



## **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel**

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel, a mentoring organization for children, is committed to providing caring adult relationships for children to promote their healthy development and enhance their self-esteem. Children in our programs are often living under very stressful circumstances and need a consistent adult role model and friend.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel has offered 40 years of service to the community of Peel Region. Big Brothers opened its doors in 1967 and Big Sisters of Peel in 1982. As a merged agency, beginning in June 2001, we are a member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada and our service is offered in accordance with BBBSC National Standards of Service Delivery.

Our vision is simple. Every child who needs a mentor has a mentor.

By spending just few hours each week with a child you will provide much needed stability, friendship, guidance and fun. We have six core mentoring programs designed to meet the needs of both our children and volunteers.

One-to-One Mentoring	Couples for Kids	Big and Little Buddy
In-School Mentoring	Group Mentoring	BIG BUNCH
Conversation Club	Go Girls! <i>Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds</i>	

Each year, our agency serves over 1250 children in Peel. Children and youth in our programs demonstrate increased confidence, improved social skills, improved relationships with family and peers and hope for the future.

Our volunteers enable vulnerable children in our community to play, explore, and dream. In return, you will have the experience of a lifetime. By sharing your knowledge and experiences with a child you will learn, laugh and meet great people at our events and activities.

### **CHILDREN IN OUR PROGRAMS**

- Girls and boys, between the ages of 6 and 17, who will benefit from the special attention, friendship and support of an adult mentor.
- Children who are interested in participating in our programs and whose parents/guardians are supportive of their child's participation
- In the In-School Mentoring program, children in elementary school are referred through the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. The In-School Mentoring Program is currently in 80 schools in Peel.
- The results of mentoring for children are increased self-esteem, improved relationships with peers and family and improved attitude towards school. In the words of one of our children, "Having a mentor is like changing a kid's life....having a mentor has made my life go from dull to bright."



## **OUR PROGRAMS**

### ***One-to-One Friendship Program – Our Most Recognized Program***

This program matches a child 6—17 years of age (Little Sister/Little Brother) with a caring adult (Big Sister/Big Brother) over the age of 18. Big Sisters and Big Brothers build the relationship with their “Littles” by meeting regularly with them from 2 to 4 times per month for the period of at least one year. They will share fun, low-cost outings together like going to the park, playing sports, crafts, catching a movie or just “hanging out”. Volunteers make outing plans directly with the family of their Little.

### ***Couples for Kids***

This program provides a way for couples over the age of 21 to enrich their lives by meeting weekly to share their friendship with a child 6-17 years of age for a commitment of at least one year. Being matched with a couple can benefit the child immensely by exposing him or her to a caring, respectful adult relationship.

### ***Big & Little Buddy Program***

This program allows the chance for an adult female over the age of 18 to be matched with a Little Brother 6—11 years of age. This program is similar to the One-to-One Friendship Program in commitment and activities.

### ***Group Mentoring Program***

The Group Mentoring program matches children in groups of 10 with 5 adult mentors. They meet as a group one evening each week from 7-9 pm throughout the school year. The Program focuses on fostering the growth of children’s social skills in a recreational, cultural and environmental context and is designed for children aged 6-17. Weekly outings consist of community based activities such as sports, crafts, laser tag, swimming, arcades, movies, tours, games, guest speakers and workshops.

### ***In-School Mentoring Program***

This program is a collaborative partnership between Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel and the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. It matches boys and girls in Peel elementary schools with a caring adult mentor. Matches meet for one hour each week during school hours for the school year to play board games, bake, do arts and crafts, read or play on the computer.

### ***Go Girls! Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds***

A school-based mentoring program for girls in Grades 7 and 8 promoting active living, healthy eating and positive self-esteem. Female mentors, aged 18-25, are trained to lead the fun and interactive sessions over 7 weeks with a group of eight girls.

### ***BIG BUNCH Program***

*The BIG BUNCH Program* is our Wait List program that offers opportunities for new Littles to attend bi-monthly evening/weekend activities while they are waiting to be involved in our Group or One-to-One mentoring programs. The social and recreational activities planned by the agency include outdoor activities, sports nights, community events and craft nights. Each BIG BUNCH leader makes a commitment to attend on average one event per month with 2 of our Waiting List children.

### ***Conversation Club***

The Conversation Club is a site-based mentoring program that matches Newcomer youth (ages 13-18) with youth from the community (ages 15-24). The program will initially be offered after-school at the Newcomer Information Centre in Brampton and Youth Connections in Malton.



