

Annual Report
2007



The Power to Change Lives



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of New York City

Each “Big” and “Little” Experiences the Power.

Our Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and the children they mentor feel the power of possibilities at their very first meeting — the excitement, anticipation, a sense of hope that their new friend will bring something special into their lives.

As they journey down the path together and their relationships grow, they realize that the mentoring experience has changed their lives forever.

For over one hundred years, Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City has empowered tens of thousands of youth and adults, facilitating life-long positive changes for as many “Bigs” and “Littles.”

But the power does not end with the mentor and child. The changes impact the youth’s families, including parents and siblings, as well as friends, teachers, colleagues, neighbors, communities and future generations. Everyone touched by the lives of those in mentoring relationships feels the power, sees the changes and celebrates the results.

This annual report illustrates the power of change. It all starts with that first BBBS NYC meeting of two strangers — a caring adult and a child in need.

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The power to change lives

This report is the story of changing the world one life at a time.

Parents worry not only about the paths their own lives will take, but the lives of their children. With often a sense of hopelessness and uncertainty about their children's futures, they turn to BBBS NYC, where we have the power to change lives for the better.

The positive impact of two people, often from divergent backgrounds, whose paths cross, uniting them in a unique bond of trust and friendship, is immeasurable. The support and guidance of a Big Brother or Big Sister enables at-risk children to take new paths and have brighter futures. Through friendship, caring, and commitment, mentors help their Little Brothers and Little Sisters consider new options, make better choices, and break down barriers.

The children in our mentoring programs may be the first members of their families to finish high school, or go to college. They may be the first to learn English, or the first sibling to avoid arrest or incarceration. Unlike many of their peers, our teen mothers choose not to repeat an unwanted pregnancy. The road less traveled is often the most rewarding and the long path seems less daunting when traveled hand-in-hand with a friend.

As you read the following stories of lives changed dramatically and in so many ways, please remember that you too can be part of this power to change lives. By supporting BBBS NYC, your donations can help make the kind of changes communicated on these pages, which take place in every neighborhood in this city.

With this annual report, we introduce you to Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City's new logo and tagline, "The Power to Change Lives." Moving forward we plan to incorporate this message of action, hope, results and rewards into all of our materials, since changing lives is one of the most powerful and priceless achievements we can make in our society.

BBBS NYC serves as a symbol of hope for children and their families, and for volunteers and donors who want to make a lasting, positive difference in the lives of New York City's children.

Laura Parsons
Chairman

Katherine C. Linder
President

Allan Luks
Executive Director



**Big Brothers Big Sisters
of New York City**

THE POWER TO CHANGE LIVES™

Our Programs

BBBS NYC responds to the long-term needs of our “Littles” with innovative programs that make a difference not only to the lives of our youngsters, but also to the life of our city. Our programs have evolved to meet the growing responsibilities over our 103-year history. Through our programs, we have the power to change so many lives.

COMMUNITY MENTORING PROGRAM

The foundation of our organization for a century, this program matches low-income youth, often from single-parent homes, between the ages of 7 and 18, with a carefully screened adult role model 21 years or older. “Bigs” meet with youngsters at least every other week for four hours and maintain regular phone contact. The “Bigs” are always on-call. Each one-to-one relationship is also supported by a social worker responsible for supervision.

In addition to BBBS NYC’s headquarters at 223 East 30th Street in Manhattan and an office at 245 Fifth Avenue, the agency has Community Mentoring Program offices located in Jamaica, Queens and the South Bronx.

Research has found that youth participating in these programs show a 67% improvement in school attendance, a 69% rise in grades and a 91% boost in self-esteem, a 77% increase in self-confidence, and a 64% improvement in relationships with peers.

JUVENILE JUSTICE INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PROGRAMS

These comprehensive citywide programs match an array of court-involved and at-risk youth under the age of 18 with screened and trained volunteers. The police, family and criminal courts, probation, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and social service personnel refer participating youth. BBBS NYC provides individual mentoring programs to arrested youth and children with a parent or sibling in prison.

