

Portage County

<u>Match Activity Guide</u>



Welcome to the Big Brothers Big Sisters Family!

I'm certain you will enjoy your new friendship with your Little Brother or Little Sister. We often hear from "Bigs" that they get as much (if not more) our of their matches as their "Littles". I'm sure you will find your new volunteer commitment to be an experience that you *both* will find rewarding and fun-filled!

As you begin your match, I know you have all kinds of ideas for activities with your Little Brother or Little Sister. As your friendship grows, there undoubtedly will be some times when you just can't think of anything to do. Your plans can be disrupted by unexpected weather changes (this IS Wisconsin!) or you may simply want to try something new!

As a service to you, we've developed this Match Activity Guide to help you think of new activities and to help make activities "easier on the pocketbook"! You'll find numerous ideas and projects that are low cost and a list of discounts offered by several generous businesses in our community. These discounts have been developed especially for Big Brothers Big Sisters and are only honored when you're with your Little. All you need to do is present your **Friendship Card**!

We're delighted to have you on our team and hope you'll find the Match Activity Guide useful and easyto-read. Please also follow us on Facebook, and Twitter for more activity ideas and agency updates.

Dawn Cherek, Executive Director

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Safety Notes:

- Please remember to always wear your seat belt, a life jacket, a helmet, and other protective gear when doing respective activities.
- Remember internet safety.
- It is the responsibility of parents & Bigs to restrain any child under age 8 in a booster seat while traveling in a vehicle.

<u>So Now You're a Big...</u>

Many matches reach a point where they are unable to decide what to do together and how they will pay for the activities. Here are a few thoughts and suggestions that may be helpful.

<u>Activities</u>

Big Brothers Big Sisters is philosophically based on the premise that the **friendship** relationship is the most important aspect of the match. In other words...it's not important **what** you do together as much as that you <u>are</u> together. We encourage you to spend your time and attention on each other (not your money). With that in mind, consider the following:

- Set aside one match meeting where together you and your Little can come up with a list of activities you can do together (homework, go for a walk, watch TV) and things you'd like to do together (learn to bowl, visit the Big's workplace). Remember to be realistic in your list.
- 2. Gather all available resources to help you prepare for your "planning session". Refer to this Match Idea Book, which lists all kinds of community resources and activities.
- 3. Ask your Match Specialist for suggestions.

<u>Money</u>

Big Brothers Big Sisters encourages **all** matches to concentrate on the friendship, not entertainment. We also know that many enjoyable activities do cost money. When you and your match choose an activity that costs money, please remember that it is essentially the **Big's** responsibility to finance the event. We encourage **all** Littles to contribute to at least some portion of the cost. (This helps to reinforce the value of money while also giving the Little another avenue of input into the match). Some of the best solutions for this issue have come from our matches who have successfully done the following:

- 1. Use the community discounts offered on the **Friendship Card.**
- 2. Have the Little chip in part of their allowance to cover the cost. (It is **very** important that the contribution come from the Little and their efforts, rather than the parent).
- 3. Your Little may not have an allowance, in which case you may have the Little "earn" some money with you...doing dishes, raking the yard, etc. are excellent ways of helping your Little understand the value of work while earning a little money to put toward the activity.
- 4. Make a "kitty". (You might spend time together actually making your kitty from a jar or box). Some matches keep a kitty each week and both people contribute. For example, the Big may throw in \$1.00, the Little 25¢. When enough money is saved, **THEN** the match does an activity to spend the money on!

Good luck! Remember that the possibilities are infinite. Some things may work for you, others may not. But your efforts, on the behalf of a child, make a difference.