**Big Brothers Big Sisters  
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## **VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PROCESS**

- ❑ INQUIRE ABOUT VOLUNTEERING BY PHONE OR E-MAIL
- ❑ REVIEW ORIENTATION INFORMATION SENT BY MAIL/E-MAIL **OR** ATTEND OPTIONAL ORIENTATION SESSION
- ❑ COMPLETE APPLICATION FORM
  - **Talk to your references and let them know we will be calling**
  - If employer reference is less than 2 years, please add a second character reference
  - Please prioritize programs if you mark more than one interest (designate the program you are **MOST** interested)
  - Make sure consent forms are signed
- ❑ SUBMIT POLICE CHECKS TO Peel Regional Police Headquarters – 7750 Hurontario Street, Brampton
  - Agency will mail to you the police check forms for yourself and family members (as applicable) once Application is received
  - Group, BIG BUNCH or In-School Mentoring programs: Police check needed on volunteer applicant only
  - One-to-one Program: Police checks needed on all household members over the age of 18
  - If you live in outside Brampton or Mississauga, there will be a different form and process for the Police check. Please contact us.
  - In Mississauga and Brampton, Police checks are submitted by volunteer and returned by mail to volunteer. **Please forward original Police Checks immediately to agency.**
  - **Please inform the agency when police check(s) are submitted as your application will be moved forward**
- ❑ CASEWORKER ASSIGNED to arrange interview when police check(s) submitted and references complete
- ❑ IN-PERSON INTERVIEW by Program Caseworker
- ❑ CHILD SAFETY & PROGRAM TRAINING
- ❑ YOU ARE READY TO BE INVOLVED NOW!!

### **NEXT STEPS:**

1. **SUBMIT APPLICATION FORM**
2. **POLICE CHECK(S) will be mailed to you to submit to the Police Headquarters**



**Big Brothers Big Sisters  
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## WORKING TOGETHER - YOUR ROLE/OUR ROLE

One of the most important roles as a mentor is to take the lead in establishing and building the friendship. By having fun together, talking, listening, guiding and encouraging your Little, you will build and strengthen your friendship.

Mentors in all our programs keep others informed about what you are doing. In most of our programs, you will communicate directly with the families involved and with our casework staff.

Your Caseworker will be in touch with you regularly to check in and to hear about all the fun you are having with your Little. Your caseworker will keep in touch with you through phone calls and in-person visits, in accordance with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada National Standards of Service Delivery. We will be there to support and encourage you throughout your volunteer experience.

The safety of children is of paramount importance to all of us at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel. All volunteers, children and families participate in child safety training prior to becoming involved in our programs. In this training, we discuss general safety rules and guidelines as well as our responsibilities in the event of a disclosure of abuse.

## MENTORING WORKS

A number of studies have looked at mentoring relationships to better understand why matches are successful. One particularly important question is: What can mentors themselves do to ensure that a relationship is more likely to succeed? The findings across studies are fairly consistent about effective mentors.

The key to creating effective mentoring relationships lies in the development of trust between two strangers of different ages. Volunteers typically come to mentoring programs because they want to help children and youth. Without establishing trust, however, mentors can never truly support the children with whom they interact. Learning to trust, especially for youth who have been let down before, requires time; youth cannot be expected to trust their mentor simply because the staff has matched them together. Establishing communication and developing a relationship can often be a difficult process. Mentors who follow a gradual path in building trust find that the types of support they can offer and that will be accepted broaden considerably once trust has been established.

The most critical factor in determining whether matches develop into satisfying and effective relationships is the approach of the mentor. Mentors who focus first on building trust and becoming a friend to their youth tend to be more effective than those who immediately try to change or reform the mentee.

Effective mentors are more likely to engage in the following practices:

- **They make a commitment to being consistent and dependable**, to maintaining a steady presence in the mentee's life. They recognize that the relationship may be fairly one-sided and take responsibility for keeping the relationship alive. They acknowledge that youth often test adults to determine whether they will actually stick around; successful mentors regularly initiated contact and

ensured that meetings were scheduled, rather than waiting to hear from the youth. Other research found that successful mentors exhibit an attitude of caring.

