



**Big Brothers
Big Sisters.®**

OF CENTRAL
WISCONSIN

Wood County-Wisconsin Rapids

Match Activity Guide

WE

INSPIRE

IGNITE

EMPOWER

POTENTIAL

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) out 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 easy-to-read. Please also follow us on Facebook, and Twitter for more activity ideas and agency updates.

Dawn Cherek, Executive Director

Table of Contents:

So Now You're a Big.....	3
Match Activity & Project Ideas.....	4-9
Exploring Wood County.....	10
Wood County Parks.....	11-12
Communication Information.....	13-14
About Your Little.....	15

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.

So Now You're a Big...

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.

Activities

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 **are** together. We encourage you to spend your time and attention on each other (not your money). With that in mind, consider the following:

1. 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.

Money

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

- Plant a garden/start seeds.
- Go fishing (no license if under 16).
- Ride bike/tune up bike.
- Have your Little make a map. Follow it and see where you end up.
- Go for a walk or jog, or attend an aerobic class at the YMCA.
- Make wind chimes or a sundial.
- Play at KASH Park.
- Feed the Ducks at Piffner or McDill Park



Summer

- Pick flowers.
- Go swimming.
- Attend a band concert or outdoor movie.
- Wash & wax your car.
- Go to a county fair.
- Have a picnic in the park.
- Skip stones on a lake.
- Have a water balloon fight.
- Shop at the Farmers Market.
- Go canoeing or kayaking.
- Go to a parade.



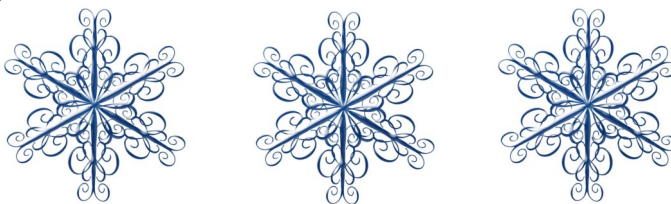
Fall

- Play one on one football or go for a hike.
- Attend Art in the Park.
- Make a scarecrow.
- Take a scenic drive...enjoy the changing colors.
- Carve a pumpkin.
- Rake leaves and jump in the piles.
- Make a Halloween costume.
- Help your Little set up a study schedule.
- Go hunting (call your match specialist first!).



Winter

- 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.
- Make holiday decorations.



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 both 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.

Games

- 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.

Animals

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

Shopping

- 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.

Meals & Other Food Ideas

- 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.

Computer Fun

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 ALL TIMES while using the internet. Talk to your Match Specialist about any concerns.

www.dltk-kids.com

www.kidsrcrafty.com

www.foodnetwork.com

www.kidzone.ws

www.wisp.k12.wi.us

www.britannica.com

<http://pbskids.org>

www.allrecipes.com

www.parents.com/fun

www.nick.com

kids.cooking.htm

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com>

www.dnr.wi.gov

www.uwsp.ed./cnr/cwes

www.si.edu (Smithsonian Institute)

www.crayola.com

www.fitforafeast.com/

<http://animal.discovery.com>

www.scholastic.com/ispys/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:
<https://www.parents.com/fun/arts-crafts/kid/tie-dye-with-kids>

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=Q5JByOcLwTU>

Scrapbook

Make a scrapbook of all your adventures.

Slime / Homemade Playdough

Make a batch of slime or 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:
<https://www.instructables.com/id/Hot-Dog-Cooker-Solar-Oven/>

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 or 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: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/anglereducation/loanerequipment.html>

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 - stevenspoint.com/780/Skatepark-Rules

Volunteer

Introducing your Little to a new volunteer experience can be a bonding opportunity and a great 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:

volunteersrock.org/need

co.portage.wi.us/departments/health-care-center/volunteer-opportunities

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.

Exploring Wood County

Alexander House, 715-887-3442, 1131 Wisconsin River Drive, Port Edwards, alexanderhouseonline.org
The Alexander House, a Center for Art and History, is a combination of art gallery with frequently changing displays, and historical museum which emphasizes local lumbering and papermaking exhibits.

