

Big Brothers Big Sisters
OF THE MIDLANDS

Training Workbook for Volunteers

HELPING YOU BE THE BEST BIG POSSIBLE

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PRE-MENTOR TRAINING

Today's training will cover a number of areas, such as motivations and expectations, relationship development and match goals and child safety. All of these will help you establish a solid relationship with your Little. We will also discuss next steps and the resources that Big Brothers Big Sisters provides. As your relationship with your Little grows, we hope you will utilize our resources to become the best Big possible.

INTRODUCTIONS

What is your name?
Where are you from?
Where do you work and what do you do?
If a student, what school and major?
How did you hear about Big Brothers Big Sisters?



NEXT STEPS

Interview - Enrollment Coordinator will complete the interview in your home.

Match Presentation - Match Support Specialist will call you to tell you all about your Little.

Match Meeting - First meeting with your Little, his/her parent/guardian, your Match Support Specialist and yourself. Held at the Little's home.

Ice Breaker - Immediately following your match meeting, you and your Little will spend time together (30-60 minutes) to get to know a few things about each other and plan your first official outing.

WORKING WITH BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Question: Who are Enrollment and Match Coordinators?

Answer: Enrollment and Match Coordinators are degreed, experienced professionals who are employees of our agency. They ensure that volunteers and children are appropriately enrolled and matched while executing a high degree of independent judgement when utilizing BBBS standards and practices. Enrollment and Match Coordinators provide a high-level of customer service, focusing on volunteer options and child safety, demonstrated throughout the volunteer, child enrollment and matching process.

Question: What do Enrollment and Match Coordinators do?

Answer:

- Conduct client enrollment; Conduct home interview with the child, as well as the parents, using a structured interview. Explain safety information to children and their families. Obtain paperwork regarding school or counseling reports if appropriate. Assess child's interests. Approve or deny applicant.
- Assess volunteer with BBBS; Conduct home interview with the volunteer, using a structured interview. Explain safety policies and ensures safety requirements. Assess eligibility. Obtain and process proper paperwork. Contact references. Assess volunteer interests. Approve or deny applicant.
- Establish matches; Use management database to organize children based on their compatibility with incoming volunteers. Attend weekly match making meetings.

WORKING WITH BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Question: Who are Match Support Specialists?

Answer: Match Support Specialists are degreed, experienced professionals who are employees of our agency. Their job is to help strengthen matches, through guidance and coaching, in order to positively impact the lives of children in the community. Your Match Support Specialist will consistently be in touch with you, your Little and your Little's parent/guardian to help develop and maintain a positive and healthy match relationship.

Question: What do Match Support Specialists do?

Answer:

- Provide you with feedback on how you're making a difference.
- Find information and resources that you might find interesting.
- Offer group activities and give you activity ideas for you and your Little.
- Connect you with donated tickets to community or sports events.
- Keep you updated on activities offered by the agency.
- Help you communicate with your Little and your Little's parent/guardian. Work with you to help resolve any conflicts that might occur in your match.

Question: How often should I talk to my Match Support Specialist?

Answer: Monthly phone calls are required for the first year of your match. Regular communication is required throughout the life of your match.

Question: When should I call my Match Support Specialist?

Answer:

Five good reasons for calling your Match Support Specialist are to:

1. Get feedback on your match from the Little's perspective.
2. Share fun match stories.
3. Discuss concerns about your Little or the match.
4. Ask any questions you may have.
5. Report any emergency situations or safety concerns.

Question: How else can I be involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters?

Answer:

- Recruit your friends and family to become Bigs.
- Join our social network.
- Attend special events hosted by Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- Financially support Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- Host an event at your place of employment.
- Participate in fundraisers.
- Donate event tickets for matches to use.

EXPECTATIONS

Expectations in the mentoring relationship are your ideas about what your Little and your mentoring relationship will be like, including when things will happen.

Expectations are critically important. They play a big role in determining how you may feel about your Little and ultimately how you may act.

What does Big Brothers Big Sister expect of our Bigs?

Fulfill the requirement of meeting 2-4 times a month for a total of four hours for a minimum of 12 months.

Be responsible for setting up outings with your Little.

Stay in touch with your Match Support Specialist.

Attend agency activities.

Do you think you are at risk for having any unrealistic expectations for your match?

Yes No

If yes, what will you do to try to keep yourself from being disappointed if your expectations are not met?

BE A SUCCESSFUL BIG

Manage Your Expectations of Your Little

1. Be objective when thinking about your Little and your relationship with him/her.
2. Initially, keep your expectations modest and positive.
3. Don't focus on changing your Little.
4. Focus on building your relationship and getting to know each other.
5. Be patient. Relationship building takes time.

Three Steps to Staying Motivated as a Mentor

1. Honestly identify your own goals.
2. Try to really learn and listen to your Little's goals.
3. Search for and try out different bridge solutions to close gaps between your goals, when necessary.

Good mentoring is defined by a willingness to consistently spend quality time with your Little regardless of what you're getting in return. Utilize the Ages and Stages of Development to establish appropriate expectations.

What specific actions can adults take in their relationships with young people that help youth learn, grow and thrive?

The Search Institute's newest research on developmental relationships identifies five essential actions that lay the foundation for a powerful mentoring relationship:

1. **Express Care:** Young people value relationships with adults who show they genuinely like them and want the best for them. These relationships help youth know they really matter.
2. **Challenge Growth:** Young people value relationships with adults who insist that they do their best to learn and improve.
3. **Provide Support:** Young people value relationships with adults who offer tangible, appropriate feedback and guidance in completing tasks and achieving goals without taking over and doing it for them.
4. **Share Power:** Young people value relationships with adults in which they feel their voice is heard and they share in making decisions that effect them. This helps youth develop self-confidence and self-direction.
5. **Expand Possibility:** Young people value trustworthy adults who help them broaden their horizons and connect them to opportunities for growth and discovery.

It is important for you to have age appropriate expectations for your Little...

- So you do activities that are enjoyable.
- So you do not expect too much and get disappointed.
- So your Little does not get frustrated or bored.

