteers and others in and around the community and hold ourselves accountable for each child in our program.

About our Volunteers

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

- Commit to a **minimum of 12 months** as a Big.
- Commit to spending **consistent**, significant time with your Little each month, weekly contact recommended.
- **Follow all agency policies, procedures and ground rules.** Child Safety is a top priority, we consider violations of policies, procedures, and contract rules to be grounds for match suspension or termination.
- Maintain **regular communication** with Match Support staff, including returning all calls, texts and e-mails. Failure to maintain contact may result in match closure.
- Participate in **required surveys and assessments** related to the match relationship and youth outcomes.

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

- Commit to a minimum of one year as a Big
- Emphasizes friendship over changing the behavior.
- Is not authoritarian.
- Decides activities together with 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 a child's safety and well-being first.
- Helps form goals.

About the Enrollment Process

BBBS will gather more information about you using the following:

- Driver's license or photo ID
- Completed application, and interview
- Home Assessment (Community Based Program)
- Reference checks, including criminal history, background checks and public domain searches
- Phone reference with a significant other or family member
- References from another BBBS agency or other service organization where you may have volunteered previously

Big Brothers Big Sisters retains the right to accept and deny participants, or close a match at anytime.

The enrollment and matching processes are led by professionals whose job it is to make the best possible match.

When a match is made, a Match Specialist oversees the relationship by ensuring safety, providing coaching, assisting in goal-orientated activities, referring services, and helping you, your Little and his/her family with needs. It is therefore critical for all match parties to treat contact by the Match Specialist as a serious component of match development. Lack of response to the Match Specialist is grounds for a match suspension or termination of the match, which can have detrimental impact on the Little.

You will receive training and instruction on our policies, procedures, and guidelines—all of which are designed to help you have the most positive impact on a Little as possible.

Potential Littles, along with their families, are also screened to ensure that our mentoring programs are the best fit for the Littles needs. The process for youth and families is similar to that of our volunteers.

About Match Goals

Being a Big is about both having fun with your Little and achieving positive outcomes. Activities should be fun and safe and allow your match to have open communication.

Your Match Specialist will work with you, your Little and your Little's parent/guardian to identify goals for the match, which will likely fall into one or more of these three categories of:

- Higher aspirations, greater confidence, and better relationships
- Educational Success
- Avoidance of risky behaviors

These categories represent the most common youth outcomes found as a result of effective mentoring. In general, youth-specific match goals are established to produce one or more of the youth outcomes. The activities you select should support those goals, which can produce the desired outcomes.

Goals will be reviewed during the pre-match process, and again with all match parties during the match introduction, as well as annually to assess progress made.

Research shows that our one-to-one mentoring programs have real outcomes for children.

- 90% of Littles agreed their Big made them feel better about themselves.
- 97% of Littles said working hard in school is very important.
- 45% of Littles were less likely to start using drugs.
- 77% of Littles said they are doing better in school because of their Big.

This is what we do, why we do it, and this is why it matters.

About Expectations

If you are approved and matched, you can expect a structured, professional process for ensuring a successful match:

1. **Match Introduction Meeting:** A Match Specialist will conduct an in-person match introduction meeting which take place at the child's home or school.
2. **Communication with Match Support staff (phone, e-mail, text, or in-person):** A Match Specialist will contact you monthly for the first year of the match, and then quarterly after the first year anniversary of the match. Additional match support is available when needed.
3. **Post-Match training:** A Match Specialist will provide any additional training identified as being needed throughout the match life.
4. **Match Activities and events:** Throughout the year, BBBS of Central Wisconsin, invites you and your Little to participate in agency fundraisers and activities. We will also let you know when we receive donated tickets to community/sports events.
5. **Youth Development Plan participation:** Together with your Match Specialist and the parent/guardian/child, appropriate goals for the match will be set and monitored.
6. **Annual survey completion:** A Match Specialist will ask for feedback and to complete brief surveys to measure the strength of the relationship and evaluate goals.

How can I make the most of our match relationship?