Chestnut Center for the Arts, 715-389-8999, 208 S Chestnut Avenue, Marshfield, chestnutarts.org
The Chestnut Center is Marshfield's venue for performing arts, visual arts and literary arts. Located in a historic church building in downtown Marshfield, it's a great place to enjoy concerts, plays, poetry readings, recitals, art gallery shows and workshops.

Escape Room Marshfield, 108 E 4th Street, Marshfield, escaperoommarshfield.com
Escape rooms are hour-long, theme-driven puzzle challenges. Our rooms are designed for 4-6 players but can accommodate as few as 2 players and are always private to your group. Various locks, riddles, physical puzzles, and secrets make for an exciting and interactive experience.

George Mead Wildlife Area, 715-457-6771, S2148 Hwy S, Milladore, meadwildlife.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, www.skigranitepeak.com. If you are a seasoned skier or snowboarder or new to the sport, Granite peak offers many levels of ski runs.

JuRustic Park, 715-435-3120, M222 Sugarbush Lane, Marshfield, jurustic.com,
This site documents the efforts of amateur paleontologist Clyde Wynia to excavate and recreate as best as possible the now extinct creatures that inhabited the large McMillan Marsh near Marshfield, Wisconsin during the Iron Age.

Lest We Forget Military Museum, 715-384-5867, 211 E. 2nd St, Marshfield, marshfieldmuseum.com/
This military exhibit is now open to the public Wednesdays and Saturdays from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Marshfield Skatepark, 715-4642, 905 N Cedar Avenue, Marshfield, ci.marshfield.wi.us/departments/parks_and_recreation/skatepark.php Come ride the ramps and rails at the Skatepark! Located at Braem Park on the corner of Ives and Cedar, the Skatepark is the place to be if you're into skateboarding, rollerblading, and BMX biking.

Melody Gardens, 715-384-3326, 1200 S Oak Ave, Marshfield, melodygardensmarshfield.com
Both the Restaurant and Skateland continue to be a Marshfield tradition with great food and fun entertainment.

New Visions Gallery, 715-387-5562. 1000 N. Oak Ave, Marshfield, marshfieldclinic.org/locations/marshfield-center/new-visions, Visit New Visions for a series of dynamic exhibitions displayed in a 1,600 square foot, secure, climate-controlled gallery. Exhibits change every 6 to 8 weeks. Each features a variety of art forms including national traveling exhibits, significant works on loan from private and public collections and quality regional art.

Power Bluff Park & Winter Recreation Area, 715-421-8422, 6990 Bluff Dr, Arpin, co.wood.wi.us/Departments/Parks/PowersBluff.aspx Located 2 1/2 miles southwest of Arpin; or 17 miles northwest of Wisconsin Rapids; or 15 miles southeast of Marshfield. There is a 1.5 mile self-guided nature trail. Winter sports include downhill skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing, and tubing.

Rose Bowl Lanes, 715-387-1114, 1600 N. Central Avenue, Marshfield, rosebowl lanes.com
This family-owned 24-lane center offers tournaments and leagues for all ages and skill levels. Families and groups are welcome and free parking is available.

Rudolph Grotto Shrine Wondercave, 715-435-3120, 695 Grotto Ave, Rudolph, www.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.

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

South Wood County Historical Museum, 715-423-1580, 540 3rd Street South, Wisconsin Rapids, swch-museum.com, On the site of Isaac's boyhood home, Anton Billmeyer built Shadowlawn for Isaac Witter in 1907. The house was built on grounds consisting of 230 feet of frontage on Third Street and 230 feet of frontage on the Wisconsin River.

Stierle Bird Exhibit, 715-387-8494, 211 E. 2nd Street, Marshfield, visitmarshfield.com/business/stierle-bird-exhibit/, Everett Roehl Marshfield Public Library has a unique exhibit for area visitors in the library's downstairs. The Stierle Bird Exhibit consists of about 400 birds representing 140 species, plus a collection of approximately 2,000 bird eggs.

Upham Mansion, 715-387-3322, 212 West Third Street, Marshfield, uphammansion.com
A restored home of former Wisconsin governor William Henry Upham, this house represents mid-Victorian, Italianate architecture. The House is the site of the annual Pie and Ice Cream Social held during *Marshfield's Dairyfest*. It is also open to a festive Christmas Event on the first Saturday and Sunday in December from 1:30 p.m. through 4:00 p.m.