FOUR STAGES OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP

STAGE 1

LEARNING

Exciting time! You are learning about being a mentor, anticipating meeting your Little and beginning your relationship.

STAGE 2

INTRODUCTION

You are matched with your Little and begin to get acquainted with each other. Be authentic!

STAGE 3

GROWTH AND MAINTENANCE

This is typically the longest stage of your relationship in which you meet regularly with your Little, build your relationship and grow together. There will be challenges. Lean on your Match Support Specialist to help you through them.

STAGE 4

REDEFINITION OR CLOSURE

Some relationships ultimately come to an end, but some just need to be redefined.

The longer and stronger a match relationship, the more positive the impact on the Little.

MOTIVATIONS

What are your goals for your mentoring relationship?
What kind of impact are you hoping to have on your
Little Brother or Little Sister?

GOALS

Building a healthy relationship is always our first goal for matches. After a few months, you will be asked by your Match Support Specialist to establish a focused goal based on the interests and needs of your Little. Please use the Thriving Indicators as a resource to help you create a new goal(s) based on what you have learned about your Little and where he/she may need some extra encouragement. Along with your Match Support Specialist, you will utilize input from your Little and your Little's parent/guardian to determine areas to work on that will set your Little up for success in life.

notes:

Positive (or Not-So-Positive) Role Model Activity:

Instructions: Read through the notes from a conversation a Match Support Specialist (MSS) had with a Little named Steven. The MSS asked Steven about his last outing with his Big Brother Robert. ***Underline or circle the five phrases in this paragraph you think demonstrate Robert was NOT being a positive role model.***

> Steven described hanging out with Robert at Buffalo Wild Wings and watching a basketball game on TV. He said they only got to see the second half of the game because Robert picked him up late. Steven said Robert was running late at work, but lied to his boss and told him that he wasn't feeling well, so he could leave work to watch the game with Steven. Steven mentioned that he thought it was cool that Robert lied to his boss and left work to come hang out with him. While they were watching the game, Steven said Robert got really mad and cursed when the refs made a bad call. Steven thought it was funny that Robert got so mad. After the game was over, Steven said Robert drove him home, but he broke his promise to come in and see Steven's pet frog. Robert said he was running late and would have to come in next time. Steven sounded disappointed.

What are some changes that could make this a very positive example of a Big?

THRIVING INDICATORS



Taking good care of your health includes: • eating healthy, balanced meals; • getting regular exercise; • sleeping enough; • taking good care of your body; • avoiding unsafe behaviors and activities; and going to the doctor and dentist regularly.

Life skills are called the "nuts and bolts" of your skill-based toolkit. They include: • earning, managing, and sharing money wisely; • managing your time well; • being organized; • goal management; • learning how to use transportation; • home care such as cooking and cleaning; • skills that will help you find and keep a good job; • and understanding communication protocols.

Love of Learning: A love of learning is a passionate interest in gaining knowledge about the world and your place in it; • working hard in school to learn and improve your skills; • being curious and pursuing subjects that interest you; • applying your learning strengths; • finding ways to address learning challenges; and • having a growth mindset instead of a fixed mindset.

Emotional Competence is the ability to identify and manage emotions to support your progress in the world. This includes: • knowing how to nourish your emotional state; • coping with failure or loss; • controlling impulses and using good judgement before you act; • taking turns, • delaying personal gratification; • and adjusting your emotions to be sensitive to other people's emotions and conditions.

Social skills are knowing what's expected and how to act in differing social situations; • how to interact with different ages and walks of life; and • how to handle strangers, including those in need or those causing problems. Social skills are demonstrated through body language and eye contact and by what you say or don't say. They are necessary for building relationships and resolving conflicts.

Positive relationships enhance the well-being of all individuals involved. This mutual connection includes trust, • resolving conflicts respectfully; • caring and • communication. You choose to be close to people who have • good values; • give you the support and guidance you need; and • encourage you to be your best. You treat others in ways you want to be treated. You invest in building relationships outside your immediate circle.

Spiritual growth is an awareness of your inner spirit or soul and your connection with the sacred or wider universe. As you discover your beliefs, you grow a sense of identity and meaning in life, which in turn strengthens your bonds to humanity and the world.

Character: • decision making grounded in a clear sense of right and wrong; • valuing diversity and acting selflessly for the good of an individual or others; • being honest, • acting out of "moral emotions" rather than snap judgements or inflammatory emotions; • respecting laws and authority; and • consistently aligning your actions and values. People of strong moral character do the right thing even when it is not easy.

A caring person honors and protects all living things and the world's resources. Caring is showing empathy towards others—including those who are different. When you are caring, you stand up for fairness and freedom from discrimination, and you share your skills and treasures to improve the lives of those around you.

Confidence is having the feeling that you will be able to do what you set out to do. True confidence is built upon believing in yourself and valuing your talents and abilities; • applying your strengths to areas of self-doubt or things that are hard to change; • working to enhance skills; • and standing up for what you believe. Confidence is having a realistic and optimistic awareness of yourself and your opportunities.

Persistent resourcefulness is the ability to: • suffer wisely; • face challenges and learn the lessons; • find creative solutions ; • engage people and resources to help you succeed; • hold on to hope and keep trying.

Purpose is a clear vision of: • where you want to go, • what you want in life, and • why. Purpose reaches beyond self to a desire to contribute to the world. There is a commitment to activities that grow this purpose and a plan for pursuing dreams. Purposeful effort leads to a feeling of joy.

© Thriving Indicators For Youth

OUR #1 PRIORITY IS SAFETY!

What does Big Brothers Big Sisters do about safety?

1. Professionally and thoroughly screens all mentors.
2. Provides child safety and child abuse information.
3. Frequently reviews ground rules, policies and procedures.
4. Conducts regularly scheduled Match Support Contacts with trained staff.

Four Roles You Should NOT Play as a Big:

PROFESSIONAL

Even if it's your profession, you should not serve as your Little's social worker, doctor, counselor or expert. Bigs should refrain from entering into any type of relationship with their Little that extends beyond that of a trusted adult friend. While it may seem natural to you, please avoid the role of full-time tutor, therapist, legal/financial adviser, etc.