- **Be a good friend:** Listen, have fun, take time to get to know this new person in your life. Choose activities that you both enjoy and that will strengthen the bond between you.
- **Be consistent:** Show the child you think your time together is important. We recommend weekly contact, especially early in the match. If you are unable to meet in person, be sure to phone, e-mail, text, or write to your little. Being consistent will help your friendship grow quicker and stronger.
- **Provide fun, safe activities:** Keep in mind that there are many things to do that do not require money, such as bike riding, visiting a park, or just having a great conversation.
- **Regularly communicate with your Little, the parents and your Match Specialist:** We are required to contact you each month to provide assistance and give feedback on how you're making a difference. Anytime you are unsure about what to do or how to handle a situation, your Match Specialist is there to help.
- **Realize that problems may come up:** It's normal for problems to arise in a match relationship. Try to balance your expectations of what it will be like with your Little and be realistic about how fast the relationship will take to develop.

About Our Littles & Families

Most children in our Community Based programs come to us through their parent or guardian. Most children in our Site Based programs come to us through a teacher or counselor. We also reach out to involved children through youth service agencies and other referrals. All children and their parents must be willing to participate in our program.

Who are our Little Brothers and Little Sisters?

- Children facing adversity from our community who could benefit from having a positive adult role model
- Children from different walks of life with different backgrounds
- Children who are eager to share interests, experiences, friendship, and a warm, trusting, relationship with you
- Children who are between the ages of 6 and 17

Parents have entrusted their child to you. They remain the leaders in the family and our role is to support them whenever we can when appropriately. It is important that we respect and honor that. The parent's role is critical to the success of the match.

How can we work with the parent/guardian?

- Communicate with them before and after an activity. Describe what you plan to do and what you have done together. Make sure they are aware of the activity plans and they are OK with your plans.
- Let them know about any changes in plans.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of your Little's family.
- Your primary relationship is with your Little. Do not become overly involved with the rest of the family.
- Talk to your Match Specialist about any concerns you have about your Little or their family.

Non—Discrimination Policy

Children are not excluded on the basis of race, religion, national origin, color, gender, marital status of parent, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status or disability.

Big Brothers, Big Sisters Board Members, Agency Staff and Volunteers are not excluded on the basis of race, religion, national origin, color, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status or disability.

About Safety

The safety of children is our number one priority – no exceptions. Our staff carefully screens each volunteer Big, board member, staff and others who work directly with the children in our programs. As a volunteer Big, it will be your role to make sure the relationship is healthy and that you are making good judgments about the child's safety on outings.

Here's how you can further promote safety:

- Follow all agency policies, procedures and ground rules at all times-no exceptions.
- Spending too much time with your Little too early in the match can set an unhealthy precedent for the relationship. Discuss plans and expected time with your Match Specialist.
- Obtain parent/guardian permission for all activities. Be aware that some parents may not be comfortable with your suggestions, so we expect that you will comply with parent decisions. Talk to your Match Specialist if you have questions.
- Always stay with your Little; do not leave them alone or with someone else.
- Do not use alcohol or other drugs before or during activities.
- Do not use physical discipline or yell at your Little.
- If an activity involves changing clothes (for example, swimming), there must be separate changing and showering places.
- Never ask your Little to keep a secret.
- Gift giving is discouraged, although you might want to buy an occasional gift for your Little. Seek parental advice about this first and discuss with your Match Specialist.
- Do not engage in tickling, wrestling, giving backrubs, or ask your Little to sit on your lap.
- I agree to follow the agency's social media and Virtual Recommendations

Child Abuse and Neglect

The Big Brothers Big Sisters program is a mandatory reporting agency for child abuse or neglect. If you ever have a situation where your Little talks to you about any abuse or violence they are subject to, contact your Match Specialist immediately. We ask that our volunteers take the following steps in a suspected abuse situation:

- If your Little tells you they were a victim of physical or sexual abuse, support them by being understanding. Let them know that the abuse is not their fault and they did the right thing by telling you.
- Tell your Little that the information must be shared with a Match Specialist. Your Little may feel uncomfortable with this at first because they've shared a secret that should not be shared with anyone .
- Call your Match Specialist and let them know about the incident. As you continue your friendship with your Little, your Match Specialist will be able to assist you in taking the necessary steps to make sure that your Little is protected.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

