



Background:

For 95 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida has been impacting lives of young people in our community through the power of one-to-one relationships. Mentoring is a proven strategy that changes how our children grow up by meeting critical needs and engaging all levels of community. BBBSNEFL helps ensure that fewer people will join the ranks of unemployed, under-employed, public assistance recipients, or homeless citizens, simply by helping children stay in school. When young people improve relationships with their teachers, develop more confidence in their academic performance, and stay in school, they achieve better grades and academic success.

Our service area includes Duval, Clay, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and Volusia counties. BBBSNEFL is one of nearly 400 agencies in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America federation of 50 states and 12 countries. As member of the Large Agency Alliance, we are the 27th largest agency in the federation, 7th largest out of 41 in the southeast region and 4th largest out of 14 in the state of Florida.

In 2009-10 fiscal year ending June 30, BBBSNEFL provided mentors for 1556 children and our numbers have almost doubled in the last six years. Of our children served, 56% are female, 57% are African American, 60% live in poverty, and 28% have one or more parent incarcerated. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida 2009-10 results of the 700 youth served in grades K-12 in our school-based program showed that 97% (678 out of 700) improved their behavior, 97% (679 out of 700) improved their attendance and 95% (667 out of 700) were promoted to the next grade.

The Need:

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida is committed to serving 5,000 children by the year 2015. Over 55,000 children, identified by our community's child-serving organizations and the school district, are in need of a caring adult in their life in order to change the trajectory of these children's lives in a positive way. Reports published by the Jacksonville Children's Commission show that many of our community's children live in environments that include drug abuse, violence, homelessness and lack of nutrition and health care. Although we serve over 1500 children, there are over 250 children on the list waiting to be matched and we receive at least 100 calls each month with requests for a Big Brother or Big Sister that we are unable to fulfill. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida has a BIG dream of transforming Northeast Florida through a "mentoring movement" that brings a caring, supportive adult mentor into the life of every child who would most benefit from having a Big Brother or Big Sister.

What we do:

Our professionally trained staff follows strict standards to guide mentor recruitment and youth-adult matching. We have a long recognized commitment to program evaluation and measuring outcomes as a way to ensure a mutually beneficial match for all involved – the Little, the Big, the families and their community. Our goal is to help children build the attitudes and behaviors needed to stay in school, succeed academically, make healthy life choices, and create promising futures. Because we are constantly evaluating the efficacy of our programs, we are able to address successes and challenges quickly and adjust them as needed to ensure the highest quality of program and child safety.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida's mission is to help children reach their potential through professionally supported, one-to-one relationships producing measureable & positive academic and social outcomes.

Our programs:

- **Community One-To-One**

The Community-Based program provides one-to-one interactions between a Big and Little to enhance the life of the child. Bigs and Littles meet an average of six hours a month and participate in various activities such as visiting the library, park, or museum and other BBBSNEFL sponsored activities.

- **Bigs in Schools**

Bigs in Schools is a site-based mentoring program and the Big and Little meet one hour per week, each week of the school year at the child's school. During their time together, they read, work on math or science or talk about life experiences and good decision making.

- **Workplace Mentoring**

Beyond School Walls is a workplace mentoring partnership between BBBSNEFL and local companies that provide their employees the opportunity to mentor a youth at their workplace. The Littles are transported to the business twice a month to visit with their Big for an hour.

***What we achieve has greater significance than what we do.
What we do is mentoring. What we achieve is changing lives.***

- In 1998, the *Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence*, at the University of Colorado, reviewed 600 intervention programs and identified Big Brothers Big Sisters as one of 11 Blueprint programs based on our service delivery model.
- *Public/Private Ventures*, a national research organization with more than 30 years of experience in studying child development and social service issues, has conducted 11 studies for BBBSA since 1993. Results show that the Big Brothers Big Sisters programs decrease drug and alcohol use, enhance peer & child relationships, improve behavior, school attendance and grades, as well as, increase the likelihood of graduation from high school.
- In *Mentoring in Florida*, a 2007 five-year report by Dr. Philip, Grise, Florida State University, Big Brothers Big Sisters is identified as one of two successful programs that “provide a blanket of care and concern that helps nurture students to move beyond their life circumstances and become successful individuals.” Additionally, it was validated that the mentees showed improved school attendance, gains in FCAT scores and decreased retention rates.

We are excellent stewards of our donors' investments. We adhere to strict nonprofit accounting standards, complete an annual formal independent financial audit and meet all reporting requirements. A 26-member governing Board of Directors ensures that the agency has adequate financial resources and provides their expertise to support programs, projects and initiatives. We follow the nationally recognized charitable best practices of our national affiliates and have earned these recognitions: American Institute of Philanthropy, A+; Charity Navigator, 3 stars; and Charity Seal of Approval – Better Business Bureau.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida is poised to meet the challenges facing the young people in our community today. But we cannot do it alone. This important work is only possible with the support of individual, corporate and foundation donors. The evidence speaks for itself: our supporters help us change the perspectives – and the lives – of hundreds of children in Northeast Florida.

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