MENTOR TO THE FAMILY

Remember you are there to be a mentor to the child...not to provide child care for the family. Work to establish a positive rapport with your Little's family members. It is important to be polite and respectful, deferring to the parentguardian to make decisions about your Little. Should your Little's family need community resources (rent assistance, food pantry, school supplies, etc.), please contact your Match Support Specialist for more information.

PARENT/GUARDIAN

Be watchful for areas that could cross boundaries into acting like a parent/guardian. Some common areas include providing money or transportation for extra-curricular activities your Little wants to do. Discipline should be handled by the parent/gurdian at home; however, when with your Little, redirection is acceptable. It's important for everyone to keep the lines clear about parental roles.

PEER FRIEND

This can be a tricky one! While your role as a Big is to have fun with your Little, it's about balancing fun activities like playing video games for hours, with learning and growth experiences. As a mentor, you will likely listen and ask questions to help your Little think through situations, just like a friend would do. But, it is important to remember that you are not to keep your Little's secrets if they lead you to believe that your Little is being unsafe or in danger in any way.

What roles should a Big play?

Mentor: A mentor is a non-parental adult who is acting in a non-professional helping capacity with a specific young person to promote positive youth outcomes in the young person via the mentoring relationship.

Roles You Should Play:

POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

- Your day-to-day interactions with your Little offer the best opportunity to be a positive role model.
- Follow through with your commitments.
- Treat others the way you want to be treated: with respect, compassion, kindness and empathy.
- Acknowledge your imperfections, apologize and admit mistakes.
- How you cope with adversity and stress will demonstrate being a positive role model.
- Think aloud so your Little can learn how you work through problems, weigh pros and cons and come to a decision.
- Be well-rounded to show that you can do and be many things.
- Be confident and proud of who you are.
- Discuss appropriate social behavior expectations prior to introducing your Little to a new experience.

TRUSTED ADULT FRIEND

- Be committed and consistent.
- Work towards equal power in your relationship.
- Include your Little in decision making.
- Follow the rules and guidelines of your Little's parent/guardian.
- Validate your Little's feelings.
- Pay attention to your Little's interests and feelings.
- Do not give unsolicited advice.

NURTURER OF POSSIBILITIES

- See the gifts and strengths of your Little.
- Provide your Little with access to people, places, activities and enriching experiences.
- Be a resource to your Little.
- Create new opportunities for your Little.
- Be willing to step outside your comfort zone, so your Little will be willing to step outside his/hers.

Work towards **EQUAL POWER**

BOUNDARIES

Guiding Principles for Establishing Boundaries:

1. Consider boundaries prior to the start of the relationship.
2. Establish boundaries early.
3. Take time to think: Is this the role of a mentor?
4. Seek agency guidance and support.
5. Ask yourself some guiding questions.

Examples of guiding questions to ask yourself:

"What is in the best interest of my Little?"

"What might my Little's family think?"

Think about how you will handle:

- Money issues
- Self-disclosures
- Time
- Working with your Little's parent/guardian

When in doubt about boundaries...

*Ask for time to think.

*Consult your Match Support Specialist!

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF THE MIDLANDS GROUND RULES

1. A Match Support Specialist will be assigned to each match. The Match Support Specialist will be in touch with all parties on a monthly basis to monitor the progress of the match and administer surveys. The Big, parent/guardian and Little MUST stay in touch with their Match Support Specialist and notify their Match Support Specialist of any issues with the match or changes in contact information.

2. The Big and Little commit to meeting a minimum of 4 hours in 2-4 outings per month for a minimum of 12 months. Any concerns regarding this commitment must be discussed with their Match Support Specialist as soon as the concerns arise.

3. If all parties agree to continue the match beyond the twelve-month commitment, Big Brothers Big Sisters will support the match until the Little turns 21 years old. If any party is considering closure, it is that person's responsibility to inform their Match Support Specialist. No party should just stop communication.

4. The Big will directly speak with the Little's parent/guardian when the Little is picked up and will inform the parent/guardian where they will be going and when they will return. The parent/guardian, or a pre-arranged responsible adult, will be home when the Little returns from an outing with the Big.

5. The first 3-6 months of the match relationship will only be one-to-one outings in the community. After 3 months, the Big can request approval from their Match Support Specialist and the Little's parent/guardian to do an outing at the Big's home or to introduce the Little to a friend or family member. At that time, the Match Support Specialist will review future guidelines for having others on outings or doing activities at the Big's home.

6. The Big cannot take other friends and family members of the Little on outings. The only exception is to allow a sibling of the Little who is enrolled in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands community-based mentoring program to attend an agency activity supervised by Big Brothers Big Sisters staff.

7. The Big is expected to comply with all local, state and federal laws. There is to be no alcohol, drug or tobacco use before meeting or in the presence of the Little.

8. The Big and Little will wear seat belts whenever in a motor vehicle. Littles under the age of 12 must ride in the back seat. Littles up to the age of eight must ride secured in a booster seat provided by the Little's family. The Big will refrain from using a cell phone to make or receive calls, send or receive text messages and will follow all traffic rules and laws while operating a motor vehicle.

9. The Big and Little will respect personal space and avoid inappropriate physical contact (examples include: tickling, wrestling, sitting on laps, backrubs, etc.).

10. Overnight stays are prohibited. No exceptions.

11. A High-Risk Activity Form, signed by the Big and the Little's parent/guardian, must be submitted to Big Brothers Big Sisters prior to the match participating in the high-risk activity.

12. The Big and Little will share the cost of all activities.

13. Gifts are not encouraged, but if the Big would like to give a gift to the Little, the Big must discuss it with their Match Support Specialist and the Little's parent/guardian prior to purchasing or giving the gift.

14. The Big does not become involved in the discipline of the Little. The Big is a mentor, not a parent/guardian.

15. Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands discourages the parent/guardian from keeping the Little from visits with their Big as a means of discipline.

16. Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands reserves the right to suspend or close any match at any time.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR YOUTH MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Physical Safety:

1. Never use physical punishment with your Little or any verbally and/or emotionally abusive means of discipline.
2. Responsibly use the Internet. For example, never post photos of your Little without parent/guardian permission and never use his/her last name. Your own social media sites should be free of any content that is inappropriate for your Little to see.
3. Should your Little become ill during an outing, take him/her home. *Do not give your Little any medication.* This includes aspirin, pain relievers, antacid relief medications, etc.
4. Treat injuries to your Little as you would any other child. Apply basic first aid or, if an emergency, take him/her to the hospital. Determine whether or not to continue the outing. No matter how severe the injury, please inform the parent/guardian and your Match Support Specialist of what happened.

Match Visit Safety:

5. Maintain automobile liability insurance for any vehicle you own that you will use to transport your Little to and from match activities.
6. Agree to never leave your Little unattended or alone with **any** other person. This includes others living in or visiting your home. Escort your Little to a public restroom to ensure his/her safety.
7. When in a large building or crowd, establish a meeting place to utilize should you and your Little get separated. You should also speak with your Little as to who an appropriate person to ask for help would be.

Emotional Safety:

8. Never ask your Little to keep a secret.
9. Never display or discuss any materials of a sexual nature with your Little.

Abide by Agency Policies to Enhance Safety:

10. Follow agency policies around fire arms and other weapons.

Responsibility to Your Little:

11. Understand the importance of properly ending a match relationship. Please actively participate in the closure/redefinition procedure, as requested by your Match Support Specialist.

Responsibility to the Family of Your Little:

12. Notify Big Brothers Big Sisters, your Little and his/her family immediately if any of your contact information changes, such as telephone number, email address, residence, etc.

Responsibility to BBBS:

13. Understand that if a problem arises in your match relationship or with your Little's parent/guardian, you will contact Big Brothers Big Sisters immediately.
14. Notify Big Brothers Big Sisters of any situations that arise in your life that may affect the match, including, but not limited to, serious illness, change in marital/family status, contact with law enforcement, etc.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR YOUTH MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Act with Integrity:

1. Remember that you are a representative of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands when you are with your Little.
2. Conduct yourself with integrity in your Little's community, school and home by being sensitive to cultural differences and your Little's expectations.

Promote Justice for Young People:

3. Be aware of differences between you and your Little such as: race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, etc.
4. Be aware of how these differenes between you and your Little have the potential to impact your mentoring relationship. Even well-intentioned Bigs are susceptible to their own biases.

Respect the Young Person's Right and Dignity:

5. Show respect at all times for your Little and his/her family and never come between a parent/guardian and his/her child.
6. Understand that you will learn personal information about your Little and his/her family, which you will keep confidential.

notes:

HIGH-RISK ACTIVITIES AND FORMS

What is a high-risk activity?

Any outing that has an element of potential danger.

- Unsupervised swimming or rock climbing
- Horseback riding
- Boating, jet skiing or watercrafts
- Sledding
- Drives longer than two hours (one way)
- Paintball or archery
- Theme parks (Worlds of Fun, AdventureLand, etc.)



- Riding bikes without helmets
- Working with power tools
- Riding an ATV or a tractor
- Working on cars
- Lighting fireworks/fires
- Activities involving aircrafts*
- Activities involving firearms*
- Teaching your Little how to drive or allowing your Little to drive your car*

additional permission required

Please be sure to speak with and get approval from the parent/guardian BEFORE discussing a high risk activity with your Little. A High Risk Activity Form can be obtained through your Match Support Specialist or via the Bigs Only website. You must return the completed High Risk Activity Form to your Match Support Specialist BEFORE going on your outing.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Should you choose to connect via social networking (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) with your Little or Little's parent/guardian, please keep the following in mind:

- ✓ **You may not connect until you have been matched for at least one year.**
- ✓ Should you choose to connect at that time, you must get approval from your Match Support Specialist and your Little's parent/guardian.
- ✓ Never post any photos of your Little without permission from your Little's parent/guardian.
- ✓ If you post photos, you must never post the last name or contact information of your Little or his/her family.
- ✓ If matched with a Little in Foster Care, you are never allowed to post his/her photo.

Your relationship with your Little is that of a mentor in addition to a friend.
Today's social networking sites are not designed to support effective mentoring relationships.
Big Brothers Big Sisters recommends that you never connect socially (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) with your Little and/or your Little's parent/guardian.
Should you choose not to connect throughout the life of your match, we will support you 100%!

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT MANDATORY REPORTER LAWS

EVERYONE is a mandatory reporter.

Child Protective Services (CPS)
Nebraska Child Abuse Hotline: 800-652-1999
Iowa Child Abuse Hotline: 800-362-2178
Or call 911

BBBS Emergency Number
Katie Shanmugam,
Director of Match Support
402-214-0994

Nebraska State Statute 28-707 / 28-710

A person commits child abuse if he or she knowingly, intentionally or negligently causes or permits a minor child to be:

a. Placed in a situation that endangers his or her life or physical or mental health;
b. Cruelly confined or cruelly punished;
c. Deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter or care;
d. Placed in a situation to be sexually exploited by allowing, encouraging or forcing such minor child to solicit for or engage in prostitution, debauchery, public indecency or obscene or pornographic photography, films or depictions;
e. Placed in a situation to be sexually abused as defined in section 28-319, 28-319.01 or 28-320.01; or
f. Placed in a situation to be a trafficking victim as defined in section 28-830.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY LITTLE DISCLOSES?

Which <u>one</u> of the following is the best process to do if your Little discloses information about abuse that is happening/has happened to him/her, but you do not believe he/she is in imminent danger?

1. Listen calmly. Ask clarifying questions. Share this information with your Match Support Specialist.
2. Listen with great surprise. Ask no questions. Reassure your Little. Call 911.
3. Listen calmly. Reassure your Little. Ask few questions. Inform your Little that you will be sharing his/her information. Immediately share the information with your Match Support Specialist.
4. Listen with great worry and concern. Ask many clarifying questions. Contact your Match Support Specialist.
5. Listen calmly. Ask no questions. Reassure your Little's parents. Call your Match Support Specialist and then call 911.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR LITTLE DISCLOSES HAVING BEEN ABUSED

Four key things that you can do to respond in a supportive way to your Little if he/she discloses having been abused:

1. **Listen calmly.** Be open and understanding, focusing on your Little's feelings rather than your own. If you react strongly or are noticeably upset, he/she may stop talking or feel worried because you are upset.