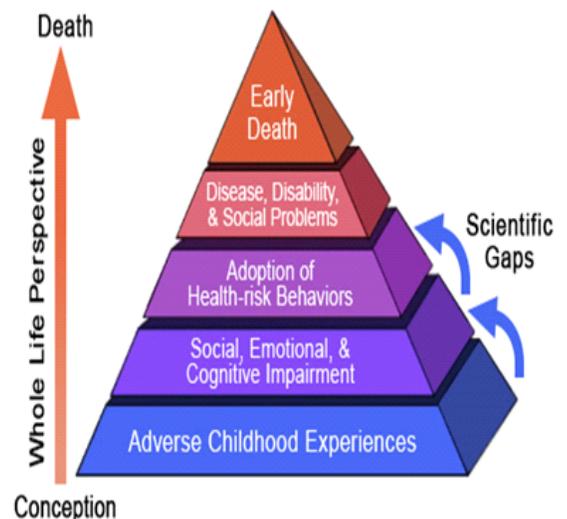
What is ACEs?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is the term used to describe all types of abuse, neglect, and other potentially traumatic experiences that occur to people under age of 18. ACEs have been linked to risky health behaviors, chronic health conditions, low life potential and early death. When children are exposed to chronic stressful events, their neurodevelopment can be disrupted. As a result, the child's cognitive functioning or ability to cope with negative or disruptive emotions may be impaired.

The presence of ACEs does not mean that a child will experience poor outcomes. However, children's positive experiences or protective factors can prevent children from experiencing adversity and can protect against many of the negative health and life outcomes even after adversity has occurred.

ACEs Include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Physical neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Intimate partner violence
- Mother treated violently
- Substance misuse within household
- Household mental illness
- Parental separation or divorce
- Incarcerated household member



Stable, nurturing relationships with caring adults can prevent or reverse the damaging effects of toxic stress.

Common Stages of Match Relationships

As every experienced Big will tell you, your friendship with your Little takes time to develop. It is a different experience for every Big and Little, and no doubt your friendship will be unique. However, there are some **common stages** that most match relationships go through at different times, usually depending on the level of trust that has been established.

Early Development Stage

What does this stage look like?

- You both are trying to figure out each other.
- Littles may try to get their Bigs' approvals or to impress them

What can you do to move it along?

- Without prying, learn facts about your Little and reference them in your conversations: eg. favorite things, best friend, where they've traveled.
- Be consistent and flexible, do what you say you are going to do.
- Be patient and remember that relationships have ups and downs, and don't "happen" by themselves.

Growth Stage

What does this stage look like?

- This is the most crucial time regarding the development of the Big/Little relationship.
- This is the time that may be a turning point in the relationship.
- It is common, around the fourth-month date, that your Little will begin testing you to see what you are really about and how much he/she can get away with.
- Your little may be observing you to find a reason not to trust you.

What can you do to move it along?

- Show your Little that he/she can trust you through your reliability, consistency and time together. As trust develops, your Little will probably begin sharing bits of information here and there with you.
- Keep in close contact with your Match Support Specialist for ideas.
- Recognize and praise accomplishments.
- If you need to give advice or address behavior problems, give reasons; avoid "shoulds."

Common Stages of Match Relationships

Maturity Stage

What does this stage look like?

- You will notice your relationship with your Little has become more positive and realistic and match activities are less structured.
- Most Bigs have shed their preconceived notions regarding the match and their Little.
- As the friendship matures, you will see the maturity of your Little as he/she grows and develops.

What can you do to move it along?

- Develop long term shared interests, activities that you will do frequently together and that you both enjoy.
- Identify past shared experiences and enjoy shared "jokes."
- Learn something new to both of you, together.

Transition and Closure Stage

What is match closure?

- Match Closure is just another name for ending your match relationship. While Match Closure is a natural part of the relationship, we anticipate that this won't happen within the first year.

What are some of the reasons that could lead to a Match Closure?

- Once a Little is 18 years old or completes high school, BBBS of Central Wisconsin no longer supports the Big/Little relationship. However, we encourage the relationship to continue.
- Changes in the Big or Little's situation, including moving, changes in the family structure, etc.
- Bigs and parents/guardians not following rules and guidelines of BBBS Central Wisconsin, including keeping in contact with your Match Support Specialist.
- **It is important that, if any of these changes or situations occur within your match, you contact your Match Specialist to discuss the match closure process.**

How do I handle the end of the Match?