The program has yielded a high degree of success, with an overall recidivism rate for male participants of 23%, versus a 46% re-arrest rate for non-participants. To date, only 5% of female participants have been re-arrested, compared to a 27% rate nationally.



PHOTO: ALLAN LUKS

The power to view the world anew

Dr. Chaitanya Chavda, a pediatrician whose specialty is the unborn and newborn child, is very concerned with the influences that can shape a child’s life from the earliest stages. Through personal observations, Dr. Chavda believes that family influences are critical for the healthy growth of children.

After graduation from medical school in India, he immigrated with his wife and family to Detroit, where he saw inner-city youth who lacked a strong family foundation, many of whom were involved with street violence.

When his residency transferred him to Brookdale Hospital, in the tough East New York area of Brooklyn, Dr. Chavda became fearful because he witnessed similar conditions: a regular flow of youth with gunshot wounds, young pregnant girls, and drug abuse. He saw no way to stop these problems, because so many youngsters lacked family guidance to prevent them from getting into trouble or hurting others around them.

“You don’t see such problems in India,” Dr. Chavda explains, “even with the poor. When you see the children in the hospital who don’t have that family force to help them accept society’s values, you become afraid of what can happen to them, and what they’ll do.”

Dr. Chavda never had social or personal contact with an African-American or Hispanic youngster until a physician in his pediatric unit organized a mentoring program through BBBS NYC, called “Mentoring through Medicine.” The unit’s doctors became mentors to neighborhood youth, meeting every other week at the hospital during the school year, spending time one-to-one as well as in group activities. Dr. Chavda was matched with Jose, a 14-year-old from East New York who wanted to be a paramedic.

Guidance as the Key to Change

Dr. Chavda was surprised at what he learned. Besides wanting to be a paramedic, Jose, who lives in a single-parent home, had set other positive goals for himself but he had no idea what he needed to do to achieve them. Dr. Chavda impressed upon him the importance of finishing school and avoiding street violence as a first step. Through his relationship with Jose, Dr. Chavda began seeing the neighborhood youth differently. He no longer feared these young people, and started to recognize their potential. Dr. Chavda worries that there will never be enough mentors for every young person-at-risk to help them determine their own roadmap to achieve success. BBBS NYC is here to meet that challenge.

The power to open a world of opportunity



It was 1989 when Anahad, an eight-year-old from the Lower East Side, met Steven, his Big Brother, for the first time. A shy boy living with a single mom and six siblings in a housing project, he had no idea what to expect from this 34-year-old finance professional. His mother had enrolled all seven children in BBBS

NYC mentoring programs because she knew it would be important for them to have positive role models in their lives, but she never could have imagined the impact this relationship would have on Anahad.

Anahad had never been outside of his neighborhood, and did not care much about school. Overwhelmed by his Big

Brother who offered to spend time with him, he didn't speak for their first three get-togethers. In time, Anahad began to open up. They explored the city, attended sporting events as well as group activities arranged through BBBS NYC, and pursued the goal of eating at every pizzeria in the city, since pizza was Anahad's favorite food. After the fun, they always spent time talking, and Steven would impress upon Anahad the importance of school as the way to find success in life.

Anahad took his Big Brother's words to heart, and began trying harder in school. Steven recalls attending Anahad's sixth grade graduation where he was told by the teachers what a good student Anahad had become. Steven proudly told Anahad that if he continued on this upward path, the sky would be the limit. With Steven's inspiration, support and guidance, Anahad went on to become valedictorian of his high school class, and received a New York Times Scholarship. He was the recipient of the Ron Brown Fellowship, and was also awarded a four-year scholarship to Yale University. Anahad went on to become a staff columnist at the New York Times (the first NYT Scholarship recipient to become a staff writer at the newspaper). He currently writes a weekly column for the Science Times section, and is also a published author.