Activities for All Seasons

Spring	Summer
• Plant a garden/start seeds.	Pick flowers.
• Go fishing (no license if under 16).	Go swimming.
• Ride bike/tune up bike.	• Attend a band concert or outdoor movie.
• Have your Little make a map. Follow it and	• Wash & wax your car.
see where you end up.	• Go to a county fair.
• Go for a walk or jog, or attend an aerobic class at the YMCA.	• Have a picnic in the park.
 Make wind chimes or a sundial. 	• Skip stones on a lake.
 Play at KASH Park. 	• Have a water balloon fight.
 Feed the Ducks at Pfiffner or McDill Park 	Shop at the Farmers Market.
	Go canoeing or kayaking.
	Go to a parade.
Fall	Winter
<i>Fall</i> • Play one on one football or go for a hike.	<i>Winter</i> • Make a snowman or sculptures.
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 Play one on one football or go for a hike. Attend Art in the Park. Make a scarecrow. Take a scenic driveenjoy the changing colors. Carve a pumpkin. Rake leaves and jump in the piles. Make a Halloween costume. 	 Make a snowman or sculptures. Visit art galleries or museums. Go sledding in Iverson Park. Attend UWSP sporting events. Have a snowball fight. Make your own cookie cutters, bake and decorate cookies. Study or read with your Little.



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Educational/Practical Ideas

- Visit your bank and show your Little how to write a check, make a deposit/ withdrawal, balance an account, or open/close an account.
- Choose a book you are both interested in...read a chapter or two together or read when you're apart and discuss during your next visit.
- Have a grooming lesson on hand and foot care. This is important for <u>both</u> boys and girls.
- Make a list of possible careers...then interview people who work in the fields your Little is interested in. Help them complete a job application.
- Explore different types of music...classical, opera, jazz, rock, blues, country, folk, etc.
- Write songs, poetry, or skits and then perform them.
- Visit the library. Help your Little obtain a card, check out materials, and return them on time.
- Learn to read a map, use a globe, and understand an atlas.
- Learn to use a camera, microscope, or telescope.
 - <u>Games</u>
- Crossword puzzles, word finds, or Mad Libs.
- Card games like Go Fish, Uno, or Cribbage.
- Jump rope, hopscotch, jacks, marbles, or make a backyard obstacle course.
- Checkers, Chess, Backgammon, Monopoly or Clue.

<u>Animals</u>

- Visit Schmeekle Reserve and observe wildlife.
- Wisconsin Rapids Municipal Zoo.
- Go to Petco and look at the animals.
- Visit a local Human Society and volunteer as a match or spend time with the animals.

<u>Shopping</u>

- Find a recipe and make a shopping list for items needed. (For younger kids, create a picture list.)
- Take your Little to the grocery store. Teach them to look for bargains, read nutritional information, find a food neither of you have tried before, or plan a meal together.
- Shop flea markets or garage sales. Look for inexpensive games, puzzles, or toys to keep at your house for when your Little visits.
- Pick up broken tools, sports equipment, or furniture and enlist your Little's help in fixing it.
- Window Shop.

<u>Meals & Other Food Ideas</u>

- Send your Little a special invitation to dinner. Ask him/her to bring two activity suggestions and what they did on his/her two favorite outings. Discuss these over dinner and plan a month of activities together.
- Plan, prepare, and serve a formal dinner. Dress up and talk about table manners.
- Pack a picnic and head for the beach, park, woods, country, or your living room.
- Prepare a meal from a different country/culture. Talk about the history and traditions of that country/culture.
- Make a pizza from scratch. Make or buy pizza dough, then add sauce and cheese, and experiment with toppings.
- Make attractive vegetable trays with carrots, celery, radishes. Talk about the importance of making healthy food choices when possible.
- Make a loaf of bread. Start with a simple white bread recipe and then try more complicated kinds as you go. Have plenty of butter ready!
- Attend the Portage County Cultural Festival at SPASH (May) and try new foods.
- Bake a cake, cupcakes, or cookies and decorate.
- Make fruit animals or find a way to "play" with your food.

<u>Computer Fun</u>

When you are stuck indoors, try one of the following websites. They range from crafty to educational & informative to interactive.

Please practice internet safety! Be sure your Little is supervised at <u>ALL TIMES</u> while using the internet. Talk to your Match Specialist about any concerns.

<u>www.dltk-kids.com</u>	<u>www.kidsrcrafty.com</u>	www.foodnetwork.com
<u>www.kidzone.ws</u>	www.wisp.k12.wi.us	www.britannica.com
http://pbskids.org	www.allrecipes.com	<u>www.parents.com/fun</u>
www.nick.com	kids cooking.htm	http://kids.nationalgeographic.com
<u>www.dnr.wi.gov</u>	www.uwsp.ed./cnr/cwes	<u>www.si.edu</u> (Smithsonian Institute)
<u>www.crayola.com</u>	<u>www.fitforafeast.com/</u>	http://animal.discovery.com
www.scholastic.com/ispy	/games/index.htm	

Activity & Project Ideas

Puffy Paint a T-Shirt

With parental permission, buy a t-shirt or have your Little bring an article of clothing they don't wear much. It doesn't have to be more than three colors of paint. Get creative!