2. **Reassure your Little** that you're glad that he/she told you what happened and that it was not his/her fault. Never pressure your Little for information.

3. **Let your Little know that you're going to help him/her** and that you'll need to share what he/she told you with a Big Brothers Big Sisters staff person (and/or law enforcement official, if appropriate), so that the abuse can be stopped and he/she can receive support. Do not tell the Little's parent/guardian.

4. **Do not attempt to question your Little further** or you may interfere with the formal investigation process. Get in touch with Big Brothers Big Sisters agency staff immediately to allow a trained professional (typically from Project Harmony) to conduct an interview with your Little. The only four questions you can ask are: What happened? When did it happen? Who did it? When is the next time you will see him/her?

Remember: When reporting child abuse or neglect, Big Brothers Big Sisters will be with you every step of the way. We have additional information that CPS may need.

If you ever feel that a child is in imminent danger, don't hesitate to call 911 or local law enforcement.



For more information on this subject, visit:
www.childhelpusa.org (Child Help)
www.preventchildabuse.org (Prevent Child Abuse America)
www.aap.org (American Academy of Pediatrics)

RECOGNIZING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE

TYPE & DEFINITION:	SYMPTOMS:
Emotional Abuse: • Constant belittling, shaming and humiliating a child, name-calling and making negative comparisons to others. • Telling a child he/she is "no good," "worthless," "bad" or "a mistake." • Frequent yelling, threatening or ignoring/rejecting a child as punishment, giving him/her the silent treatment. • Often very limited physical contact with the child - no hugs, kisses or other signs of affection. • May expose the child to violence or the abuse of others.	• Excessively withdrawn, fearful or anxious about doing something wrong. • Shows extremes in behavior (extremely compliant or extremely demanding; extremely passive or extremely aggressive). • Doesn't seem to be attached to the parent/guardian. • Acts either inappropriately adult (taking care of other children) or inappropriately infantile (rocking, thumb-sucking, tantrums).
Neglect: • A pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene or supervision. • Not always easy to spot. • Sometimes, a parent might become physically or mentally unable to care for a child, such as serious injury, untreated depression or anxiety. Other times, alcohol or drug abuse may seriously impair judgement and the ability to keep a child safe.	• Clothes are ill-fitting, filthy or inappropriate for the weather. • Hygiene is consistently bad (unbathed, matted and unwashed hair, noticeable body odor). • Untreated illnesses and physical injuries. • Is frequently unsupervised or left alone or allowed to play in unsafe situations and environments. • Is frequently late to or missing from school.
Physical Abuse: • Bodily harm or injury to the child. • It may be the result of a deliberate attempt to hurt the child, but not always. • It can also result from severe discipline, such as using a belt on a child or punishment that is inappropriate to the child's age or physical condition.	• Frequent injuries or unexplained bruises, welts or cuts. • Is always watchful and "on alert," as if waiting for something bad to happen. • Injuries appear to have a pattern such as marks from a hand or belt. • Shies away from touch, flinches at sudden movements or seems afraid to go home. • Wears inappropriate clothing to cover up injuries, such as long-sleeved shirts on hot days.
Sexual Abuse: • Body contact between an adult and a child involving genitals, breasts and/or buttocks. • Any contact - from touch to stroking to penetration - is abuse. • Additionally, exposure to situations and/or materials that are 'adult' in nature is abuse.	• Trouble walking or sitting. • Displays knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to his/her age or even seductive behavior. • Makes strong efforts to avoid a specific person, without an obvious reason. • Doesn't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities. • Has an STD or pregnancy, especially under the age of 14. • Runs away from home.

SERIOUS SAFETY RISKS IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

It is important that you contact your Match Support Specialist should you observe any of these signs or symptoms in your Little.

SAFETY RISK: Runaway
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF EXPOSURE:

- Had been physically or sexually abused at home in the year prior to the episode or was afraid of abuse upon return.
- Was substance dependent.
- Was in the company of someone known to be abusing drugs.
- Spent time in a place where criminal activity was known to occur.
- Engaged in criminal activity during the course of the episode.
- Was with a violent person.
- Had previously attempted suicide.
- Was enrolled in school at the time of the episode and missed at least five days of school.
- Was physically assaulted or someone attempted to physically assault child.
- Was with a sexually exploitative person.
- Had a serious mental illness or developmental disability at the time of the episode.
- Was sexually assaulted or someone attempted to sexually assault child during the course of the episode.
- Whereabouts were unknown to the caretaker for at least 30 days (and the episode was unresolved or no information was available).
- Engaged in sexual activity in exchange for money, drugs, food or shelter during the episode.
- Had or developed a serious or life-threatening medical condition during the course of the episode.

SAFETY RISK: Self-Harm
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF EXPOSURE:

- Covering up arms, legs, ankles, etc. – even during hot weather.
- Excessive time behind locked doors.
- Defensive about physical space.
- Seems "unfeeling" or empty, apathetic, non-reactionary.

SAFETY RISK: Suicide
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF EXPOSURE:

- Presence of a psychiatric disorder (depression, drugs or alcohol, behavior disorders, conduct disorder, runs away or has been incarcerated).
- The expression/communication of thoughts of suicide, death, dying or the afterlife (in a context of sadness, boredom, hopelessness or negative feelings).
- Impulsive and aggressive behavior, frequent expressions of rage.
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs.
- Exposure to another's suicidal behavior.
- Recent severe stressor (difficulties in dealing with sexual orientation, unplanned pregnancy, significant real or anticipated loss, etc.).
- Family instability, significant family conflict.

SERIOUS SAFETY RISKS IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

It is important that you contact your Match Support Specialist should you observe any of these signs or symptoms in your Little.

