

# Volunteer Orientation



Our “Bigs” come from diverse backgrounds just like our Littles. They are regular people, just like you. You don’t need any special degrees or job skills. You just have to want to positively impact a young person. Role models come in all shapes and sizes, and you could be a perfect fit. Volunteer now and make a difference in the life of a Little!

Thank you for your interest in becoming a “Big” with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Utah!

Before you fill out your application, there are a few things you need to know.

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## What is Big Brothers Big Sisters?

### **Our Mission**

To provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change a child’s life for the better, forever.

One-to-one mentoring built on...

- Careful screening
- Thoughtful matching
- Thorough support of the mentoring match

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## Why are “Bigs” so important?

Of the 1,111 kids we served last year . . .

- 93% are living in low-to-moderate income households
- 48% are living with a single parent and 8% are living with neither parent
- 66% are members of a racial or ethnic minority group
- 13% have an incarcerated parent

A great mentoring relationship can be a positive factor that helps balance challenges some kids face, such as:

- Divorce
- Poverty
- Substance abuse
- Problems in school
- Problems relating to peers

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## What makes a great “Big”?

You do not need special skills, a ton of money, or to know that you are “good with kids” you just need to be:

- A caring, supportive person
- Willing to share time, ideas, new experiences
- Someone who embraces differences and loves to learn
- Able to set and hold boundaries
- Consistent

Almost all of the kids who need and want a Big Brother or a Big Sister have situations in their lives that reduce the likelihood that they will thrive as they grow up.

Your role as a mentor is to let them know they are important, that you care, and that despite their challenges you want to help them be their best selves.

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## A “Big” Commitment

We ask all “Bigs” to make a 12 month commitment to the child they are mentoring.

In mentor2.0 we hope you will stay together about 3.5 years

On average you will spend 4 to 6 hours per month mentoring your “Little.”

In site-based programs it is an hour on a specified day of the week, weekly for the academic year and happens at a set location

In mentor2.0 weekly contact is electronic and in-person meetings are monthly on a set schedule during the academic year

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## 3 Ways to make a “Big” Difference:

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Utah operates three different one-to-one mentoring programs:

**Community-Based** (Meet 2 – 4 times per month for whatever activities you choose together. Volunteer requirement: must be at least 18.)

**Site-Based** (Meet weekly at a site supervised by BBBSU staff – most are at schools in late afternoons. Volunteer requirement: must be at least 14).

**Mentor 2.0** (Communicate electronically weekly and meet in-person monthly in evening. Focused on college access & success. Volunteer requirement: must have college degree.)

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## You Won't Be Alone . . .

After you are matched with your "Little" a Mentoring Specialist on BBBSU staff will call you 13 times in the first year of the match (and less frequently after that) to help with things like:

- problem-solving
- ideas for building a friendship
- information about resources
- support and feedback

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## Next Steps

Complete the online questionnaire. It will take you 15 – 20 minutes to complete and submit. You may need to reference the previous information.

Fill out application. It will take you 1 – 2 minutes to complete and submit. You'll be given the link after you submit the questionnaire.

After you've submitted your questionnaire and application, we will email you a complete list of next steps to becoming a "Big." This includes getting your fingerprints, setting up an interview, providing references, etc.

Your application will be processed and we will contact you to let you know if you are accepted.

Give us a few weeks as we spend some time reviewing "Little" applications, find kids on the waiting list who want a "Big", and find the one we think will most benefit from your mentorship.

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## Thank You

Thank You for considering this commitment of your time and talents.

Do you feel like becoming a "Big" isn't a good fit for you? We would love to talk to you about other volunteer opportunities with us!

BBBSU also needs financial support to continue to offer quality mentoring support. On average making/supporting matches costs \$1300 each. You can help!

Consider making a financial donation, helping plan an event, donating to an event, or hosting a clothing drive.

Contact Brandi at 801-743-1674 or [brandi.jolley@bbbsu.org](mailto:brandi.jolley@bbbsu.org)