Thumbprint Art

Using a stamp pad, press your thumb into the ink and make a print on paper. Use a marker to add details to make different creatures and designs.



Match Treasure Box

Use an old shoe box to your advantage. You and your little can decorate it to reflect what the two of you like. Then as your match goes on, collect items from outings you go on (photos, drawings, etc.) and put them in your treasure box. It's a great keepsake for your Little.

Make Musical Instruments out of Recycled Materials

Check out the website below for ideas or create your own. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHnVgej9LPo

Tie Dye a T-Shirt

Get your groovy on and make shirts that you can wear on your outings. For ideas and tips, go to: <u>https://www.parents.com/fun/arts-crafts/kid/tie-dye-with-kids</u>

Knit, Crochet, Sew

Look for projects on YouTube to make with your Little.

Paint Rocks

Littles can paint a rock to look like a sunset and give it to their parent/guardian as a paperweight. Find the perfect rock while on a hike in the woods.

Crayon Stain Glass Windows

For a how to, check out the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5JBy0cLwTU

Scrapbook

Make a scrapbook of all your adventures.

Slime / Homemade Playdough

Make a batch of slime of homemade play dough! Check out YouTube for recipe ideas.

More Activity & Project Ideas

Make a Bird Feeder

This can be as simple as a pinecone slathered in peanut butter & birdseeds, making birdseed ornaments to hang on trees, or a handmade structure out of recycled objects from your home. (hollowed out orange peels, milk jugs, etc.)

Scavenger Hunt

Be creative! There are a lot of possibilities for this. One way could include a list of items you and your Little can collect throughout an afternoon together.

The list can include items like a smooth stone, a red leaf, an acorn, etc.

Plant a Garden

You can either plant seeds in a garden at your house or plant seeds in terra cotta pots. Have fun decorating your pots with paint or markers.

Make a Hot Dog Cooker / Solar Oven

Check out this website for solar cooking fun: <u>https://www.instructables.com/id/Hot-Dog-Cooker-Solar-Oven/</u>

Make an Obstacle Course

Take turns going through it. Time yourselves and see who gets through the fastest.

Construction Paper Mosaics

Tear the colored paper into a bunch of different shapes and sizes. Piece them to make your mosaic. Use colored tissue paper and clear drying glue to decorate a washed out glass jar. Put a candle in it and it makes a great gift for Little's parent/guardian.

Sports

Attend or watch a Sporting Event with your Little. Don't be afraid to check out something new.

Send Letters of Postcards

Teach your Little how to write and mail a letter or postcard. Help them write a letter or postcard to their parent/guardian and mail it to them.

Taste Test

Have a blind taste test with your Little using various drinks and food.

More Activity & Project Ideas

Go Fishing

Littles 15 and under fish for free every day during the season. The DNR has an equipment loaner program. Check out more details at: <u>http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/anglereducation/loanerequipment.html</u>

Attend a Car Race

Check out Marshfield Motor Speedway or Golden Sands Speedway!

Hike or Bike

Plan a route around your neighborhood or find a trail. (Remember bike riding safety.)

Visit a Skate Park

Please make sure your Little has proper safety equipment before you go! Bukolt Park - <u>stevenspoint.com/780/Skatepark-Rules</u>

Volunteer

Introducing your Little to a new volunteer experience can be a bonding opportunity and a <u>great</u> way to teach your Little about giving back to the community. This is also helpful for Littles who need to complete service learning hours to graduate.

To find volunteer opportunities visit:

<u>volunteersrock.org/need</u> <u>co.portage.wi.us/department/health-care-center/volunteer-opportunities</u>

Show Support

Kids love to show off their skills! If your Little is involved in a sport, dance classes, plays an instrument, etc...find time to see them perform. Whether it's practicing at their house or an organized performance, it's a good way to make your Little feel special.