Wildwood Park & Zoo, 715-384-4642, 1800 S. Roddis Ave, Marshfield, ci.marshfield.wi.us/visitors/wildwood_zoo, Come visit and enjoy your time with the animals. Admission is FREE, but donations are always welcome!

Wisconsin Rapids Municipal Zoo, 715-421-8200, 444 West Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, wirapids.org/municipal-zoo.html The *Wisconsin Rapids zoo* is a small zoo but great for everyone. During the summer months the petting zoo is lots of fun for small children's adults alike.

Wisconsin River Papermaking Museum, 715-424-3037, 730 First Avenue South, Wisconsin Rapids
The Wisconsin River Papermaking Museum features a pictorial history of the 100-year old mansion that houses the museum as well as photos and history of the development of the dam on the Wisconsin River at Grand Rapids/Centralia and the beginnings of Consolidated Water Power & Paper Company.

World's Largest Round Barn, 715-387-1261, 513 E. 17th Street, Marshfield, centralwisconsinstate-fair.com, The World's Largest Round Barn, come take a look at this magnificent building for yourself!

Wisconsin Rapids Parks

Ben Hansen Park: Ben Hansen Park is an urban park located in and administered by the city of Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin. The park has an area of 18.4 acres. It is adjacent to Lyon Park. 1885-2031 2nd Ave S

Gaynor Park: Gaynor Park is 4.64 acres in size. This passive park is located in the east central downtown section of Wisconsin Rapids. Gaynor Park offers nice landscaping to those who want to get away from the busy downtown area to relax or to stroll through. Baker Street & 5th Street North

Henry Demitz Park: Demitz Park is a secluded park 3 acres in size that is nestled along the east bank of the Wisconsin River at the corner of Third Street South and the Riverview Expressway. Demitz Park is one of the more tranquil parks in the Wisconsin Rapids community. This enclave offers a serene view of the river. 1050 3rd Street South

Lyon Park: Lyon Park is 6.18 acres in size. The Lyon Park facility is connected by a strip of land along the river to Ben Hansen Park to the south. Large tree growth and a well-developed playground have made this park a popular neighborhood getaway. The picnic facilities are regularly used and the river offers a touch of natural beauty. Local fishermen frequently visit the park. 2nd Avenue S & Riverview Expressway

Mead Athletic Field: Mead Field is rated one of the best athletic facilities in the area offering a diversity of recreational activities. The park is 19.35 acres in size and houses the west side swimming pool. 311 17th Avenue

Nepco Lake County Park: Located 1 mile south of Wisconsin Rapids, the 125 acre park is situated on the 494 acre Nepco Lake. The park features a beach area, boat launch, picnic area, playground, small open shelter, enclosed shelter, fishing access for disabled and hiking/cross-country skiing trails. 1410 Griffith Avenue

Poplar Springs Park: Poplar Springs Park is 4.26 acres in size and is a relatively quiet area located on Spring Street just west of Highway 54. It offers a small sledding hill, play equipment, and an undeveloped ball field. Spring Street

Robinson Park: Robinson Park is a community park that is 25.5 acres in size on the northeast side of the city. This park is one of the most popular parks in Wisconsin Rapids. 1150 17th Street

Sand Lot Park: Sand Lot Park is 9.87 acres in size and is situated in a residential area located in the south central portion of the city. There are two Little League ball diamonds, a basketball court and two sand volleyball courts in the park. 453 Goodnow Avenue

South Wood County Park: South Wood County Park is located 5 1/4 miles east of Wisconsin Rapids on CTH W. The park is located on 332 acres around Lake Wazeecha, which is the Indian name that means "lake of the land of the pines." The lake is 148 acres. 6411 South Park Road

Veterans Memorial Park: Located in the heart of downtown Wisconsin Rapids on the east bank of the Wisconsin River. The Veterans Memorial Park is dedicated to the veterans of Central Wisconsin. 112 2nd Street South

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.

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

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 #: _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Phone #: _____

Email address: _____

Employer: _____

Additional Contact Person: _____

Phone #: _____

Siblings: _____

Match Specialist: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Office phone: **715-341-0661**

Office hours: **8 am - 4 pm**

www.bigimpact.org