



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Defenders of Potential,

Mentorship isn't just the right thing to do—it's one of the smartest investments we can make in our community. A mentor can change the trajectory of a young person's life, ensuring they graduate high school, avoid negative influences, and set ambitious career goals. And when young people succeed, the ripple effect benefits everyone—reducing crime, strengthening education, and filling workforce gaps that challenge our region's economic growth.

Right now, nearly one-third of youth from low-income families fail to graduate high school, drastically limiting their future opportunities. But mentorship is proven to change this. A Harvard study recently released by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America found that BBBS Littles are 20% more likely to attend post-secondary education, earn 15% more over their lifetimes, and experience a two-thirds reduction in the socio-economic gap.

At Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay, we're turning those statistics into action. Our School-to-Work and Big Futures programs pair high school juniors and seniors with mentors who guide them through career exploration, job readiness, and planning for what's next—whether that's college, trade school, or jumping straight into the workforce.

Beyond career readiness, mentorship builds stronger communities. Our Bigs in Blue/Bigs with Badges program connects law enforcement officers and public service professionals with mentees. In communities where trust has been strained, these relationships are breaking down barriers and rebuilding connections—one match at a time.

Programs like these don't just change lives—they change perceptions. And in a time when division can feel overwhelming, mentorship provides a simple, human-centered way to bring people together.

When a young person graduates high school with a plan—whether it's college, trade school, the military, or a stable job—the impact is far-reaching. They become homeowners, taxpayers, and engaged citizens. They break cycles of poverty and crime. And many return as mentors themselves, creating a generational impact that strengthens our entire region.

Our future depends on the investments we make today.

Thank you for supporting our mentoring programs as we Go BIG for Kids!

Chris Letsos, CEO Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay Kenneth Beattie, Board Chair Flowbird



OUR VISION

All youth achieve their full potential.

OUR MISSION

Create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the **power** and **promise** of youth.

OUR PROMISE

To empower every young person on the path to graduate high school with a plan for their future and a mentor whose impact will last a lifetime.

BIG PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY - BASED

Bigs spend an average of 8 hours per month with their Littles. Matches meet up for activities such as playing sports, getting ice cream, or visiting the library. We ask volunteers to commit to at least 15 months in this program.

Average Match Length: 41 Months

SITE - BASED

Matches meet at the child's school or after-school site. The Big & Little do homework, play games, or talk.
We ask volunteers to commit to at least 12 months in this program.

Average Match Length: 24 Months



2024 PROGRAM OUTCOMES



OF OUR LITTLES MAINTAINED OR IMPROVED IN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

This measure uses children's self-reported grades. Self-reported grades are associated with actual grades which are linked to externalizing behaviors (i.e., aggression), internalizing behaviors (i.e., social withdrawal), and high school graduation rates. The information from these questions provides an overall picture of academic performance.)



OF OUR LITTLES REMAINED STABLE OR IMPROVED WITH DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS

This measure assesses children's self-reported mood and feelings. It is important to recognize this measure examines indications of depressive symptoms and is not intended for clinical diagnosis.



OF LITTLES MAINTAINED OR IMPROVED THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Mentoring has been linked to higher educational and vocational aspirations. Children and adolescents' academic expectations and plans, in turn, have been linked to academic performance and educational attainment.



OF OUR LITTLES MAINTAINED OR IMPROVED IN PARENTAL/FAMILY CONNECTEDNESS

These items measure the extent to which the child feels that they have an understanding and respectful relationship with a parent or guardian. A positive relationship with one's parents is linked to decreased risky behavior and improved school performance.





















PROUD PARTNERS



SIGNATURE EVENTS

BOWL FOR KIDS' SAKE

VARIOUS DATES AND LOCATIONS IN APRIL - JUNE

Bowling party fundraiser give.bbbstampabay.org/ge/bfks2025

HALL OF FAME

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025

Special honoree awards and breakfast ARMATURE WORKS, TAMPA bbbstampabay.org/events/hall_of_fame

BIG GALA

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2025

Premiere seated dinner event with inspiring program auction & entertainment

Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, TAMPA bbbstampabay.org/events/gala

On-Line Auction: bidpal.net/bbbstb

FRENCHY'S BIG CLAYS FOR KIDS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2025

Sporting clays tournament, awards dinner, and auction TAMPA BAY SPORTING CLAYS, LAND O' LAKES

give.bbbstampabay.org/ge/clays2025

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GO BIG BLUEPRINT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2025-2027

Every young person deserves access, opportunity, and engaged mentors and experiences to help them navigate their path to adulthood. We are driven by the collective belief that through quality mentorship, youth can visualize and achieve a future they are proud of and become empowered to realize their dreams.

We engaged a diverse and inclusive group of stakeholders to help shape the direction and priorities for our future and outcomes and we are proud to launch our Strategic Plan: Go BIG for Tampa Bay.

Our sixty-year legacy of impact demands that we evolve in fundamental ways. Today, the families of our youth face increasingly complex and deeply rooted challenges. We acknowledge that we must expand traditional one to one mentoring because our families are dealing with issues like poverty, trauma, inequalities, and limited access to educational opportunities.

Over the next three years, we are taking bold steps to bring our vision to life for more youth throughout our nine-county service area. Our commitment is unwavering, and our goals include:

GROW

Serve 5,000 young people

through one-to-one mentoring relationships and focused mentoring experiences.

ENGAGE

Recruit, attract and deploy 3,500 volunteer BIGS

and champions to help ignite the BIG potential of youth.

IMPACT

Support over 1 million hours

of mentor experiences and deliver more than \$30 million of value and impact.

OUR KEY STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

Evolve mentoring programs to serve more youth with greater impact.

Build community partnerships and targeted collaborations.

Boost organizational growth and sustainability.

Strengthen board engagement and invest in our professional staff.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay can only reach these goals with your continued support. Join us and Go Big Tampa Bay!

BIG 8 LITTLE SISTER OF THE YEAR



Janae comes from a multi-generational Big family, her father having been a Big. Working in the Department of Juvenile Justice, she had seen many children in the community struggle. She felt like she could make a difference by helping them think a little bigger and gain different experiences.

Starting their match when Taniya was just 7, she is now 16 and maintains her honor roll status. Their lunch outings provided an escape from the world, providing some sense of normalcy, especially during times of adversity and housing instability.

"I'm proud of what she's accomplished and where she's gone; she has come so far. She didn't always talk to me and express herself, but we're working on talking things through. Her confidence went up, she is very articulate, and we chat non-stop now.

"I act as an external person who can talk to her and let her vent. Some of these kids have been let down so many times by other adults in and out of their lives."

Janae offers as a final piece of advice to future Big mentors: "What we do is not extraordinary. It doesn't take much time. It's about consistency. To quote Dr. Seuss: Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."



BIG S LITTLE BROTHER OF THE YEAR



"So many people say you can't change the world, but I think you can." Carl had a solid foundation growing up and later became a father. After the nest had emptied, he wanted to help young men without father figures. Now, Carl is proud of the mutual trust and understanding he shares with his Little Brother Calab.

Carl shares, "At first you might think 'How am I going to entertain this kid?', but BBBS makes it so easy. Even from the beginning, we had lots of fun and didn't have to try too hard. Just show up and they know they can count on you."

Calab is the oldest child out of four siblings – and the only boy. "There is a lot of love in that house, and I have a lot of admiration for Calab's mom. She teaches them to be respectful. It was always 'Mr. Carl' when we first got together."

Over the years, learning opportunities have come up, such as financial responsibility and opening an investment account. Calab's A-B grades earn him frequent visits to a popular fast-casual Mexican food chain. His confidence has improved, resulting in better relationships inside the home and at school.

"Nothing is more important to the future than our kids. At the grassroots level, BBBS is shaping this future."

Do you feel inspired by Janae and Carl's stories? You, too, can make a lasting difference in the life of a child and your community by becoming a Big! Mentorship is a powerful way to create positive change, and we're here to support you every step of the way. If you're ready to start your journey as a mentor, reach out today to learn more about how you can get involved. Together, we can build brighter futures, one match at a time!







BIG COUPLE: PETER & CRYSTAL • LITTLE BROTHER JORGE

Jorge was matched with Peter and Crystal when he was 12 years old and is now 14 and in 9th grade. Jorge's mom, Carmen, enrolled Jorge in the program because she believed he would benefit from having a Big in his life, to give him extra support, one on one attention, and be a great friend to him and help him explore new things. Jorge ended up with not one, but two wonderful Bigs! Crystal and Peter have been great at communicating, open to coaching, and wonderful advocates of the program among their social group, recruiting more Bigs and Big Couples.