Be creative and provide opportunities for relationship development. This is important to focus on early in the match relationship. Yes, going to the movie theater is a lot of fun, but doesn't leave a lot of face time for you and your Little. Find activities where you and your Little get to talk or bond in an experience like baking cookies, shooting hoops, etc.

Always remember to include your Little's parent or guardian in the match. Give a report about the fun things you did together, how your Little behaved, and at least one detail about the day. This can create an atmosphere of openness between you and your Little's parent/guardian. If any challenges develop down the line, you will already have a more open relationship to discuss the good, the bad, and everything in between.

UW Stevens Point Activities

All UWSP sporting events are free to Bigs and Littles, just show your Friendship Card.

https://athletics.uwsp.edu/

Allen F. Blocher Planetarium, 715-346-2208, UWSP Science Building

UWSP Museum of Natural History, 715-346-2540, located in LRC

Outdoor Edventure, 715-346-3848, Lower Level of the Allen Center Room 002,401 Reserve Street. Rent canoes, kayaks, paddles, bikes, tents, snow shoes and ice skates!

Carleston Art Gallery, 715-346-4797, UWSP Noel Fine Arts Center. Exhibits of contemporary artwork by students, faculty and guest artists. Open when school is in session.

Health Enhancement Center (HEC), 715-346-3147, 2050 Fourth Ave. A multi-activity center, strength center, aquatic pool, racquetball courts and climbing wall.

Learn Something New Together

Many area hardware stores, craft stores, UWSP and other local businesses offer "mini sessions" and workshops year round. Many provide the materials or offer rental equipment. For schedules and registrations contact or look on their website:

Michael's

1210 Commons Cir Plover, WI 54467 715-344-7476 www.michaels.com/classes

Restaurants where Kids eat FREE!

<u>Grazies</u>, 5327 Hwy 10 E, 715-345-7808 Wednesday & Sunday's kids 10 and under eat FREE with purchase of adult meal.

Fazoli's, 5665 Hwy 10 E, Stevens Point, 715-344-8739

Tuesdays from 5pm-8pm kids 12 and under get a Kids Meal for .\$1 with purchase of adult entrée.

<u>**Pizza Ranch**</u>, 1300 Commerce Place, Plover, 715-544-1644 Tuesdays kids 10 and under get a free buffet with purchase of adult buffet.

Exploring Portage County

Annette & Dale Schuh Riverfront Arts Center, 715-343-6251, 1200 Crosby Avenue, Stevens Point, stevenspoint.com/170/Riverfront-Arts-Center, The Riverfront Arts Center's gallery hosts art exhibits and workshops in a variety of media.

Breakpoint Escape Room, 715-204-1600, 3256 Church St, Stevens Point, pointescaperooms.com Ages 9 and up. \$15 for child and \$25 for an adult. A puzzle that you have to put together and beat the clock and "escape" the room. Pricier activity, but could be fun for a special occasion.

Bucks and Bulls Archery, 715-341-2825, 3296 Church St, Stevens Point, bucksandbullsarchery.com/ An indoor archery range. \$10 per hour. Instructor will fit you for bow and assist you in shooting. Contact MS prior to activity.

Casey's Orchard, 715-344-6814, 2829 Burbank Rd (follow signs on Hwy 10 E near Fleet Farm) Facebook.com/caseysorchard, Open Labor Day to Thanksgiving. Apples, cider, honey, jellies, maple syrup and pumpkins. No pick your own.

Central WI Area Community Theatre, 715-314-6744, cwact.org, All performances at Sentry Theatre.

Central Wisconsin Children's Museum, 715-344-2003, 1100 Main St, Stevens Point, childrensmusuem.org, Museum promoting early learning through an array of hands-on exhibits & music, art & STEM programs.

Central Wisconsin Water Ski Show Team, 715-693-5495, cwwaterwalkers.org/schedule Free family orientated themed water ski show at South Bay Beach, Lake Dubay.

Feltz's Dairy Store and Farm Tours, 715-344-1293, 5796 Porter Dr, Stevens Point, feltzsdairystore.com, 35-45 minute tour includes viewing robotic milking, baby calves and receive a small scoop of ice cream in the store. Tours by appt only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Walk in tours on the hour on Saturdays. Adults \$8 and kids 12 and under \$6.

