Big Sister Ivonne & Little Sister Amber
WE SEE significant positive effects when our students are enrolled in Big Brothers Big Sisters. They grow more confident in their abilities, feel more accepted, and report reduced negative behaviors. Outcomes like these are what it is all about. We are grateful for BBBS as our long-standing partner.

— CARLA SANTORNO
TACOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT

WE SEEK to create and support 1-to-1 mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.

VISION
All youth achieve their full potential.

ACCOUNTABILITY
We partner with parents/guardians, volunteers, and the community so that each child in our programs achieves higher aspirations and more educational success, engages in less risky behavior, and has greater confidence and better relationships.

IMPACT 2018
14,000 Volunteer hours in 2018
195 Families impacted in 2018

YOU are a part of an incredible movement that is inspiring more youth to achieve their full potential—and we can’t say thank you enough! Together, we are connecting with thousands of kids, mentors and families so our incredible kids can build their own paths to future success.

Tacoma and Pierce County stand together for the health and well-being of our youth. Our vision is for every one of our young people to have someone in their corner, to know that they are seen and that they matter.

So many of our local kids face significant life challenges; fortunately, mentoring is an equally significant support for social and emotional health. Thanks to supporters like you, Big Brothers Big Sisters is providing high-quality, 1-to-1 mentoring programs in Tacoma Pierce County to support individual lives and positively impact our community.

New enrichments are also creating a deeper mentoring experience for all. We’ve expanded services for teenagers looking for career exposure, immigrant and refugee families, and LGBTQ youth and mentors. Together, we are connecting mentors from all backgrounds, cultures, races, identities, and geographies with kids who are excited to ignite their own power and promise for a bright future.

But as the number of families that turn to Big Brothers Big Sisters grows, so too does the number of kids who are waiting for a mentor. We welcome your support in answering the call to action. We can all be a part of realizing the vision of a compassionate and accountable community. Doing so will change who we are collectively.

We are proud to be part of this community with you, proud to be part of the collective action for kids, proud of the vision of compassionate community. Thank you for helping us provide the high-quality mentoring that our families deserve.

Gratefully,
Diana Comfort
Executive Director
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tacoma-Pierce County

JOSH & ANTOINE MATCHED 2 YEARS

When Josh started middle school, it was a huge step for him. He had just moved to Tacoma from Kenya, and he wasn’t sure what to expect.

Fortunately, the staff at Josh’s school knew that Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring can make a huge difference for kids in transition. With Big Brother Antoine in his corner, Josh has dealt with teasing, worked to manage his emotions and connect with peers, and improved his performance at school.

KIDS’ POTENTIAL A BIGGER FUTURE
Many of our kids face overwhelming challenges that can derail their futures.

According to research from the National Institutes of Health, negative experiences—like poverty, family instability, having a loved one in jail, or being exposed to trauma—can affect a child’s ability to handle their emotions, trust others, and focus at school.

Kids react to an uncertain future by abandoning hope and engaging in risky behavior. Nearly 50% of males and 25% of females surveyed felt moderate or severe hopelessness, which predicts violent and aggressive interactions, substance use, sexual behavior, and accidental injury.

Almost one in nine teens and young adults doesn’t have access to people or opportunities that encourage them to develop the education, skills, social and emotional resources, and self-confidence they need to reach their full potential.

THE NEED IS URGENT

OBSTACLES OUR KIDS FACE IN TACOMA

- 46% have a parent or guardian who did not graduate from high school or earn a GED.
- 28% have an immediate family member who struggles with substance use or addiction.
- 27% have been homeless within the past 5 years.
- 71% live in a home without one or both parents.
- 12% have a loved one in the criminal justice system.
- 77% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, a key indicator of poverty.

290 kids in Pierce County are waiting for a Big Brother or Big Sister—a sign that now, more than ever, caring families see a Big Brother or Big Sister can be one of the most valuable friends in their kids’ lives.

WHY 1-TO-1 MENTORING WORKS

Research from the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University indicates children who do well despite serious hardship have had at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive adult.

These relationships buffer children from developmental disruption and help them build resilience and the skills they need to respond to adversity and thrive.

Big Brothers Big Sisters is an evidence-based mentoring organization that thoughtfully matches stable, caring adult mentors with children living with adversity.

Mentoring is proven to make a meaningful difference for youth. A mentor relationship lets a child know they have someone in their corner and they can navigate life’s challenges together.

Introducing youth to new experiences, opportunities, and career exploration activities helps close the opportunity and achievement gaps that exist for many kids in underserved communities. Over time, a caring volunteer can provide support that counteracts the effects of hardship, giving a child the ability to grow past struggles they face in life.

These 1-to-1 mentoring relationships help young people build perseverance and find their own path to success in life.

MENTORS HELP YOUTH SUCCEED AND OVERCOME ACADEMIC CHALLENGES*

- 52% less likely than their peers to skip a day of school when meeting regularly with their mentor.
- 55% of vulnerable youth are more likely to enroll in college than those who did not have a mentor.
- 71% of mentored youth do better in school.

* Public/Private Ventures Study of Big Brothers Big Sisters / The Mentoring Effect, 2014
**TOGETHER, WE HELP CLEAR THE PATH FOR YOUTH TO THRIVE**

Our cause is BIG. Our successes are BIG. And our future is undeniably BIG.

Because of YOU, we impacted the lives of 195 children and families in Tacoma-Pierce County in 2018. That number will continue to increase as we strive to provide mentors for the growing number of youth who are waiting for a Big Brother or Big Sister.