SAFETY RISK	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF EXPOSURE
Bullying • Verbal or physical harm for the purpose of gaining some type of control over a person. • Generally to use someone for something, such as money or attention from peers. • Includes insulting, teasing, abuse, threats, humiliation, gossiping, rejection or exclusion - either in-person or via the Internet, texting and email or both.	• Unexplained injuries. • Torn, damaged or missing clothing, books or belongings. • Fearful about attending school, walking to the bus or loss of interest in schoolwork. • Chooses an unusual route to get to school. • Emotional changes including unexpected mood shifts or poor appetite, headaches and stomach aches. • Withdrawal from family and friends. • May steal money from family members.
Domestic Violence A pattern of behavior that may include physical and sexual violence, threats, insults and economic deprivation aimed at gaining and maintaining power and control over the mind, body, behavior and lifestyle of a spouse or partner.	• **External**: aggressive behavior and conduct problems at home and in school, fighting, cursing and name calling. • **Internal**: anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, guilt, crying, decreased intellectual and academic functioning including inability to concentrate, difficulty with school work, school truancy and failure and developmental delay. • **Social**: isolated and withdrawn from friends and family and demonstrates low levels of empathy. • **Health**: demonstrated somatic symptoms, poor sleeping and eating habits, headaches, stomach aches and self-destructive behaviors such as suicide attempts and self-mutilation.
Gangs A gang refers to a group of people who, often through acts of delinquency or crime, create a shared, negative identity throughout a community.	• Change in types of friends. • Changes in dress habits, such as wearing the same color combination all the time. • Displaying symbols on books, clothing or locker. • Wearing tattoos. • Carrying extra cash from unknown sources. • Carrying a weapon. • Losing interest in school and family. • Getting arrested or detained by police. • Becoming truant. • Using alcohol and other drugs. • Talking in a unique language. • Using hand signals to communicate with others.

UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

As you interact with Littles and their families who may be from different cultures or backgrounds other than your own, you may see many similarities and you may also observe some differences. How you interpret and evaluate these differences will influence how well you can continue to work together and what to do when situations highlighting these differences arise.
How would you define poverty and what does poverty actually mean?

CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND MENTORING

Culture is the lens through which you view and interpret all other cultures and their values and practices.

Activity

Think about your own and your Little's values, beliefs and realities. Write some notes about the similarities and differences between you and your Little.

Your Own:

Values (e.g. family, education):

Beliefs (e.g. religion):

Realities (e.g. home ownership, socioeconomic status):

How to be proactive in addressing cultural competency in your match:

•Ask: But, make sure it's "give and take." Share something about yourself before you ask something of others.

•Observe: How are things done? What are the customs, practices and rules?

•Research: Use a wide range of sources to learn.

•Take some risks: Take the initiative and accept the fact that you will make some mistakes!

How to recover from a mistake so you can build and maintain positive relations with your Little and his/her family:

•State your intentions and communicate what you want the impact to be.

•Tell them what's on your mind. Let them know if you feel unsure, hyper-sensitive or disoriented.

•Encourage them to share what's on their minds about how they are feeling about what happened.

•Next, apologize for any problems you may have caused.

•Now you can share information about yourself – why you did what you did.

•Agree together on a plan for how to proceed going forward.

MEETING YOUR LITTLE: THE MATCH MEETING

What will happen?

1. Introductions
2. The role of your Match Support Specialist
3. Opportunity to have "adults only" conversation to discuss hot/sensitive topics and trauma triggers
4. Review communication expectations and ideal outing times
5. Discuss everyone's goals for the match
6. Last minute tips to promote match success
7. Review of Big Brothers Big Sisters Ground Rules and match packet
8. Icebreaker outing with your Little
9. Schedule your first official outing

STRENGTHENING YOUR MATCH

Homework Assignment:

Preparing for your first meeting with your Little

Instructions: After you complete today's training and before you meet your Little for the first time, write out your plan by answering these questions. Be sure to talk with your Match Support Specialist should you have any concerns or questions.

How will you introduce yourself to your Little and his/her family?

What will you ask your Little about him/herself?

What questions will you ask your Little's parent/guardian?

How will you plan your first match activity?

Are there any concerns you would like to discuss with your Match Support Specialist before meeting your Little?

REDEFINITION/CLOSURE

When you and your Little need to redefine your relationship, we ask that you keep the following in mind:

- **NEVER** just stop meeting with your Little or disappear.
- Follow the Big Brothers Big Sisters transition or closure process (see below).
- Work with your Match Support Specialist (MSS).

Redefinition or Closure Process:

- Big questions if it's time to end the match (moving, change in life circumstances, etc.).
- Big notifies MSS. MSS will help troubleshoot and see if there is a compromise that can be made to redefine and continue the match (fewer outings, scheduled outings, etc.). If match continuation is not feasible, Big and MSS can then come up with a plan for ending the match on a positive note. Big and MSS will decide whether contact after the match is closed is appropriate or practical and can be sustained.
- Big tells Little and parent/guardian either over the phone or in person. Please do not communicate this via text message.
- Big and Little have their second to last outing where they plan how they will celebrate on their final outing.
- Big and Little have a final outing. Big and Little can exchange any pictures of their time together. MSS can email out questions for the final outing to prompt the match to reflect positively on their time together and to bring closure to the match.

***DISCLAIMER:** BBBS knows that not every match can or will be able to close in this manner, but saying goodbye is important. If a final outing isn't appropriate, your MSS can help you find an alternative way to close the match in a positive way.

notes:

BIGS ONLY WEBSITE

www.bbbsomaha.org

Password: BBBSMIDLANDS

Discount list for matches, free tickets, monthly agency activities, frequently updated list of community activities, volunteer opportunities, resources and much, much more!

BIGS ONLY FACEBOOK PAGE

Once you are matched, join the Bigs Only Facebook page to interact with other Bigs, keep up-to-date on agency activities, get free tickets and more!

BIG APP

Download the Big Brothers Big Sisters Big App to access: the Thriving Indicators, activity ideas, RSVP for agency activities, connect with your Match Support Specialists, find discounts/free activities and much more!

Make sure you allow notifications.

MENTOR DEVELOPMENT

Big Brothers Big Sisters can assist you in finding additional trainings to help with any topic you would like more information. Some of the more popular topics include:

Navigating Cultural Differences
Match Ethics, Safety and Boundaries
Youth with an Incarcerated Parent
Mentoring Youth in Foster Care
Engaging Through Empathy
The Culture of Poverty
Mentor as Social Connector

SURVEYS

Big Brothers Big Sisters will be administering surveys with you and your Little throughout the life of your match. The answers you provide help us to better serve you and your Little. They also allow our agency to be evidence-based, which in turn leads to funding for our program. Your cooperation is much appreciated!