Galaxy Comic and Games, 715-544-0857, 925 Clark St, Stevens Point, galaxycomicsandgames.com Comics, board games, card games, and limited dining menu. Log onto galaxycomicandgames.com for special weekly pricing.

George Mead Wildlife Area, 715-457-6771, S2148 Hwy S, Milladore, meadewildlife.org. If you like hunting, fishing, hiking, biking and wildlife activities and watching this is the place. Check their website for seasonal special events!

Granite Peak, 715-845-2846, 3605 N Mountain Rd, Wausau, skigranitepeak.com. If you are a seasoned skier or snowboarder or new to the sport, Granite peak offers many levels of ski runs.

Green Circle, 715-346-4992, 2419 Northpoint Drive, Stevens Point, greencircletrail.org Unique 27-mile trail linking scenic natural areas that follows along the Wisconsin and Plover Rivers and winds its way through forests, parks, and wetlands. The trail is composed of 12 distinct segments.

Ice Age Trail, 715-570-6370, portagecoiat.org

Portions of this continuous 1,000 mile walking foot path travel through Portage County through diverse landscapes that provides outdoor recreation experiences and preserves geological features.

Portage County Public Library, 715-346-1544, 1001 Main St, Stevens Point, pocolibrary.org/calendar/ events, The library offers many different events throughout the year, including weekly story times, Tai Chi classes, family movie nights, puppet shows, teen specific events and much more. Check out their website for most up to date events.

Putt-N-Play, 715-544-1902, 701 2nd St N, Stevens Point, <u>puttnplay.today</u> Indoor mini golf course, outdoor laser tag, RC Track and arcade.

Stevens Point Swimming Pool & Waterslide,715-346,1226, stevenspoint.com/departments/parks/pool -slide. Open early June through early August.

Stevens Point Disc Golf, stevenspoint.com/departments/parks/parks and facilities/discgolf Go and enjoy the world class Yulga Disc Golf course located in Mead Park. BBBS has disc golf to check out, course is free to play!

Stevens Point Farmers Market, stevenspointfarmersmarket.com

Open Monday's from 3-7 and Saturdays 6:30-5pm. Vendors sell out fast, so if you have your heart set on something go before noon!

Schmeeckle Reserve, 715-346-4992, 2419 Northpoint Drive, Stevens Point, uwsp.edu/schmeeckle Five miles of trails and boardwalks for hiking, walking and biking. Fish, canoe or watch wildlife on Lake Joanis. Visitor Center open daily 8am-5pm.

Skate City, 715-423-4040, Hwy 54 &36th St N, Wisconsin Rapids, skatecityfamilufun.com Enjoy skate rentals, arcade and bounce house.

Stevens Point Sculpture Park, 900 N Second St, Stevens Point, stevenspointsculpturepark.org Features artwork from local, regional and national artists on 20 acres. Check website for seasonal events and activities.

Sunrise Raspberry Farm, 715-572-5381, 3692 Sunset Dr, Stevens Point, sunriseraspberryfarm.com All organic pre-picked or pick your own raspberries, asparagus and rhubarb.

Tactical Escape 101, 715-418-0012, 23 Park Ridge Drive, #2K. Stevens Point, tacticalescape101.com Escape room center in Park Ridge.

Rudolph Grotto Shrine Wondercave, 715-435-3120,695 Grotto Ave, Rudolph, rudolphgrotto.org A variety of shrines, outdoor flower and rock gardens, picnic area & man made underground cave. Free Admission to gardens, cave has a small fee.

Willett Ice Arena, 715-346-1576, stevenspoint.com/departments/parks/willetticearena Enjoy ice skating for \$3.50 per person, skate rentals additional. Check out their scheduled ice shows!

Portage County Parks

Bukolt: Located at the end of Bukolt Ave, on Wisconsin River. Water access, ball diamond, horseshoes, shelters, parking, picnic area, playground, restrooms, swimming beach, skateboard park and access to Green Circle Trail.

Dewey Shooting Range: Willow Springs Dr, 6 miles north of Stevens Point. Adjacent to the Wisconsin DNR Resources 6,000 acre Dewey Marsh. Provides safe facility for firearms target practice. Contact MS prior to activity.

