



# SCHOOL/SITE-BASED

## Parent/Guardian & Child Handbook



**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.

**Accountability Statement:** We partner with parents/guardians, Bigs and others in the community and hold ourselves accountable for each Little in our program achieving:

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

## THE BIG DETAILS ABOUT BBBS

### **About Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS)**

Big Brothers Big Sisters has been matching Littles with caring Bigs in fun and rewarding relationships since 1904. By participating in mentoring programs, young people are:

- 75% more likely to receive a four-year college degree
- 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs
- 53% less likely to skip school
- 37% less likely to skip a class

### **Who are Big Brothers and Big Sisters?**

- People who work and live in your community
- High school and college students from nearby schools
- Retirees, military personnel, members of faith communities or civic organizations
- Ordinary people that are extraordinary

***What they all have in common is a sincere interest in being a friend and mentor to a Little. They are not paid – all of their time is volunteered.***

### **How do we select Bigs?**

BBBS staff make a professional decision about whether an applicant is eligible to mentor a Little after the applicant has completed an extensive screening process that includes:

- An application
- A criminal background and motor vehicle check
- At least three reference checks
- An in-person interview
- An orientation and training that helps prepare a mentor to support your child's healthy development

### **Who are Littles?**

- Youth who would benefit from having a positive adult role model.
- All Littles and their parents/guardians choose to be in our program and are able to commit to the program for one year.

- All interested applicants must submit an application and complete an in-person child interview with a Program Coordinator. Information collected in the enrollment process will help our staff determine eligibility for our program. Upon acceptance, Littles are placed on a waiting list. Some Littles take longer to match than others depending on volunteer availability.
- Although the matching process may take some time, please know that we work hard to find appropriate matches for all waiting Littles. While waiting for a match, waiting Littles and their families are able to still participate in many of our agency activities and events.

**When Bigs and Littles get together, what do they do?**

Matches typically meet 2-4 times a month for about 1 hour at a time during the school year. Matches should maintain contact over the summer by writing letters, emailing, calling, or texting each other. Matches choose activities they both enjoy such as arts and crafts, board and card games, going to the gym, or playing with Legos. School/site-based matches may attend BBBS activities but need to meet at the activity. The Big is never allowed to transport the Little.

## MY ROLE AS A PARENT/GUARDIAN

**Parents/guardians should know about each activity.**

When your child returns home from the day they meet with their Big, please ask what they did and if they enjoyed their time together. Make sure that your child feels okay spending time with their Big.

## BBBS MATCH SUPPORT

**How we work with you, your child, and the Big**

**BBBS works hard to support the relationship between Bigs and Littles.**

**Our goal is for the relationship to be as successful as possible for everyone.**

It is required for us to talk to your child and their Big every month. This allows us to see how the match is going and ensure your child’s safety. We’ll also need to check in with you throughout the year – twice during the school year and once during the summer. These check ins typically take place over the phone. Please feel free to contact us at any time to share stories or discuss the match.

**Your Program Coordinator is the main link between you, your child, the Big, and the agency. They will...**

- Find information and resources that you might be interested in
- Connect you with community resources
- Keep you updated on activities offered by the agency
- Help you communicate with your child and their Big
- Work with you on any conflicts or challenges that may arise

### **Why Match Support is required:**

- To discuss your child's safety or well-being; this is our number one priority
- To discuss general concerns, you may have about your child's Big
- To report any changes in address or phone number
- To report any important family changes
- To share success stories about your child's progress or special honors

*\*If we are unable to reach you or your child after three attempts, the match may be suspended or even closed. Please be sure to return phone calls within 3 business days to stay in good communication with your Program Coordinator.*

### **Your Role: We need you to be an active partner!**

Parents/guardians are important partners in helping to build a successful and meaningful friendship between your child and the Big.

## **BIG THINGS YOU COULD DO TO HELP**

- Share your concerns, hopes and wishes for your child with your Program Coordinator.
- Please let us know if there is anything you feel the Big should know or if you have tips that would help them be successful.
- Always ask your child about what activities they did with their Big and their feelings about the activity
- Participate in agency sponsored events and activities. You can view and sign up for these events through our activity emails or by visiting our website: **BigDefenders.org**.
- Bigs are "older friends." They are not substitute parents, babysitters, disciplinarians, financial support, a taxi service or counselors. Bigs are not allowed to babysit their Little or their Little's siblings.
- In the summer, please help make sure that your child returns phone calls and stays in regular contact with the Big and Program Coordinator. Regular contact is important to the success of the match. We would like Bigs and Littles to keep in touch twice a month over the summer through phone calls, texting, emailing, writing letters, or attending BBBS activities.
- Give it time: This relationship needs time to develop – at least three months – so don't judge it too quickly.

### **In summary, the top 3 rules are:**

- 1.** Know what your child is doing with their Big.
- 2.** Communicate any concerns to BBBS staff.
- 3.** Be an active partner!

## SPECIAL INITIATIVES

**Mentoring Children of Incarcerated Parents** – The objective of this initiative is to create quality, lasting, one-to-one relationships that provide children of offenders with caring role models for future success. Bigs provide opportunities for Littles to gain new skills and interests and expand their experiences beyond their families, schools, and neighborhoods by acting as a trusted friend.

**Bigs in Blue** – This initiative allows on-duty police officers to mentor youth who are facing adversity. This initiative was developed to create positive and respectful relationships with people who have authority, including officers. We currently have partnerships with the St. Cloud, Sartell and Waite Park Police Departments and are looking to expand to other departments in our service area.

 Big Brothers Big Sisters

**BIGS IN BLUE**

**Bigs in Brown** – With this initiative we partner with local Sheriff's Offices to provide mentors for youth facing adversity. The Bigs are made up of employees of the Sheriff's Office which may include deputies, corrections staff, dispatchers, administrative staff, etc. We currently partner with the Stearns County Sheriff's Office and hope to expand to other counties in our service area.

**Operation Military Mentoring** – Big Brothers Big Sisters supports children from military families and engages active duty, reserve, and retired military personnel as volunteer mentors. It's an opportunity to provide support and friendship to families who give so much to protect our freedom.

**Faith-Based** – Our Faith-Based Bigs help the Little explore their faith journey while engaging in fun activities they both enjoy. Bigs may share about their faith to help the Little with their own faith journey and teach/model the importance of serving others. As with all of our Bigs, this has to be prior approved with the parent/guardian and an interest of the Little.

**College & Career Readiness** – Big Brothers Big Sisters provides activities for our youth to help prepare them for college and career. This includes such activities as: scholarship opportunities, College Night, college visits, FAFSA Workshop, Career Exploration Night, etc. These activities are open to all current and past Littles as well as High School Bigs.

**Dr. Potter Bigs on Campus Mentoring Initiative** – We are partnering with St. Cloud State University, Spanier Bus Service and the St. Cloud School District (ISD 742); AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) students will be bussed to SCSU where they will be matched with an employee of SCSU or business professional from the community. They will meet twice a month on campus. The AVID program works primarily with students of color, low income, or those whose families are first generation college students. The purpose of this initiative is to introduce the students to college and provide professional adult mentors to the students.

**DR. POTTER**  
**BIGS**  
**on Campus**

**Bridging Generations** – Big Brothers Big Sisters recruits and engages volunteers age 55+ to share their time and life experiences through youth mentoring. This initiative makes a positive impact across the generations and offer long-lasting effects. Often we hear potential Bigs say, “I wish I would have done that when I was younger,” thinking they are, in their opinion, “too old.” We have found great success in Bigs age 55+, both for the Big and the Little

**Sports Buddies** – The Sports Buddies program is a fun way to mentor through participating and spectating sports. In this program, one-to-one mentoring friendships between an adult and child are formed while engaging in athletics. Bigs make a 6-month commitment with the option to continue their match after the 6-month mark. They will attend 1-2 events per month organized by BBBS staff. Activities take place on weeknights and Saturdays and last on average 2-4 hours. Bigs will only spend time with their Little at BBBS Sports Buddies events. The Little’s family is responsible for coordinating transportation to and from activities. The BBBS Program Coordinator will conduct all scheduling and communication between the Big, Little, and Little’s parent/guardian. Sports Buddies is a great way to mentor and build community with other matches that love sports!



**Big Couples** – Two adults can team up to mentor a youth. “Couples” may be a spouse, significant other or close friend. As a Big Couple, the two Bigs provide a Little with a team of support.

**Big Families** – This opportunity allows a family to invite a child to join in on their family activities! A couple or individual with a child or children all benefit when adding a Little to their family.

**High School Bigs** – We provide a unique opportunity for high school students to volunteer as mentors in our school-based program. High school Bigs must be in the second semester of their freshman year or older.

## CHILD SAFETY Our Top Priority

Children’s safety is our number one priority. We focus on the child’s safety and well-being throughout the match, not just at the beginning. We want to work together to keep your child safe. While our staff carefully screens each volunteer, we need your help to make sure the relationship is healthy and the Big is making good judgments about your child’s safety on outings.

- Please notify us immediately if you have a concern with the match.
- The Big should never ask your child to keep a secret.

**If the following patterns arise, you should discuss them with your Program Coordinator:**

- Your child’s Big wants to spend more and more time with your child.
- Your child’s Big is frequently buying them gifts.

We know that you work with your child to teach them skills to help keep them safe. Please feel free to discuss these issues and any other issues related to child safety with your BBBS Program Coordinator. We want to work with you to keep your child safe.

As a parent/guardian, you recognize the potential of your child better than anyone. By giving them the opportunity to be part of BBBS, you're starting them down a path to an even brighter, more promising future. We look forward to working with you and your child!

*If at any time you have concerns regarding your child's match, please contact BBBS staff for support.*

## OFFICIAL POLICIES & GUIDELINES

**Here are the policies Big Brothers Big Sisters requires all volunteers who work with children to abide by while they are involved in our program.**

**If you have questions about these policies/guidelines or if the Big violates any of these, please contact the Program Team at 320.253.1616 immediately.**

### **USE OF CHEMICALS BY VOLUNTEERS:**

Bigs are prohibited from being under the influence and/or using any substance that could potentially affect: judgment, driving, reaction time, or otherwise jeopardize a child's safety and well-being, while the Little is in the Big's care or company. This includes, but isn't limited to: alcohol, illicit drugs, and legal drugs, including opiates, Ambien, medical marijuana, and other prescription medications. If there is any use of alcohol or mind-altering substances, the Big will be subject to termination. Bigs are prohibited from the use of any illegal substances while matched with a Little in the program.

Bigs are prohibited from the use of tobacco products and electronic cigarettes (including vaping) in front of their Littles.

*\* High school Bigs are expected to be a role model in and out of school and agree to be chemical free. If convicted of any type of drug/alcohol related offense, they will lose their privilege to be a Big.*

### **GIVING MEDICATION:**

Bigs are not allowed to give Littles any medication (prescription/non-prescription).

## **FIREARM/WEAPON SAFETY**

- Personal firearm/conceal and carry: Bigs are prohibited from carrying, possessing, or using firearms including but not limited to: pistols or other weapons while the Little is in the Big's care and while at BBBS sponsored events, at the BBBS office, or at off-premise locations, unless for hunting or target practice purposes. This policy applies to all Bigs, including but not limited to those who have a valid permit to carry a pistol. An exception to this policy would be in the case of Law Enforcement Officers who are employed by a Law Enforcement Agency.

## **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

It is BBBS' objective to resolve problems and complaints promptly, keep the resolution as close to the source as possible, and offer graduated steps for further discussion and resolution at higher levels of authority as necessary. Child safety is BBBS' highest priority in resolving conflicts among adults (e.g., between a Big and their Little's parent/guardian). We encourage the person who believes there is a problem to talk directly to the person with whom they have a conflict. If the discussion does not resolve the issue, the adults involved in the conflict should discuss the situation with their Program Coordinator.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Given the nature of the program our Bigs may be introduced to sensitive and extremely personal information about the child with whom they are matched. Every Big in the program must agree to treat all information pertaining to areas of concern and background with strict confidentiality. BBBS encourages confidentiality between the Big and child. In order for a trusting relationship to develop, friends need to feel confident their thoughts and feelings will not be shared with others without their permission.

However, there are certain things that must not be kept secret:

- Anytime a Big is concerned about the health or well-being of the Little they should discuss with their Program Coordinator
- Anytime a Big learns about or suspects physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or neglect the Big and/or BBBS is required by law to report the actions to the proper authorities

## **ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING**

BBBS recognizes that online social networking (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Kik, Instagram, blogs, etc.) has become a very popular communications tool and that many of our Bigs and Littles use these. In general, personal use of social networking sites is typically for communication between peers, including friends and family. BBBS wants to reiterate that your relationship with your Little is that of a mentor in addition to a friend. Not all types of social networking are designed to support mentoring relationships.

### **Bigs:**

Please proceed thoughtfully when inviting or accepting an invitation from your Little to a social networking site. Please make sure you have their parent/guardian's permission. If you have any doubts, please contact your Program Coordinator, and/or postpone your invitation or acceptance. If you do choose to participate in a social networking with your Little, you must adhere to the following guidelines regarding any postings related to your match or affiliation with BBBS:



- Do not participate in any online communication with/about your Little unless you have discussed this with the parent/guardian or Program Coordinator and have received their approval.
- Never post any pictures of your Little online unless you have the written consent of the Little's parent/guardian. That consent form should be filed with BBBS.
- Never post the last name of your Little or their parent/guardian.
- Never post any contact information for your Little.
- Never post any identifying information about your Little (their home address, their school, where the parent works, etc).
- Honor confidentiality guidelines within your match. Be cautious when posting detailed information about conversations with your Little, their parent/guardian or with BBBS staff.
- Be aware of other postings on your page that are inappropriate for minors. Know that as a Big you are always a role model.

**Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the termination of your match.**

**Parents/Guardians & Littles:**

Do not post photos of the Big without approval of the Big and the Program Coordinator (the Big must have a signed release on file with BBBS).

## CHILD SAFETY GUIDELINES

The following safety rules were designed to protect program participants from harm, identify potential areas of risk and define ways to minimize liability. Bigs will be expected to follow these rules while matched with a Little. Contact us at 320.253.1616 with any questions or concerns.

**PERSONAL BOUNDARIES:**

- Bigs must respect their Little's need for personal space and privacy.
- Affection is best expressed through positive or affirming comments.
- Upon their Little's permission, physical affection may be expressed using a handshake, high five, pat on the back or hug.
- Sitting on laps, massage, or touch of any private areas (genitals, breasts, buttocks) is not permitted of either Big or Little.
- Wrestling and tickling are not permitted between Bigs and Littles.
- Bigs are never allowed to sleep or nap with their Little in the same bed, sleeping bag or sofa.
- Contact your Program Coordinator if there are any concerns about your child's boundaries or expressions of affection.

**DISCIPLINE/SETTING LIMITS:**

- Verbally, physically and/or emotionally abusive means of discipline are never allowed by the Big.

- Bigs are asked to state expectations for behavior and any boundaries.
- Bigs are asked to verbally address behavior concerns – clarify what needs to change or happen.
- If the Little does not respond, the Big is instructed to take them back to their class/site.

**ABUSE, NEGLECT, MALTREATMENT AND SAFETY ISSUES:**

- Both Bigs and BBBS staff are mandated reporters.
- Bigs are asked to report any suspicions they have to their Program Coordinator for consultation.
- If the Big believes their Little is in immediate danger, they are instructed to contact legal authorities and follow up with BBBS after the call has been made.

**GIFT GIVING:**

- It is ok for Bigs to give gifts for birthdays, holidays, special events or recognition of personal achievements. They must let the Program Coordinator know if they purchase a gift for the Little. Value of the gift should not exceed \$25. Staying in the \$5 to \$10 range is preferred. Giving gifts is not an expectation of our Bigs. It is optional.

**IF THE CHILD GETS SICK:**

- Bigs are instructed to take the Little to the school nurse or Program Coordinator.

**WHEN USING THE RESTROOM:**

- Bigs are instructed to walk the Little to any public restroom to ensure safety and wait for the Little either in the restroom if there are stalls or just outside of the restroom.

**SUPERVISION OF THE LITTLE:**

- Bigs are responsible for the supervision of their Little at all times from the start to finish of a match activity.
- At no time should the Little be left unsupervised or left with someone else during a match activity.

**MOVIES, VIDEO GAMES, MEDIA, INTERNET**

- Bigs and parent/guardians are responsible for determining age-appropriate content/ratings in all media forms when with the Little.
- Viewing rated R (under 17 requires a parent/guardian) or NC-17 (no one under 17 admitted) movies or playing video games rated M (Mature-17+) is not allowed.
- Exercise caution and careful consideration when viewing movies rated PG-13 (parents strongly cautioned—some material may be inappropriate for children under 13) or playing video games rated T (content suitable for ages 13 and older) with your Little. If their Little is under the age of 13, the Big must get the parent/guardian's permission first.
- Viewing any media content with explicit sex, graphic violence or pornography is not acceptable while with the Little.
- Consult with your Program Coordinator for further consultation or clarification of these rules.

# REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

## Who should report suspected child abuse or neglect?

Anyone may voluntarily report suspected child abuse or neglect to the local child protection or law enforcement agency. Minnesota law requires professionals who work with children and families and their delegates to make a child protection report if they know or have reason to believe

- A child is being neglected or abused.
- A child has been neglected or abused within the preceding three years.

This applies to BBBS staff and all Bigs.

Anyone who reports child abuse in good faith is immune from civil liability. The reporter's name is confidential and accessible only if the reporter consents or by court order. The inconvenience of reporting is offset by one simple fact: the action you take could save the life and spirit of a child and provide a family with much needed support.

It is against the law to **not** report suspected abuse or neglect to a local child protection or law enforcement agency.

**Immediate danger** – If you know or suspect that a child has been abandoned or is in immediate danger (such as recent sexual assault or a serious physical assault), contact your local law enforcement agency right away.

**No immediate danger** – If the child is not in immediate danger, but you have reason to believe a child has been maltreated:

- Contact your Program Coordinator immediately. They are there to assist and offer support during the reporting process.
- Reports need to be made within a 24-hour time period after the suspected abuse or neglect has occurred. A written report is required within 72 hours of the report.
- Contact the child protection unit of the county social service agency the child resides.

## BULLYING

Bullying is a widespread and serious problem that can happen anywhere. It is not a phase children have to go through, it is not "just messing around", and it is not something to grow out of. Bullying can cause serious and lasting harm.

**Although definitions of bullying vary, most agree that bullying involves:**

- **Imbalance of Power:** people who bully use their power to control or harm and the people being bullied may have a hard time defending themselves
- **Intent to Cause Harm:** actions done by accident are not bullying; the person bullying has a goal to cause harm

- **Repetition:** incidents of bullying happen to the same the person over and over by the same person or group

## TYPES OF BULLYING

**Bullying can take many forms. Examples include:**

- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing
- **Social:** spreading rumors, leaving people out on purpose, breaking up friendships
- **Physical:** hitting, punching, shoving
- **Cyberbullying:** using the Internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies to harm others

**Resource: StopBullying.gov**, an official U.S. Government Web site managed by the Department of Health & Human Services in partnership with the Department of Education and Department of Justice.

## MY CHILD'S MATCH

**Big Happenings** – If you use email, you will receive a weekly activities email newsletter from us which highlights upcoming activities being offered by our agency for matches and various other opportunities in the community that your match can take advantage of.

**Agency Activities** – BBBS offers several agency-sponsored activities. These events are a great way to meet other matches and staff members. A few examples include ice skating, movies, fishing, and picnics. You can learn about activities through the activity emails or by visiting our website: **www.BigDefenders.org**

## CONNECT WITH US ONLINE

There are more ways than ever to connect with the BBBS community online. You can find us on:



Like us on **Facebook** – **@BigDefenders** and visit **BIGDEFENDERS.ORG** for agency news, activity information, merchandise, photo galleries, and more.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MATCH

## **1. KEEP APPOINTMENTS & BE CONSISTENT.**

- When you follow through in having your child on time for activities, it sends a positive message to the Big that you value the match and the time your child spends with them, which will help build trust in the relationship.
- If there is a time when your child can't keep an activity appointment with their Big, please let your child's teacher or the Program Coordinator aware.

## **2. COMMUNICATE OPENLY & REGULARLY.**

- Be honest about match activities or actions you are not comfortable or happy with.
- Keep the Program Coordinator informed if there are things going on in the Little's life that may affect their mood or behavior while on an activity. They can then pass that along to the Big.

## **3. MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH BBBS.**

- Returning all phone calls, emails or letters from BBBS will help ensure a strong, healthy match.

## **4. SET BOUNDARIES & KEEP THEM.**

- Before the match begins meeting on their own, sit down with your child and talk about your expectations for their behavior when with their Big. Be sure to make clear that your child is not to ask the Big for gifts or money spent on activities, as the focus of the match is solely on developing the friendship.
- Address concerns as they arise – do not wait until it becomes a larger issue.

## **5. BE PATIENT.**

- BBBS has worked hard to match your child and their Big based on shared interests, but that does not mean friendships form overnight.

## **6. HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS.**

- Remember that friendships and change take time. The impact of the match may not be easy to see, especially early on, but to prevent frustration and burnout for both yourself and your child's Big, focus on consistent activities between them and your child's enjoyment in the match.

## **7. FOCUS ON TRUST AND SAFETY.**

- Big Brothers Big Sisters takes every possible precaution to ensure the health and safety of your child when being matched with their Big, including background and reference checks of each and every volunteer that passes through our doors. Please trust that we are doing everything possible to keep the match, and your child, safe, but remember that you play an important role in this as well. Talk to your child after each match activity to help ensure their safety and satisfaction in the match.

# MATCH COMPLETION

## Addressing Completion in Your Child's Match

At some point most mentoring relationships end. Sometimes they end because the match just doesn't fit, one of the parties has moved or changed schools, or life circumstances have changed. Regardless, positive match completion is an important part of healthy relationship management. Consequently, we would like to point out some important aspects of successful match completion.

### **Remember Closure in Your Life**

First, consider a time in your life when you experienced the end of an important relationship; perhaps a break-up, divorce, etc. How did this event make you feel? How was it handled? How could it have been addressed in a different, more positive way? What practices do you have regarding endings and transitions?

### **Consider Your Child**

Next, consider how ending the relationship may affect your child. Your child may feel they are at fault, feel hurt, abandoned or angry. They may also act indifferent. If handled inappropriately, completion can have a very negative impact on a child.

### **Acknowledge Emotions**

It is helpful to acknowledge your own emotions and the emotions of your child. Match completion is common and honesty around the situation is most helpful. Consider this an opportunity to handle saying goodbye in the most healthy, respectful way. If addressed properly, match completion can be a positive experience.

### **Steps to Completion**

It is the commitment of BBBS to assure closure is handled in the most respectful, positive manner possible. Therefore, we ask all participants to participate actively in completion and adhere to the following steps:

- Notify your Program Coordinator as soon as the need for completion is identified.
- Focus on the positive aspects of the match.
- Allow your child an opportunity to discuss completion if they desire.
- Use this event as an opportunity for a teachable moment. Discuss how moving on is a part of life.
- Discuss with your child's Big what you can expect from them going forward. Do they plan to stay in touch with your child? If so, how? What will it look like? BBBS appreciates your commitment and follow-through in this process. We recognize this can be very difficult for all involved. We are dedicated to supporting you in match completion and hope you will work with us to ensure a positive mentoring experience for all involved.
- Complete closure questions with the Program Coordinator. This is a requirement, especially if your child would like to be re-matched.

# COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

## Federated Challenge Scholarship

The three Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies in Minnesota (BBBS of Central Minnesota, BBBS of the Greater Twin Cities, and BBBS of Southern Minnesota), through generous donations from the Federated Insurance Foundation and the donors to the Federated Challenge, have established a scholarship program to assist current and past Littles, as well as High School Bigs, who plan to continue their education in a non-four year postsecondary program at an accredited Minnesota school that is focused on apprenticeship, certificate, trade school, technical or community college. Scholarships are offered each year for study at an accredited institution of the student's choice.

### Eligibility:

Applicants to the Federated Challenge Scholarship for Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies in Minnesota must:



- Be a current or past Little or High School Big for a minimum period of 18 months prior to application deadline date, and have been matched through either Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Minnesota or Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Minnesota.
- Be a U.S. citizen or have permanent resident status.
- Have attained a high school diploma or GED (or will have graduated prior to the term for which the scholarship application is being submitted).
- Be enrolled or plan to enroll part-time or full-time in a non-four year program at an accredited Minnesota postsecondary school that is focused on apprenticeship, certificate, trade school, technical or community college.
- Have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale (or its equivalent).
- Have completed the FAFSA.

### Awards:

- If selected as a recipient, the student will receive an award ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Funding can be applied toward tuition, fees, books, and other necessary expenses related to the particular program or training (i.e. tools, materials, cookware, etc.).
- Scholarships are a one-time award. Students may re-apply each year, but funding cannot exceed \$5,000 per year, and will not continue beyond the established time necessary to complete the program or degree.

### To Apply:

- Application deadline is mid-April (please check website)
- Contact Ann Matvick at [Ann@BigDefenders.org](mailto:Ann@BigDefenders.org) or (320) 258-4517 to get a copy of the application.

## WWBD Memorial Scholarship

BriAnna Kruzel is a former Little Sister and High School Big Sister (Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central MN), who passed away suddenly and unexpectedly in September 2013. BriAnna's family would like to carry forward BriAnna's legacy.

BriAnna's experience with the Big Brothers Big Sisters program was quite unique. When her father was deployed in Iraq, BriAnna began as a Little Sister in the program. Years later, BriAnna decided to become a High School Big Sister as a way to provide the same experience to another child. BriAnna was matched with a Little Sister whose father was deployed overseas, which helped them form an instant bond. BriAnna was able to relate to her Little Sister and provide advice and support. BriAnna was a dedicated friend and mentor for over two years. She was selected as the 2013 High School Big Sister of the Year for her outstanding commitment to the program and her Little Sister. She was also honored by the St. Cloud Optimist Club with the "Youth Appreciation Award" for her work with Big Brothers Big Sisters.



BriAnna's family would like to honor her memory by awarding a scholarship to a High School Senior who is a current/past Little or High School Big who has some of the same characteristics that BriAnna had. BriAnna was a very hardworking, dedicated student who worked diligently at achieving the best grades that she could. BriAnna may not have received the "A" that she was striving for but would never throw in the towel.

BriAnna believed strongly in giving and volunteering. She was an active member of Big Brothers Big Sisters, volunteered with Sartell Community Education, her church, and would help anyone that needed assistance. She was also a person who believed in loving each and every person that she came across. She was strong in her faith, she didn't judge anyone and was compassionate towards everyone. BriAnna had a contagious smile that would light up a room. Since BriAnna passed away her family and friends have decided to live out the mission of WWBD by evaluating situations in their own lives by asking themselves "What Would Bri Do?" Please check out <http://wwbdinc.org> to learn more about WWBD and BriAnna.

BriAnna's family would like to honor her memory by awarding a current/past Little or High School Big with a \$500 scholarship to a college of their choice. Payment of scholarship will be awarded after submitting proof of completion of first semester of college.

### Eligibility:

- The applicant must be a current/past Little or High School Big in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central MN program.
- The applicant must be a senior in high school.
- The applicant must have been matched thru Big Brothers Big Sisters for at least 18 months.

### To Apply:

- Application deadline is April 1<sup>st</sup>
- Contact Ann Matvick at [Ann@BigDefenders.org](mailto:Ann@BigDefenders.org) or (320) 258-4517 to get a copy of the application.



# RESOURCE PAGE

## AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

General Line	320.253.1616
Fax	320.253.1702
Toll Free	1.888.600.1616
Address	203 Cooper Avenue North, Suite 162, St. Cloud, MN 56303

## PROGRAM SUPPORT TEAM

	<u>Direct Line</u>	<u>Email</u>
Ann Matvick *Program Director	320.258.4517	Ann@BigDefenders.org
Jamie Lodermeier	320.258.4532	Jamie@BigDefenders.org
Kayla Meyer	320.241.7996	Kayla@BigDefenders.org
Mary Bellefeuille	320.258.4538	Mary@BigDefenders.org
Rebecca Fonss	320.258.4519	Rebecca@BigDefenders.org
Robyn Rieland	320.258.4512	Robyn@BigDefenders.org
Tasha Bruns-Notsch	320.258.4516	Tasha@BigDefenders.org

**After hours emergency contact: Jackie Johnson 320.292.9235 or Ann Matvick 320.249.8769**

## HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES – CHILD PROTECTION

Benton County	320.968.5087
Morrison County	320.632.2951 or 1.800.269.1464
Stearns County	320.656.6000
Sherburne County	763.765.4000
Wright County	763.682.7400

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

Benton County	320.968.7201
Morrison County	320.632.9233
Stearns County	320.251.4240
Sherburne County	763.765.4000
Wright County	763.682.1162

## COMMUNITY HELP LINE

United Way 2-1-1