- Ending a relationship is not unique to a Big/Little match. But it's important to remember that your Little's age and level of vulnerability will make it necessary to use special care and attention at this stage.
- When match closure is imminent working through feelings and problems with your Little shows him/her that your relationship was worth the effort. This helps prepare your Little to handle future transitions.
- The match closure process provides an opportunity to review the great things that happened during the match with all match parties.

About Match Closures

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 with a Little. However, research shows that when mentors are trained in how to handle match closure well and, in partnership with Match Specialist, 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 closes the file and does not continue to provide 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 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 Specialist should talk about the best options for you.

About Confidentiality

Given the nature of our program and the fact that we are working to develop strong one-to-one relationships, our mentors may be introduced to sensitive and extremely personal information about the Little that they are matched with. All Big Brothers and Big Sisters in the program must agree and adhere to strict confidential treatment of all information pertaining to areas of concern and background for the parties involved. You are to share private information only with the Big Brothers Big Sisters professional staff. Big Brothers Big Sisters encourages confidentiality between the Big and the Little. In order for a trusting relationship to develop, friends need to feel confident that their thoughts and feelings will not be shared with others without permission.

Thank You!

As your match begins, and throughout the entire life of your match, we want to thank you. You are stepping forward on a journey where you don't know exactly what will happen, but you are doing this because you care for others and you know that there is a great reward in life in the relationships you develop.

We wish you all the best in your match with your Little Brother or Little Sister. Have great fun. Take pride in your contribution to the happiness of your Little. We will be with you, supporting you, throughout your journey.



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Wisconsin Community-Based Bigs Contract

1. I understand that seeing my Little is one of the most important things I can do as a Big. Weekly contact is preferred, especially throughout the first year. If this cannot be done in person, a phone call, letter or postcard is appropriate.
2. I understand that the relationship between my Little and me is primarily a one-to-one relationship. Therefore, I will not include other people on the majority of our outings. I understand that only current volunteer Bigs may spend time alone with a child participating in the program. If I choose to introduce my Little to family or friends, I will never leave them unattended.
3. I understand that I will keep confidential any information about my Little and family members from other individuals, except my Match Specialist.
4. I will notify my Match Specialist immediately if a concern arises in my match relationship or if I have any concerns regarding my Little's safety and well-being. I understand that my Match Specialist is a mandated reporter and is required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.
5. I will inform the parent of match activity plans and obtain his/her approval. I will inform the parent of the location and general safety of the activity.
6. I will not engage in activities that are illegal or pose a high risk for injury while with my Little. I will be a positive role model for my Little. I will refrain from smoking, consuming alcoholic beverages, swearing, and practicing other behaviors which may not be perceived as positive while with my Little. I agree to abide by the Big Brothers Big Sisters Weapons Policy.
7. I understand that I am obligated to report to Big Brothers Big Sisters if I am involved in any arrest, charge, and/or conviction for anything other than misdemeanor traffic violations.
8. I understand that appropriate physical boundaries must be maintained with my Little at all times. Certain types of physical contact such as (but not limited to) tickling, wrestling, pinching, patting or asking a child to sit on an adult's lap are prohibited.
9. I understand that displaying or discussion of any materials such as (but not limited to) movies, videotapes, DVDs, video games, web-sites or magazines that contain suggestive or explicit sexual material or graphic violence is strictly prohibited. I understand that I will not allow a Little under the age of 13 years old to view a PG-13 movie or a T for Teen or M for Mature rated video game. I will not allow a Little under 17 years old to view an R rated movie or a M for Mature rated video game, even if I have parent permission. I understand that I will directly supervise video game and internet use when I am with my Little.
10. I understand that texting, emailing or use of any mobile device while driving, when my Little is in the car, is prohibited. I will also be respectful of our time together and will not be using any mobile devices or taking calls during match meetings unless they are urgent or an emergency.
11. I understand that I will not add my Little to Facebook or any other social networking sites or post pictures of my youth online, without prior approval from the child's parent and Match Specialist. I understand that my Little must be age 13 or older to be able to use Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok or Snapchat.
12. I understand that the I may not post any personal information about my Little, including full name, where they live, or descriptions of their personal or family background that could identify my Little, on Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Snapchat or any other social media.