"When we were first matched with Jorge as a Big Couple two years ago, we wondered how we might find common ground to build a strong connection. Our backgrounds are all different. Our ages ranged from 12 to 56. And our interests were (and still are) widely varied. The key, we learned, was creating shared experiences."

Peter and Crystal say, "Over the past two years, we've enjoyed board games, lawn games and card games. We've competed in an ongoing game of Tweety, in which we shout out yellow cars on the road as we drive. We've gone on hikes, visited museums, and seen the Bucs play. We've watched and debriefed movies. We've found a shared love of afternoon ice cream, and we've undertaken an ongoing quest to find the best cheeseburger in Tampa Bay."

These simple shared experiences have opened the door for conversations about short-term goals, long-term dreams, obstacles and successes. Jorge is endlessly curious and asks great questions about current events, issues, and the world we share. He's a bright young man with a good heart and a clever mind!

It's been a great experience, a priceless connection, and we look forward to continuing it as Jorge grows toward his goals and dreams.









SPORTS BUDDIES

Sports Buddies is a fun and meaningful way to mentor a child while sharing your love of sports. As a Community-Based match, you'll meet twice a month to play sports or attend a sporting event, building a lasting connection through shared experiences.

HIGHLIGHT

The Tampa Bay Rays and Rowdies Foundation are a proud sponsor.

BIGS IN BLUE



Our Bigs in Blue/Bigs with Badges program builds positive relationships between law enforcement, first responders, military and government agencies, and the communities they serve through mentorship.

Agencies participating in 2024 include the Tampa Police Department, Hillsborough County Sherriff's Office, Pasco County Sheriff's Office, Ocala Police Department, Sumter County Sheriff's Office, State Attorney's Office for the 13th Judicial Circuit and 5th Judicial Circuit, and St. Petersburg Police Department.

HIGHLIGHT

175 active matches in 2024 and over 400 matches since 2017.



BIGS WITH BADGES



SCHOOL-TO-WORK

In our School-to-Work program, we partner with local school districts, corporations, and government agencies to provide mentoring for high school students in the workplace.

Littles gain valuable skills, explore career opportunities, and receive guidance from their Big as they plan for life after graduation.

BBBSTB is proud to partner with many corporate & government agencies.



RAYMOND JAMES











JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.













PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: CITY OF LAKELAND



The BBBS School-to-Work mentoring program is a partnership between the local school districts, BBBS, and corporate and community partners, providing mentoring in the workplace for high school students to help improve graduation rates. 100% of seniors who completed the School-to-Work program have graduated from high school!

The City of Lakeland has partnered with BBBS since 2021 as part of their Lift Lakeland initiative to bridge social gaps and develop harmonious relationships through people-centered solutions, including youth mentoring. Students from Lakeland High School visit employees at the City of Lakeland offices once per month during the school year. Littles learn post-graduation skills, then spend one-to-one time with their Bigs discussing goals and planning for the future.

"We are so grateful for a framework which allows City associates to inspire hope and align dreams with potential opportunities in the lives of the Littles with whom are partnered. Tweaking life trajectory by broadening early consideration of future life options matters! It will be a rich reward to follow the progress of our Littles in the years ahead. We want to make a difference," says Bill Mutz, Mayor of Lakeland and a Big Brother in the School-to-Work program.

BBBS is proud to be a part of the City's Lift Lakeland project!

BIG FUTURES

Before the launch of this program in 2019, matches ended when the Little graduated high school, and many Littles struggled with life after graduation.

This program supports Littles up to age 26 as they navigate this pivotal time in their lives. Big Futures offers additional guidance in helping young adult Littles make and implement educational and career choices.

Our goal is that Littles will be enrolled, employed, or enlisted after high school and earn a living wage by age 26.









HIGHLIGHT

Big Futures served 150 matches in 2024. 91% were enrolled in post-secondary education, in the military or were employed and making a livable wage.





GEORGE & DORETHA EDGECOMB



MENTORING CIRCLE

The Edgecomb family legacy is to uplift our youth, thereby Big Brothers Big Sisters is honored to form the George & Doretha Edgecomb Mentoring Circle to empower the potential of all children through mentoring relationships. The Edgecomb Mentoring Circle provides the opportunity to invest in our bold goal for all children to graduate with a plan for the future, through enrollment in higher education, enlistment in the military, or employment.

George Edgecomb was appointed the first African-American county judge in Hillsborough County in 1973 and now the County Courthouse bears his name. Hailing from East Tampa, George persevered in the face of adversity, working hard and embracing his innate leadership and change-making acumen. His tenacity would pay off — Judge Edgecomb was just 31 when he took the bench — all while serving on the Big Brothers Big Sisters Board of Directors and other community organizations.

Judge Edgecomb also volunteered as a mentor, or "Big" and wife Doretha provided mentorship to their "Little" alongside her husband. The Judge served three years before his death from leukemia, but his family and friends continue to make a big impact by empowering youth. Doretha championed education as a teacher, principal, and School Board member. Advocating for black children and teachers during school integration, The Children's Board named their Family Resource Center in her honor. George & Doretha's legacy continues with daughter Allison, a Hillsborough County School District Supervisor.



2024 LITTLE DEMOGRAPHICS

We serve youth who need us the most!



qualify for free or reduced lunch

79%

are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color)

73%

of our waiting list are boys waiting for a Big

62%

are aged 13 and above

40%

have an incarcerated immediate family member

BY THE NUMBERS

PRIVATE REVENUE \$2,788,119

GOVERNMENT REVENUE \$3,267,897

TOTAL REVENUE GROSS \$6,056,016

7% MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL

9% FUNDRAISING

FUNCTIONAL
EXPENSES

Please visit our agency website for complete financials: www.bbbstampabay.org



BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS LICENSE PLATE



Purchase our Big Brothers Big Sisters license plate today at any county tax collector's office and defend the potential of thousands of Littles across the state. Show off your license plate with **#Driving4Potential**

HIGHLIGHT

We receive \$25 per plate, generating \$282,312 in 2024 for our mentoring programs across Florida. Since the plate's debut in October 2017, it has generated over \$1.6 million for state agencies.



WHAT'S YOUR LEGACY?

The dedicated partners of our Legacy Society have chosen to support the potential of youth in our community through a planned estate gift of cash, property, or equity. As one of many options for supporting Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay, we are pleased to offer a way for donors to support our mission for generations. The benefits of making an estate gift extend beyond the recognition in our Annual Report, events throughout the year, and informative newsletters. Planned gifts can also reduce your income tax burden and offer substantial tax savings on appreciated properties and securities. Making a commitment to join the Legacy Society is a win for the children of our nine-county service area, your family, and you.

We thank the visionaries below who have made the decision to support our mission today — and tomorrow.

For more information, visit www.bbbstampabay.org/give/legacy-society

LEGACY SOCIETY

Mary Ann and Hunt Berryman
Tammy and Darrell Davis
Jane and Jamie Egasti
Nancy and David Fox
Mary Ann and Scott Fullerton
Taniquel Gray
Mary and Lonnie Hawkins
Amy and Jim Hollington
Lisa Letizio and Paul Jackson
Stephen Koch
Tim Langenback

Bruce Mackey
Dennis McLeod
Deborah and Hugh Miller
Cathy and Vincent Pavese
Susan Rolston
George Spowart
Pamme and Joel Taylor
Dina Vann
Karen and Paul Vincent
De Anna and Rodney Ward

IN MEMORIAM

BJ Altschul Ruth Davis Gary C. Graef Lois Kavalunas Thelma C. Kells Charles Manly Jack Mullong David Pratt Wilbur and Madonna Ptak Dr. Mary Ann Ratliff
Eugene Roberts
Patrick Sexton
Virginia M. Sharp
Sweet Alice Young

BIG IMPACT SOCIETY

Regular monthly support from donors within our Big Impact Society allows us to plan and budget to meet the needs of the children in our community. Every gift is appreciated and the steady cash flow that comes in from recurring donations allows us to fulfill our mission.

As a thank you for joining the Big Impact Society, you will receive special invitations and exciting updates throughout the year, but most importantly, you will be a "Defender of Potential".

CONNECT \$10 MONTHLY

Provides three training sessions preparing potential volunteers for their vital roles as Bigs

IGNITE \$25 MONTHLY

Provides activities for matches led by program staff

EMPOWER \$50 MONTHLY

Allows trained program staff to complete 30 match support calls to Bigs, Littles and families

DEFEND \$125 MONTHLY

Supports and maintains the cost of one match for one year

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE \$250 MONTHLY

Supports and maintains the cost of two matches for one year

JOIN THESE INDIVIDUALS IN OUR GIVING PROGRAM

www.bbbstampabay.org/give/big-impact-society

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