

Big Brothers Big Sisters Fact Sheet

Big Brothers Big Sisters helps at-risk children beat the odds. Through the generosity of a variety of funding sources including individual donors, corporations, governmental entities, and foundations we have the resources necessary to carry out our mission, which includes conducting background checks on volunteers to ensure child safety. Donor support also allows us to provide ongoing support for children, families, and volunteers to build and sustain long-lasting relationships, which are key to successful mentoring. Big Brothers Big Sisters is proven by independent research to improve children's odds for succeeding in school, behaving nonviolently, avoiding drugs and alcohol, and breaking negative cycles. Headquartered in Philadelphia and with nearly 400 agencies across the country, Big Brothers Big Sisters serves a quarter of a million children.

Impact

Independent research shows Big Brothers Big Sisters has a measurable, positive impact in children's lives. In a nationwide study, Little Brothers and Little Sisters were:

- 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs
- 27% less likely to begin using alcohol
- 52% less likely to skip school
- 37% less likely to skip a class
- 33% less likely to hit someone
- more confident of their performance in schoolwork
- getting along better with their families

Core Programs

- Community-Based Mentoring – traditional Big Brothers Big Sisters one-to-one mentoring, a few hours a couple of times a month.
- School-Based Mentoring – one-to-one mentoring that takes place at school.

Organization

- Nearly 400 affiliates across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam. Each affiliate is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with its own staff, budget and board of directors.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the national organization, sets and measures program standards, assists in fundraising and volunteer recruitment, and provides grant funding to our affiliates.

Ratings

- [Charity Navigator, 4-star \(highest\) rating](#) for organizational efficiency
- [Better Business Bureau](#), Big Brothers Big Sisters of America meets all of its standards for Charity Accountability
- [Independent Charities Seal of Excellence](#)

History in Brief

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America's roots date to 1904, when Ernest Coulter, a New York City court clerk, established Big Brothers to match caring adults with young people who were getting into trouble. At the same time, members of Ladies of Charity were befriending girls who had come through the New York Children's Court. That group would later become Catholic Big Sisters, and subsequently, Big Sisters International. These groups worked independently until 1977, when Big Brothers Association and Big Sisters International joined forces and became Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Big Brothers Big Sisters International was founded in 1998, and now serves children in [12 countries](#).