- **They involve the youth in deciding how the pair will spend time together.** Although youth are often somewhat uncommunicative, successful mentors take the time to learn about the youth's interests and provide them with options for how to spend their time, rather than planning everything without input from the youth. It is important to remember that, similar to adults, children's moods and energy levels differ each day. Therefore, it is helpful to be flexible about the plans you may have made.
- **They pay attention to kids' need for "fun."** Not only is having fun a key part of building a relationship, but it provides youth with valuable opportunities that are often not available otherwise. Children can learn a lot when doing fun activities.
- **They respect the mentee's viewpoint.** Effective mentors are open and flexible; they listen to what the child has to say and pay attention to what the child thinks is important.
- **They get to know their mentee's families, but do not become too involved with them.** Successful mentors have found it helpful to meet and interact with their mentee's parents. At the same time, mentors have to guard against involvement with the family to an extent that could be detrimental to their relationship with the youth.
- **They focus on the mentee's strengths,** ensuring that the youth experiences success and a sense of self mastery. It is better to build from a strength rather than a weakness.
- **Finally, successful mentors seek and use available resources such as the support and guidance of staff.** These mentors recognize that it can be helpful to talk with staff, especially when they are struggling with issues arising from the match. It is normal for most mentors to experience some frustration, especially in the early stages of the relationship. Help and advice from program staff can benefit mentors (and consequently mentees) tremendously.

Adults who become effective mentors often see themselves as "**friends**" rather than teachers or parents and define their role as supporting the youth in a variety of ways.

- A mentor is caring, steady, patient, realistic, resourceful, respectful and resilient.
- Building trust and establishing a friendship are the key goals.

**Thank you for your interest in becoming a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel! If you have any questions, please contact our Intake Coordinator at 905-457-7288 ext 211.**



**Big Brothers Big Sisters  
of Peel**

71 West Drive, Unit 23  
Brampton, Ontario L6T 5E2  
Phone: (905) 457-7288 Fax: (905) 454-0769  
e-mail: [info@bbbspeel.com](mailto:info@bbbspeel.com)  
website: [www.bbbspeel.com](http://www.bbbspeel.com)

We use personal information to provide services and to keep you informed and up-to-date on the activities of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel including programs, services, special events and opportunities to volunteer or donate.

**VOLUNTEER MENTOR APPLICATION FORM**

If you have any questions while completing this application, please contact us, we would be happy to help.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male  Female

Address (Apt/Street): \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive e-mail updates from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel. Yes  No

How long at current address? \_\_\_\_\_ Number of adults in household aged 18+ (including yourself) \_\_\_\_\_

Previous address if less than one year: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own or have access to a vehicle? Yes  No  If yes, Drivers License #: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your car have passenger-side airbags? Yes  No

Level of automobile insurance coverage?  \$1,000,000;  \$2,000,000; (other amount)\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been charged with a traffic violation? Yes  No

(If yes, please explain date(s)/charge/outcome): \_\_\_\_\_

**Family:**

Marital Status:  single  separated  common-law  married  divorced  widowed

Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Children \_\_\_\_\_ Ages of girls \_\_\_\_\_ Ages of boys \_\_\_\_\_

How does your partner feel about you becoming a volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel?

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you anticipating any changes in your life in the next year that may impact on volunteering? (e.g. marital status, living arrangements, employment, children, etc.) Yes  No

\_\_\_\_\_

**Employment:**

Are you currently employed? Full Time  Part Time  Self Employed  Retired

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Hire: \_\_\_\_\_

(Work): \_\_\_\_\_ Ext. \_\_\_\_\_ May we call you at work? Yes  No

Average Weekly Working Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Shifts: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Reason for Leaving: \_\_\_\_\_

**Education History:**

Name of Institution	Program	Year Completed	Did You Graduate?

Are you currently a student? Yes  No  (if yes, Full-time  Part-time  )

**Volunteer Experience:**

Are you at present (or have you been) a volunteer with other organizations or service clubs?

Yes  No  If yes, please identify (Organization/Length of time): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever applied to become a volunteer with any Big Brothers Big Sisters Agency? Yes  No

If yes, where and when? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you learn about Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel?