**OUR 1-TO-1 MENTORING PROGRAMS**

We serve youth in King, Pierce, and Kitsap counties through innovative mentoring programs in communities, schools, and workplaces.

**IN THE TACOMA-PIERCE COMMUNITY**

Our traditional community-based 1-to-1 mentoring takes place in neighborhoods and communities. Each match gets together for four hours per month to have fun and build a trusting relationship to help navigate life’s challenges.

**EMERGING PROGRAM – MENTORU**

MentorU is a mix of guided classroom curriculum, technology-supported and in-person 1-to-1 mentoring for high school students facing academic and personal challenges with a focus on career readiness and college preparation.

**BIG SIBS LITTLE SIBS**

Big Sibs Little Sibs is a fun after-school program for elementary school students who can benefit from the friendship and support of a “near peer” mentor. A part of the Expanded Learning Whole Child Initiative at Tacoma Public Schools, this program connects children at Delong Elementary in 1-to-1 mentoring relationships with older student-mentors.

**OUR FUTURE YOUTH SUCCESS INDICATORS WITH 1-TO-1 MENTORSHIP**

- 100% of our seniors graduated from high school in 2018.
- 74% have increased expectations for their future beyond high school.

- 89% said they felt accepted by their peers.
- 96% wanted to avoid risky behavior.
- 91% had a trusted adult in their life.
- 91% of youth said, “My relationship with my mentor is very important.”
- 67% improved or maintained their grades.
- 85% reported they trusted their parents.
SISTERS OF THE YEAR
ALEXA & AMANDA | MATCHED 7 YEARS

I was nervous when I first went to meet Alexa. She was 9 years old and absolutely full of energy. I was 24 years old and had no idea who One Direction was. Alexa’s wise beyond her years. She speaks up for those who can’t speak for themselves, she’s kind, and she’s brave. She also has the best taste in music. It’s been incredible to see her go from so unsure of herself to so confident. She thinks very deeply and cares about matters a lot of people her age don’t even recognize. I wish I had been more like her when I was her age, and I couldn’t be more proud of the growth she’s made throughout the last 7 years.

– Big Sister Amanda

BROTHERS OF THE YEAR
RUSSELL & DAN | MATCHED 2 YEARS

Russell was a quiet 13-year-old who struggled with anger and motivation. His mother was raising him alone after Russell’s father died. After their initial shyness, they discovered a shared love for mechanics and figuring out how stuff works. They often talk about Russell’s future and all the places he could go.

“Russell has a big heart,” Dan says. “He is not willing to see anyone hurt or bullied.”

“If I were to tell Dan one thing,” Russell says, “it would be that you’ve been the best support. You are always there for me.”

– Big Brother Dan

SIGNATURE EVENTS

Every year, we host a variety of signature events to raise critical funding, celebrate our special supporters and socialize in style. We pause to acknowledge how our generous donors and volunteers provide mentors to kids in our community who need it the most and help us develop more college grads, community leaders and entrepreneurs. Together, we are deeply affecting our local schools, workplaces, neighborhoods and the entire Tacoma-Pierce County. Without you, fulfilling our dream would be impossible.

OPEN HOUSE

Our fall 2018 Open House celebrated our new Tacoma office, our updated Big Brothers Big Sisters brand, and the new partnerships and programs that benefit mentors and kids in our community. Together with our partners, community supporters, families, kids, and mentors, we honored our luminous history and looked forward to an even brighter future!

KICKOFF FOR KIDS

Hosted by Tacoma Defiance and BCRA, the Kickoff for Kids brings together dozens of youth, mentors, families, and supporters to Cheney Stadium for a fun evening in the sun. Before the game, community and corporate stakeholders meet in the beautiful 1882 Club to learn more about Big Brothers Big Sisters and how they can support local kids.

THE BIG INVITATIONAL

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound partners with NAIOP South Sound Committee for the BIG Invitational golf tournament. Professionals from the commercial real estate and construction industries come together to play a round in support of kids in our community. Networking for a good cause is par for the course!
He’s one of the smartest kids I have ever met. He may struggle sometimes, but he gets his act together when it counts. I learned how big of an influence society and people have on a young man who is trying to be “somebody” and wanting to fit in. It’s just as tough for him as when I was his age. Patience and just paying attention to your Little go a long way. If you do those steps, everything else will fall in place.

– Big Brother Joe

The development and well-being of Tacoma’s youth are a reflection of the overall health and vitality of our community. Big Brothers Big Sisters’ mission provides crucial support to some of our most vulnerable young people, and I greatly admire the impacts made by their high-quality youth mentoring program. An investment in their work is an investment in Tacoma.

– Victoria Woodards, Tacoma Mayor

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED

1  BE A MENTOR OR HELP US FIND MENTORS

For just a few hours every month, you can give a child the invaluable gift of friendship. Learn more at MentorTacoma.org.

If you host a lunch and learn at your workplace, Big Brothers Big Sisters staff will give a presentation at your company so that you and your coworkers can get involved together.

2  MAKE A FINANCIAL GIFT

Move kids off our waitlist and into a positive, professionally supported relationship with a mentor. To make a life-changing gift today, visit MentorTacoma.org/donate.

3  DONATE CLOTHING AND HOUSE ITEMS

Change a life by simply cleaning out your closet. Find a drop-off location near you or host a donation bin at your workplace. Visit MentorTacoma.org/donate to find out more.

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Little Brother Dominic & Big Brother Joel

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