TIPS FOR THE FIRST FEW MONTHS

- Plan your first official outing when you drop off your Little after your ice-breaker.
- Be committed about scheduling outings with your Little's parent/guardian.
- Establish an effective communication plan.
- Allow your Little the opportunity to help plan activities.
- Ask open-ended questions. If your Little is shy, talk about yourself until he/she opens up more.
- When you drop off your Little, take a few moments to talk with his/her parent/guardian.
- Be aware of all outing costs. Have a back-up plan ready!
- Become involved in your Little's school or extra-curricular activities.
- Utilize the resources available through Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- HAVE FUN!!

QUESTIONS?

@bbbsmidlands

MenotrOmaha.org

RESOURCES FOR YOU

TRAINING/BENEFITS/IMPACT

Q1: Why is mentor training important?

Trained Bigs feel more prepared and ready to be a mentor compared to mentors who do not receive training. This contributes to better, longer-lasting relationships with their Littles. In addition, Littles with a trained Big have more positive outcomes than Littles with an untrained Big.

Q2: What are the benefits of mentoring for youth who are in a mentoring relationship?

- **Academic** (better attendance and grades, achieving graduation)
- **Social** (social skills, better quality relationships)
- **Emotional** (better mood, fewer psychological problems)

In order for these benefits to happen, you must have an effective and enduring relationship with your Little. Training, support from Big Brothers Big Sisters and time with your Little contribute to a successful relationship.

Q3: What impact do Bigs have on their Littles?

Findings from research on Littles on a National level:

Greater Confidence:

- 90% agreed their Big made them feel better about themselves.
- 86% agreed they lead a fulfilling life.
- 72% said they are satisfied or extremely satisfied with their relationships with friends.
- 65% said they are satisfied or extremely satisfied with their relationships with family.

Avoidance of Risky Behaviors:

- 90% said their relationship with their Big helped them make better choices throughout their childhood.
- 86% said their relationship with their Big has helped them make better choices throughout their life.
- 76% said they learned right from wrong from their Big.

Educational Achievement:

- 77% reported doing better in school because of their Big.
- 65% agreed their Big helped them reach a higher level of education than they thought possible.
- 52% agreed their Big kept them from dropping out of high school.

Q4: Is completing this training all the mentor development I need?

It's a great start! Research shows that successful mentors need at least two hours of mentor development. This course gives you the foundation you need to start. Additionally, we offer topical training courses you may want to take depending on the Little you are matched with and what questions and interests you have - all to help lengthen and strengthen your match.

notes:

AGES AND STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

5-7 Year Olds

General Characteristics
- Eager to learn, easily fatigued, short periods of interest.
- Learn best when they are active while learning.
- Self-assertive, boastful, less cooperative, more competitive.

Physical Characteristics
- Are very active and need frequent breaks from tasks. They like to do things that are fun and involve use of energy.
- Need rest periods.
- Large muscles are well developed. Activities involving small muscles are difficult (i.e., working on models with small pieces).
- May tend to be accident prone.

Social Characteristics
- Like organized games and are very concerned about following rules.
- Can be very competitive. May cheat at games.
- Are very imaginative and involved in fantasy playing.
- Are self-assertive, aggressive, want to be first, less cooperative than at four, boastful.

Emotional Characteristics
- Are alert to feelings of others, but are unaware of how their own actions effect others.
- Are very sensitive to praise and recognition. Feelings are easily hurt.
- Inconsistent in level of maturity evidenced; regress when tired, often less mature at home than with outsiders.

Mental Characteristics
- Are very eager to learn.
- Like to talk.
- Their idea of fairness becomes a big issue.
- Have difficulty making decisions.

Developmental Tasks
- Sex role identification.
- Early moral development.
- Concrete operations - child begins to experience the predictability of physical events.

AGES AND STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

8-10 Year Olds

General Characteristics

- Interested in people, aware of differences, willing to give more to others but expects more.
- Busy, active, full of enthusiasm, may try too much, accident prone, interest in money and its value.
- Sensitive to criticism, recognize failure, capacity for self-evaluation.
- Capable of prolonged interest, may make plans on own.
- Decisive, dependable, reasonable, strong sense of right and wrong.
- Spend a great deal of time in talk and discussion, often outspoken and critical of adults although still dependent on adult approval.

Physical Characteristics

- Are very active and need frequent breaks from tasks to do things that are fun for them and involve use of energy.
- Bone growth is not yet complete.
- Early maturers may be upset with their size.
- May tend to be accident prone.

Social Characteristics

- Can be very competitive.
- Are choosy about their friends.
- Being accepted by friends becomes quite important.
- Team games become popular.
- Worshipping heroes, TV stars and sports figures is common.

Emotional Characteristics

- Are very sensitive to praise and recognition. Feelings are hurt easily.
- Because friends are so important during this time, there can be conflicts between adults' rules and friends' rules. You can help by your honesty and consistency.

Mental Characteristics

- Their idea of fairness becomes a big issue.
- Are eager to answer questions.
- Are very curious, collectors of everything. However, they may jump to other objects of interest after a short time.
- Want more independence, but know they need guidance and support.
- Wide discrepancies in reading ability.

Developmental Tasks

- Social cooperation.
- Self-evaluation, skill learning.
- Team play.

AGES AND STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

11-13 Year Olds

General Characteristics

- Testing limits, "know-it-all attitude."
- Vulnerable, emotionally insecure, fear of rejection, mood swings.
- Identification with admired adult.
- Bodies are going through physical changes that effect personal appearance.

Physical Characteristics

- Small-muscle coordination is good, and interests in art, crafts, models and music are popular.
- Bone growth is not yet complete.
- Early maturers may be upset with their size.
- Are very concerned with their appearance, very self-conscious about growth.
- Diet and sleep habits can be bad, which may result in low energy levels.
- Girls may begin menstruation.

