



Big Brothers Big Sisters of North America Coronavirus Task Force

A partnership between Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada (BBBSC) during this time of crisis

TAMPA, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, March 27, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Two national organizations representing hundreds of agencies and thousands of communities across North America have joined forces to collaborate in support of mentoring relationships that ignite the power, promise, and potential of youth during the coronavirus pandemic.

Big Brothers Big Sisters provide mentoring services to youth, ages 5 to young adulthood. [BBBSA](#) represents 240 local Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies in the United States, serving 5,000 communities; [BBBSC](#) represents 101 local Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies in Canada, serving 1,100 communities. The rapid spread of the coronavirus and important measures put in place to reduce the spread of the coronavirus are isolating the young people and families we serve, presenting serious challenges to their financial, emotional, and physical wellbeing. Across both nations, Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies are stepping up to keep Littles connected to their Bigs, provide moral support and essential resources to families. Unfortunately, the ripple effect of the coronavirus and the resulting economic downturn threaten the fundraising channels of local agencies and force cancellations of fundraising events that were critically important to sustain the organizations and continue needed mentoring services and family support. The Big Brothers Big Sisters of North America Coronavirus Task Force will work together to: 1) Identify funding that can be used to save agencies from closing their doors, 2) Align messaging, thought leadership, and best practices for the North American BBBS network, and 3) Pursue options for virtual engagement so the strong mentoring relationship continues between the mentor and mentee, as well as provide support for families as needed.

"We are focused on making sure our critical mission will continue in every community," said Pam Iorio, President & CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. "All of our agencies have been adversely affected by the pandemic and together with BBBS of Canada we will work to ensure our one-to-one mentoring programs can thrive."

"We continue to encourage the bonds of social interaction, albeit in a new and digital way during these challenging times of social distancing and self-isolation," said W. Matthew Chater, President and CEO, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada. "We will work together to ensure agencies can continue to provide these essential services and life-changing mentoring relationships for young people through this pandemic."

About Big Brothers Big Sisters

The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters is to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth. Big Brothers Big Sisters' evidence-based approach is designed to create positive youth outcomes, including educational success, avoidance of risky behaviors, higher aspirations, greater confidence, and improved relationships. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America was founded in 1904; Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada was established 106 years ago. For more information, visit www.bbbs.org and <https://bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/>.

Members of the 16-person Big Brothers Big Sisters of North American Coronavirus Task Force include:

BBBSA

Gale Nelson - President and CEO, BBBS Miami (Florida)
Amy Kuchta - CEO, BBBS of Southwest Michigan
Kalli Christ - Executive Director, BBBS of Acadiana (Louisiana)
Nichole Turgeon - President and CEO, BBBS of the Midlands (Nebraska)
Darcey Palmer Schultz - BBBS of Central Indiana
Jeremy Foster - CEO, BBBS of Metro Chicago (Illinois)
Betsy Fitzgerald - President and CEO, BBBS of the Heart of Georgia
Alicia Guevara - CEO, BBBS New York City (New York)
Beach Pace - CEO, BBBS of Columbia Northwest (Oregon)
Angela Reed Padilla - CEO, BBBS Central New Mexico
Kwame Johnson - President and CEO, BBBS of Metro Atlanta (Georgia)

BBBSC

Gurpreet Lail - President and CEO, BBBS of Calgary (Alberta)
Leanne Nicolle - President and CEO, BBBS of Toronto (Ontario)
Victor Roman - Executive Director, BBBS of Regina and Area (Saskatchewan)
Nick Sharpe - Executive Director, BBBS of Colchester (Nova Scotia)
Susan Ingram - Executive Director, BBBS of Ottawa (Ontario)

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