13. I will not buy expensive gifts for my Little. When in doubt, I'll check with my Match Specialist.
14. I understand that my Match Specialist must follow local and national BBBS standards, which includes monthly contacts with the Big for the first year of the match. I will maintain regular contact with the Match Specialist by promptly responding to calls, letters and emails. I understand that without regular contact, I will not be allowed to see my Little until I have spoken to my Match Specialist.
15. I will notify my Match Specialist immediately if there are any changes that may impact my ability to commit to being a Big.
16. I will contact my Match Specialist if my place of employment, residence or telephone number changes.
17. I understand that my Little is not allowed to visit my home until we have had at least 3 in-person visits, and both the Match Specialist and parent approves visits to my home.
18. I understand that overnight visits are not allowed between the Big and Little, and will result in immediate termination of the match.
19. I understand that in order to transport my Little safely, I must have a current driver's license and current auto insurance with no less than the minimum acceptable state limits. I agree to provide the necessary documentation to obtain an annual insurance update. I understand that I must notify the agency if my driving privileges are revoked.
20. I understand that my friends or family members are not allowed to transport my Little except in cases of emergency (sudden illness or accident that does not allow the Big to drive).
21. I understand that I must use a child safety seat for any child under age 8 unless they meet the State's minimum weight and height requirements of 80 lbs. or 4'9".
22. I understand that my Little is not allowed to change clothing in my presence. (swimming, etc.) There must be separate changing and showering places.
23. Public Relations Permission Release

I give permission for BBBS to use my name and picture for the purpose of public relations.

I do not give permission for BBBS to use my name and picture for the purpose of public relations.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE, WHICH DEFINE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A BIG BROTHER/BIG SISTER, AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THEM.

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Wisconsin
Site-Based Bigs Contract**

1. I understand that seeing my Site-Based Little is the most important thing I can do as a Site-Based Big. Weekly contact is preferred during regular semester school weeks.
2. I understand that the relationship between my Little and me is primarily a one-to-one relationship. Therefore, I will not include other people on the majority of our outings.
3. I understand that I will keep confidential any information about my Little and family members from other individuals, except my Match Specialist.
4. I will not buy expensive gifts for my Site-Based Little. When in doubt, I'll check with my match specialist.
5. I will notify my Match Specialist immediately if there are any changes that may impact my ability to commit to being a Big. If I am unable to meet with my Little on any assigned day, I will notify the school and Match Specialist in advance.
6. I will notify my Match Specialist immediately if a concern arises in my match relationship or if I have any concerns regarding my Little's safety and well being. I understand that my Match Specialist is a mandated reporter and is required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.
7. I understand that I am obligated to report to Big Brothers Big Sisters if I am involved in any arrest, charge, and/or conviction for anything other than misdemeanor traffic violations.
8. I will be respectful of my time together with my Little and will not use any mobile devices or take calls during match meetings unless they are urgent or an emergency.
9. I understand that displaying or discussion of any materials such as (but not limited to) movies, videotapes, DVDs, video games, web-sites or magazines that contain explicit sexual material or graphic violence is strictly prohibited. I understand that I will directly supervise internet use when with my Little.
10. I understand that appropriate physical boundaries must be maintained with my Little at all times. Certain types of physical contact such as (but not limited to) tickling, wrestling, pinching, patting or asking a child to sit on an adult's lap are prohibited.
11. I will not engage in activities that are illegal or pose a high risk for injury while with my Little. I will be a positive role model for my Little. I will refrain from smoking, consuming alcoholic beverages, swearing, and practicing other behaviors which may not be perceived as positive while with my Little. I agree to abide by the Big Brothers Big Sisters Weapons Policy.
12. I understand that no in-person contact with my Little is allowed outside the assigned match site. I understand that I am not allowed to have any contact with my Little via phone, email, texting, Facebook or any other social media, without prior approval from the Match Specialist and parent permission.
13. I understand that my Match Specialist must follow local and national BBBS standards, which includes monthly contacts with the Big. I understand that my Match Specialist will contact me in-person at the school, by phone, letter or email.
14. Public Relations Permission Release

I give permission for BBBS to use my name and picture for the purpose of public relations.

I do not give permission for BBBS to use my name and picture for the purpose of public relations.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE, WHICH DEFINE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A SITE-BASED MENTOR AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THEM.

Print Name:

Signature: Date: