Read about how our matches are staying connected, learn about our technology enhanced mentoring program, and discover how you can keep defending potential.
Big Brothers Big Sisters’ mission is, and always has been to develop strong one-to-one mentoring relationships. In this unprecedented time of social distancing, these relationships are more important than ever before. Mentoring is an essential need and our mentors are front line workers. Data shows that the population we serve will be the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic – it may be lost jobs, academic struggles, or a lack of food - there are many ways the families we serve are being challenged at this time.

But crisis can lead to opportunity, to growth, to the identification of our strengths. It can allow us to show our best abilities, to pivot, adapt, and continue to serve those who need it most. For us at Big Brothers Big Sisters, this included the aggressive innovation of our service delivery model, constant communication with and support of our matches, and the immediate incorporation of feedback from our community.

Big Brothers Big Sisters is, has been, and will continue to be a leader in youth mentoring. Leveraging our expertise in technology enhanced mentoring gained in the past six years in our mentor2.0 program, we’ve continued to support and grow our other mentoring models, all without skipping a beat. This new model will support the youth we serve, our matches, increase agency efficiency, provide volunteers with more flexible volunteer opportunities, and will remain true to our outcomes-based mentoring model and the organic nature of our one-to-one mentoring service delivery model.
BECOMING A BIG

We have quickly transitioned our recruitment and matching process to operate virtually. We continue to provide the same high quality of service as always, creating matches like the one below, pictured in their first match meeting alongside Big Brothers Big Sisters match support staff.

To learn more about becoming a Big visit bbbsmilwaukee.org/volunteer.

PROFESSIONAL MATCH SUPPORT

Our staff continues to remotely support mentoring matches like Big Sister Erika and Little Sister Nathalia with our professional case management. This includes access to community resources to meet basic needs, virtual educational options, and health-related information.

MATCH SUPPORT

MATCH SUPPORT

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PROJECTING YOUR POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES

We continue to provide match activities through community partnerships that offer virtual experiences and activities. Through our REACH program, we are providing virtual educational group activities in addition to Scavenger Hunts and Bingo to create intentional ways to continue building strong match relationships.
**Mentor Carol & Mentee Cassie**

“Working with Cassie gives me a sense of purpose that is different from my other responsibilities.”

- Mentor Carol

**Big Brother Robert & Little Brother Justice**

**Community-based** match Robert and Justice are still in the first year of their match, but quickly hit it off, easily finding ways to stay connected virtually when in-person meetings were no longer an option. Video chatting has allowed the pair to play games, read poems, and most importantly, to dance together.

“Being able to dance is one of our favorite activities to do in person. Now we are able to do this online. I realized that we are both going through the same struggles with social distancing and are able to help each other through them,” said Robert.

In addition to dancing, Robert provides Justice with writing prompts to provide creative inspiration. Recently, Justice wrote about where he would go if he could go anywhere, and he chose Dubai, so he – along with his family and Robert – could explore all of the exciting things the city has to offer.

“Having a Big Brother has helped me learn more than I knew before. I have still been able to learn about different cultures and new places. I always look forward to our Zoom hangouts.”

- Little Brother Justice

**mentor2.0** match Carol and Cassie are well versed at virtual communication thanks to mentor2.0’s technology based mentoring model. The two have kept up their weekly communication through Facetime and the mentor2.0 app, this “has been very beneficial to keeping our relationship strong,” said Carol.

Although communicating virtually isn’t new, they are both facing new realities offline, and Carol says that her communication with Cassie helped her “recognize that everyone has unique problems related to COVID and it’s your attitude that will really help you get through this.”

Carol wants to do whatever she can to help Cassie achieve her goals, including planning for college and becoming a nurse one day. The two have even attended a college information session together on Zoom, something they plan to do more of over the summer.
OUR MENTORING PROGRAMS

Youth and volunteer mentors meet weekly throughout the community and spend time together engaged in activities they choose based on mutual interest.

School-based  match Isaiah and Kevin both had unexpected endings to their school years, with Isaiah finishing his sophomore year at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee online, and Kevin wrapping up 7th grade in a similar fashion. Luckily, they had each other to turn to for support.

Isaiah initially expected to have difficulty reaching his Little Brother during the pandemic, but with the support of Big Brothers Big Sisters staff, and technology, “I was able to get in touch with him and we talk a lot,” said Isaiah.

They have spent a lot of time chatting on the phone about life and just letting the conversation flow. “He is a very smart and knowledgeable kid who loves to talk about his interests which works out great because we have a lot in common,” said Isaiah.

“I really value our time together and our conversations, it actually feels like he is my little brother.”

- Big Brother Isaiah

High school youth are matched with college educated mentors to promote high school graduation, college readiness, and college success.

Students meet with volunteer mentors weekly during or after the school day at one of 10 partner elementary or middle school locations for educationally-focused mentoring.
BIG EVENTS

Save the date!

BIG Gala
A CELEBRATION OF MENTORING
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7 | THE PFISTER HOTEL

www.bbbsmilwaukee.org/gala

30th Annual
BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS | NFL ALUMNI
GOLF CLASSIC

In order to keep our golfers safe while still raising critical funds to support the youth we serve, we are turning our traditional golf outing into a fundraiser. Even though we will miss you all on the course, we appreciate your continued support of this event, and of the youth that we serve. It is more important now than ever.

Visit www.bbbsmilwaukee.org/golf to learn more.

BOWL For Kids’ Sake

Following state guidelines we suspended our Spring 2020 Bowl for Kids’ Sake events, we plan to reschedule once it’s safe to do so.

Visit www.bbbsmilwaukee.org/bfks2020 to donate to a bowler, or make a general donation to Bowl for Kids’ Sake.

LOOKING FOR ANOTHER WAY TO SUPPORT OUR MATCHES?

For every puzzle purchased one will be sent to a Little so they can enjoy it with their family - for free.

Learn more: www.bbbs.org/puzzle
START DEFENDING POTENTIAL

We are in need of caring volunteer adult mentors

ARE YOU READY TO HELP A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ACHIEVE COLLEGE AND CAREER SUCCESS?

Learn more about our mentor2.0 program

Learn about virtual volunteer enrollment

bbbsmilwaukee.org/volunteer

Or contact us at (414) 831-4563 or startsomething@bbbsmilwaukee.org
I know your role looks a lot different right now. **You guys are providing support through this critical gap for families and I'm grateful.** The skills you're learning, you'll take into the next phase and you'll have an even broader reach now that you're up and running on the virtual side, too. **You're rising to the challenge.**

- Parent of a Little Sister