Social Characteristics

- Being accepted by friends becomes quite important.
- Cliques start to develop outside of school.
- Team games become popular.
- Crushes on members of the opposite sex are common.
- Friends set the general rule of behavior.
- Feel a real need to conform. They dress and behave alike in order to "belong."
- Are very concerned about what others say and think of them.
- Have a tendency to manipulate others ("Mary's mother says she can go. Why can't I?").
- Interested in earning own money.

Emotional Characteristics

- Are very sensitive to praise and recognition. Feelings are hurt easily.
- Because friends are so important during this time, there can be conflicts between adults' rules and friends' rules.
- Are caught between being a child and being an adult.
- Loud behavior hides their lack of self-confidence.
- Look at the world more objectively, adults subjectively, critical.

Mental Characteristics

- Tend to be perfectionists. If they try to attempt too much, they may feel frustrated and guilty.
- Want more independence, but know they need guidance and support.
- Attention span can be lengthy.

AGES AND STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

14-16 Year Olds

General Characteristics

- Testing limits, "know-it-all attitude."
- Vulnerable, emotionally insecure, fear of rejection, mood swings.
- Identification with admired adult.
- Bodies are going through physical changes that affect personal appearance.

Physical Characteristics

- Are very concerned with their appearance, very self-conscious about growth.
- Diet and sleep habits can be bad, which may result in low energy levels.
- Rapid weight gain at beginning of adolescence. Enormous appetite.

Social Characteristics

- Friends set the general rules of behavior.
- Feel a real need to conform. They dress and behave alike in order to "belong."
- Are very concerned about what others say and think of them.
- Have a tendency to manipulate others ("Mary's mother says she can go. Why can't I?").
- Going to extremes, emotional instability with "know-it-all" attitude.
- Fear of ridicule and of being unpopular.
- Strong identification with an admired adult.
- Girls usually more interested in boys than girls, resulting from earlier maturing of the girls.

Emotional Characteristics

- Are very sensitive to praise and recognition. Feelings are easily hurt.
- Are caught between being a child and being an adult.
- Loud behavior hides their lack of self-confidence.
- Look at the world more objectively, adults subjectively, critical.

Mental Characteristics

- Can better understand moral principles.
- Attention span can be lengthy.

Developmental Tasks

- Physical maturation.
- Membership in the peer group.
- Relating to the opposite sex.

WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH YOUR LITTLE'S PARENT/GUARDIAN

Check each task below before every outing. Be sure to communicate with your Little's parent/guardian on a regular basis.

- ☐ It's your responsibility to figure out an effective communication plan with your Little and his/her parent/guardian.
- ☐ Don't take things personally. Be persistent in reaching out to your Little's parent/guardian. Example: If they don't call back right away, call again.
- ☐ Seek approval of the activity from the parent/guardian.
- ☐ Confirm pick-up time and location (be aware of meal times). It is recommended to let the parent/guardian know you are on your way.
- ☐ Provide activity plans: activities, locations and times.
- ☐ Have a back-up plan ready in case of weather, your Little got in trouble at home/school, you or your Little don't want to do your originally planned activity, etc.
- ☐ Double-check contact and emergency phone numbers.
- ☐ Confirm drop-off time, location and adult to receive your Little.
- ☐ The parent/guardian must always know where his/her child is, so if you change your plans after leaving the home, please inform the parent/guardian of the change in plans.
- ☐ If you are going to be out of town or unavailable for an extended amount of time, please communicate that to your Little and his/her parent/guardian.

ACTIVITY IDEAS BY AGE OF LITTLE

Activities should be: based on your Little's interests, culturally sensitive, parent/guardian approved, inexpensive, fun and/or involve learning. Find even more ideas in your match packet, by visiting the Big App or by speaking with your Match Support Specialist.

Age 5–7	Age 8–10	Age 11–13	Age 14–16
Bake and frost cut out cookies	Start a scrapbook with a page for pictures of favorite things	Watch a TV program and identify negative stereotypes	Figure out how to program your DVR
Fly a kite on a windy day	Go on a scavenger hunt to find odd objects	Look up your state on the Internet: What is the major industry? Biggest cities? Fun statistics?	Research what happened on the day and year each of you was born
Go on a walk and collect interesting rocks, leaves or other items	Make greeting, get well or holiday cards to give to special people	Build and paint a bird house – watch for occupants	Check out the classified ads and discuss what each job requires in terms of education and experience
Feed the ducks at the park	Make a bug cage and catch butterflies or bugs together	Rent rollerblades and learn to skate safely	Visit a fish market, meat market or other place where food is not prepackaged
Make a present for someone special	Visit the zoo at feeding time	Make a vision board	Go out for dinner at an ethnic restaurant: Who else is eating there? Favorite dishes?
Play UNO, Crazy 8s, Old Maid	Record yourselves reading a selected book out loud	Take a long ride on public transportation to the end of the line	Explore a new radio station together; discuss ads and target audience
Play badminton or croquet	Play mini-golf or go bowling	Visit the Humane Society and offer to walk the dogs or pet the cats	Plan, shop for ingredients and cook dinner
Go for a walk and find interesting places to practice "balancing"	Play Monopoly, Life, Sorry, Hangman	Mow the lawn or wash the car together	Go to a concert featuring a favorite performer
Have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich picnic	Go on a field trip to a museum – focus on one exhibit and discuss it	Play computer and video games together	Try mastering something difficult: juggling, cooking a soufflé, watercolor painting
Visit a pet store and decide which is the oddest pet	Call ahead and visit the local fire station or police station	Plan and plant a garden or visit a community garden and offer to help	Watch a professional or semi-professional sporting event

notes:

A FEW OF OUR DISCOUNT PARTNERS...

eCreamery
Ice Cream and Gelato

Kids Warrior GYM

SPIEL BOUND

The Amazing Pizza Machine
Crank out the Food & Fun

THE DURHAM MUSEUM

Boulder Creek Amusement Park

FILM STREAMS
AT THE RUTH SOKOLOF THEATER

THE MAKERY
a local crafting studio

OMAHA'S HENRY DOORLY ZOO & AQUARIUM