

Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego Co. Shares Local Impact as Parent Organization Releases Long-term Mentorship Study

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America's new study cites mentorship as a cost-effective solution to drive socioeconomic mobility for youths in San Diego and beyond



Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego County Logo

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Today, [Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego County](#) (BBBS of SDC) – the preeminent one-to-one youth mentoring organization serving the San Diego community – is [sharing case study information](#) in conjunction with the national release of a groundbreaking study on the transformative power of mentorship by parent organization – [Big Brothers Big Sisters of America](#). This study, conducted by leading researchers

from Harvard University and the U.S. Department of Treasury, reveals how mentorship programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters can help to reduce socioeconomic disparities over time, shaping young people's educational, economic, and social trajectories.



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"This study reinforces what we've seen in our Big Brothers Big Sisters San Diego community: Mentorship is a game-changer," said Tina Rose, CEO & President of Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego County. "It empowers youth to overcome barriers and unlocks their potential, shaping lives and closing the socioeconomic gap. We're proud to be

part of this movement and deeply dedicated to ensuring every child has the opportunity to succeed."

This research, rooted in three decades of data, provides compelling evidence that mentorship delivers long-lasting benefits, such as a 15% boost in earnings for participants, a 20% higher likelihood of college attendance, improved behavior, lower absenteeism, fewer school suspensions, stronger social bonds, a reduced dependency on social services, and long-term societal improvements.

These findings come at a critical time for youth and families in San Diego. In 2024, San Diego children had an 88.3% graduation rate and a 62.9% college attendance rate. Further, the projected local demand for workers in the innovation economy is set to double over the next few years.

Last year, over 1,200 Bigs and Littles in San Diego, along with their families, received vital support from BBBS of SDC, including training and resources from our professional staff, resulting in 96% of Littles graduating high school, 91% improved academics in Littles, 91% improved emotional regulation in Littles, and a 94% risk prevention in Littles thanks, in large part, to a 31 months average length of match and 49,000 hours of 1:1 mentoring.

A prime example of the life-changing power of mentorship is the inspiring story of Joe, a former Little Brother, who credits his Big Brother, Dave, for shaping him into the man he is today. Joe was raised by a single mom in a tough neighborhood in Vista, who worked 12-hour days to provide for him. When he was just 9 years old, he had the traumatic experience of having a gun pulled on him. To give him a better chance, his mother moved them to San Marcos and enrolled Joe in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, and he was matched with his Big Brother, Dave.

Dave was there for Joe through everything, from grabbing ice cream to staying by Joe's side when his mother faced major surgery to even being the best man at Joe's wedding, serving as a crucial male role model who would have a steadfast presence in his life for the next 30 years until his passing.

"Mentorship goes beyond helping youth. It changes lives, for both Bigs and Littles," said Claudia Aldana Robles, Program Director at Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego. "The lifelong bonds formed through these relationships shape futures in ways we never imagined. I'm grateful every day for the volunteers and families who make this work possible and for the privilege of witnessing lives transformed."

As we look toward the future, Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego remains committed to building meaningful, lasting relationships that empower children across San Diego County to achieve their full potential. The findings of this groundbreaking study further confirm what we've seen in our community for years—the power of mentorship to transform lives and break the cycle of poverty.

Together, we can create brighter futures, one relationship at a time.

About Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego County

Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego County (BBBS), a donor- and volunteer-supported network, has been impacting the lives of children since 1961 across San Diego County. BBBS holds itself accountable for children in its program to achieve measurable outcomes, such as educational

success, avoidance of risky behaviors, and higher aspirations, greater confidence, and better relationships. Partnering with parents/guardians, schools, corporations, and others in the community, Big Brothers Big Sisters carefully pairs children (“Littles”) with screened volunteer mentors (“Bigs”) and monitors and supports these one-to-one mentoring matches throughout their course. BBBS is proven to substantially help Littles navigate life’s challenges, to positively impact children, and empower them to succeed. BBBS is always looking for more mentors, mentees, and donors.

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