- Word of Mouth (BS, BB, Friend, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- TV/Cable (which station, ad, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- Signage (street, display, poster location) \_\_\_\_\_
- Always known
- Newspaper (which paper/article etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- Radio (which station, ad, etc) \_\_\_\_\_
- Website (state where if not ours) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Have you had past experiences working or volunteering with children? If yes, please describe:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What have you learned about yourself in those situations? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Preference Profile:**

In what program are you most interested in volunteering: (\*\*PLEASE SPECIFY FIRST PREFERENCE\*\*)

- One to One Matching
- Couples For Kids (**please contact office for an application form for the Couples Program**)
- Big Buddies (*Big Sisters for Little Brothers*)
- Group Mentoring Program (*PEAK, PALS*)
- Big Bunch
- In-School Mentoring
- Go Girls! Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds (*program offered to female volunteers ages 18-25*)
- Conversation Club (*after-school mentoring program with newcomer youth; volunteers ages 16-25*)
- Other (*committees, events, fundraising, etc.*)

Major Intersection of your home: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Intersection of your work: \_\_\_\_\_

In which of the following areas would you prefer to volunteer? (**Circle all that apply**)

**Brampton**                      **Mississauga**                      **Malton**                      **Caledon**                      **Bolton**

**Health and Home Environment:**

Have you (had) any physical or emotional illnesses?

Yes  No  If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you in the past, or are you now, involved in counseling or therapy? Yes  No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you smoke? Yes  No  Do any members of your household smoke? Yes  No

Do you use alcohol regularly? Yes  No  If yes, how frequently? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you used illegal drugs in the past year? Yes  No  If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have pets? Yes  No  If yes, please describe (ie. breed): \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any potential safety concerns in your home environment for children? Yes  No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:**

Have you ever had police involvement? Yes  No

Have you ever been accused, arrested, convicted or pardoned of a criminal offense? Yes  No

***If yes to either, please explain and provide dates:***

\_\_\_\_\_

**Tell Us About Yourself:**

What do you see as your strengths? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you see as your challenges? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Why, at this point in your life, do you want to mentor a child? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you like about children? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think that children enjoy being around you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe a child whom you see yourself spending time with: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your interests: (Indoor, Outdoor, Sports, Cultural, Hobbies, Leisure, Special Skills)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What interests or activities would you like to be able to do with a child/youth? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Character References Form



Big Brothers Big Sisters  
of Peel

Volunteer Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Program of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_

## CURRENT EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR (If known less than 2 years please provide additional character below)

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Known: \_\_\_\_\_

## IMMEDIATE FAMILY (Immediate Family i.e. Parent or Sibling – List Spouse/Partner in the Spouse/Partner section if Applicable)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Known: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHARACTER/FRIEND (Not a Family Member) that has known you for at least 2 years

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Known: \_\_\_\_\_

## SPOUSE/PARTNER/GIRLFRIEND/BOYFRIEND

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Known: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF your Employer Reference has known you for LESS THAN 2 YEARS,  
please provide an extra Character Reference in the space below:**

## CHARACTER/FRIEND that has known you for at least 2 years (Not a Family Member/ Former Employer)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Known: \_\_\_\_\_

**I give permission for those I have named to be contacted for references for the information I have given to be verified.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)



**Big Brothers Big Sisters  
of Peel**

## **Volunteer Permission and Release Form**

I hereby authorize Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel to contact any or all of the references listed herein for the purposes of processing my application to become a volunteer in the Agency's program. I understand that these references will be contacted in confidence. I hereby waive the right to request disclosure of the personal references given about me.

I further authorize any individuals, firms, corporations, government or other regulatory departments, and Police Department or other organization to release information and copies of documents pertaining to myself to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel in order to consider my application to volunteer in the Agency's Program, on the understanding that such information will be held in strict confidence.

*I acknowledge and accept that this application does not guarantee acceptance into the program, and that Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel is under no obligation to accept or assign me as a volunteer in their program, and is not obliged to provide a reason.*

I hereby release and forever discharge Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel, and their employees, directors and volunteers from any cause of action or claim for damages, whether bodily injury, death, property damage, or emotional trauma, anxiety or distress arising from my association with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel.

If I am matched, I understand that I am solely responsible for the care of, and will supervise, the Child with whom I am matched during outings and activities.

I give permission for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel to release pertinent information regarding my file to the parent of the Child in the process of match selection. Further, I agree to allow my file to be viewed by Agency Reviewers for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada, at the time of the agency review, should it be requested. I further grant Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel permission to release my name, date of birth, agency applied to and notice of acceptance, rejection (OR WITHDRAWAL) to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada and for relevant details to be shared within the movement.

I understand this application and subsequent information in my file is the property of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel. I understand that if Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel should cease operation, my complete file becomes the property of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada. I understand that the information in my file will be retained by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada for a period ending 75 years after the close of my final match.

The implications of the waiver have been explained to me. I understand and consent to them. I further agree that this waiver is made of my own free will and without duress.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Note: Release to share information with other professionals will expire within one year of the above date.