DuBay: 4501 Cty Rd E to Lake Dr, just West of Amherst Junction. Water access, swimming beach, picnic area, lodge, playground, restrooms, ball diamond, campground.

Easlan-Weslan Complex: Located off Cedar Ave, between Post Rd and Hoover Ave. Parking, tennis, playground, ball diamonds, picnic area, basketball, shelter, restrooms, ice skating, hockey.

Iverson: On Hwy 10 E between 1-39 and Park Ridge. Water access, ball diamond, basketball, horseshoes, outdoor ice skating, sledding hill, shelter, picnic area, parking, playground, restrooms, swimming, access to Green Circle Trail.

Jordan: Co Hwy Y, 2 miles northeast of Stevens Point off Hwy 66. Water access, picnic area, lodge, showers, playground, nature center & trail, small swimming beach, ball diamond, fishing, campground.

Kash/Mead: Located on the corner of West Clark St and West Whitney St. Water access, ball diamond, basketball, horseshoes, shelter, parking, picnic area, playground, swimming beach, restrooms, disc golf.

Lake Emily: Hwy 10 to Lake Dr, just west of Amherst Junction. Water access, swimming beach, picnic area, lodge, showers, ball diamond, nature trails.

Little Plover River: Located off Hoover Ave. 52 Acres offering jogging, cross country trails, ski trails, paved pedestrian and handicap walkways, tennis, volleyball, picnic area, playground, ball diamond, bleachers, shelter, restrooms, parking.

Pacawa: Located off Hoover Ave, behind Menards. Ball diamonds, soccer fields, beach area, shelter, restrooms, picnic area, Veterans Memorial, parking.

Pfiffner: Located on Crosby Ave, along the Wisconsin River. Water access, bandshell, formal garden, shelter, parking, picnic area, playground, restrooms, River Arts Center, Veterans Memorial, and access to Green Circle Trail.

Sunset Beach: Sunset Lake Rd, 5 miles north of Nelsonville. Boat landing, fishing, huge swimming beach.

Zenoff: Located on 2nd St North near I-39/Business 51 Interchange. Ball diamonds, restrooms, parking, picnic area, playground, volleyball, access to Green Circle Trail.

Communication Cards

Cut apart cards and put them in a container. Have your Little choose a card and take turns answering the questions. Encourage your Little to really think about his/her answers, and don't feel afraid to come up with follow up questions to the answers they give.

What is your favorite color?	What makes you angry? How do you respond when you are angry?	If you could be any animal, what would you be and why?	What makes you laugh?
If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be and why?	What is your favorite food?	Where would you go if you could travel anywhere in the world?	What do you want to do when you grow up?
What was the best thing that happened to you today?	How important are someone's looks? Why?	If you saw a friend steal something, what would you do?	Would you rather be rich or famous? Why?
If you could have any super power, what would it be? Why?	If you could go back in time and live in any other era, what would it be? Why?	What's a skill or talent you wish you had? Why?	What does success mean to you?

Listen so your Little will talk; talk so your Little will listen.

Avoid talking **at** your Little, make a point of identifying with the feeling instead. If your Little tells you they got in trouble for talking back to the teacher, how you respond will determine how deep your words sink in. *"I remember how stressful school was, especially when I had a teacher I didn't like...How do you feel about what happened?...What else do you think you could have said to your teacher?...How do you think the outcome would have been different?...Is there anything you can do about it now?..."*

Listen to them and allow them to get their feelings out without judgement. Using humor prior to getting serious can help your Little feel less defensive and more open to your words of wisdom. Depending on the situation, sometimes the very best support one can give another person is to listen without saying a thing.





Vision: All youth achieve their full potential.

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

About Your Little

Match Date:		
Little's Name:		Birth Date:
Address:		
Little's Phone #	<i>t</i> :	
Parent/0	Guardian Name(s):	
Phone #	:	<u></u>
Email ac	ldress:	
Employ	er:	
Addition	nal Contact Person:	
Phone #	:	
Siblings	:	
Match Speciali	st:	
Phone #:		
Email:		
	Office phone: 715-341-0661	Office hours: 8 am - 4 pm

www.bigimpact.org