A Way Out of a Neighborhood and to See a Different Future

Reflecting back, Anahad attributes Steven's presence in his life as a driving force behind his success. Most of his previous neighborhood peers still live in the projects, many are in jail, and some have died. As a young man he recognized that he had potential, but he didn't care and didn't see how it applied to his life in his neighborhood. Steven took him outside these "borders," opened him up to new possibilities and showed him that the key to success was within him. "Steven was the one, steady, positive force in my life that I could count on," he explains. And when Anahad was recently interviewed on "Good Morning America" about his book, it was no surprise whom he called afterwards to get feedback.



PHOTO: AVITAL ARONOWITZ

WORKPLACE MENTORING CENTER

Our Workplace Mentoring Center (WMC), a collaborative effort between schools, corporations and BBBS NYC, introduces students to the world of business through a one-to-one relationship. Every other week, teenagers are brought to companies in New York City where they meet with a Big Brother or Sister. By bringing students on-site, not only do youngsters bond with an adult volunteer, but they also learn they can make it in the business world.

91% of students completing the program want to go on to college, 87% report an improvement in school, and 88% believe they can pursue a business career. In addition, 89% of the adult volunteers reported an increase in self-esteem and 86% felt their work life improved.

WMC Sponsors: 2007-2008

American Eagle Outfitters	JPMorgan Chase
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The Bank of New York Mellon	Merrill Lynch
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Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.	Morgan Stanley
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Deutsche Bank	PricewaterhouseCoopers
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Federal Bureau of Investigation	Shearman & Sterling LLP
Goldman, Sachs & Co.	Sony Corporation of America
Guardian Life Insurance	UBS
Hospital for Special Surgery	US Attorney's Office
	Verizon
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BUILDING FUTURES PROGRAM

Adolescents transitioning out of foster care are a uniquely vulnerable part of the foster care population. Many will not return home to their parents or be adopted. Rather, they will age out of the foster care system without jobs, stable homes, savings, or people they can count on. These teenagers are matched with a "Big" and receive intense professional support.

77% of participating youth improved self-confidence.

The power to advocate and communicate

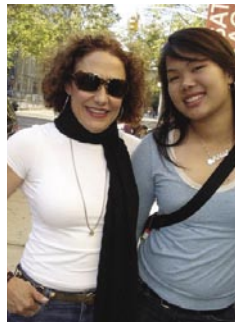
As an adult, Mary Marino, 52, often felt uncomfortable around teenagers. Mary had moved to New York from West Virginia to pursue a career in the fashion industry. Six years ago she decided it was time to volunteer and contacted BBBS NYC to become a mentor.

She was matched with Patricia, then 11, a youngster who had recently moved to Chinatown and was attending school and learning English at the same time. Patricia's parents, born in China, spent several years living in Panama and eight years ago immigrated to New York. Because her parents worked long hours, Patricia and her siblings were often on their own. Mary's concern prompted her to call the school guidance counselor and was told that being alone was common for children of Chinese immigrants.

A Play Brings a New Understanding

When matched, Patricia questioned if she could become close to such an "old" woman and assumed that she would be very bored with her Big Sister. It wasn't until they went to see the play "The Prince and The Pauper," written more than one hundred years ago by Mark Twain that a breakthrough occurred. They both say the play — the story of two boys who exchange roles — was the turning point that helped them realize, that despite their differences, they could still appreciate each other.

Slowly they found common interests, including cooking, and Patricia began spending time at her Big Sister's home, cooking together as well as with Mary's friends.



But, when Patricia started high school, Mary noticed changes in her behavior: she became more withdrawn. With Patricia's permission, Mary again called the guidance counselor to better understand the issues, and was told that Patricia was failing badly and was being held back. Since Patricia's parents didn't know how to be an educational advocate for their daughter, Mary began to learn more about the school system and seek a new high school for Patricia. She was able to get Patricia into Manhattan's Cascades High School, with only 200 students. There, teachers and students knew Patricia first hand, and being absent would not go unnoticed. Within this new environment, she began to improve right away.

Patricia now wants to complete high school and go on to college. She says the age gap that once separated her from Mary is gone, and what was once a seemingly insurmountable challenge could now be overcome.



Finding similarities more powerful than differences

"I used to think Chinese people were from a very different culture that was hard to understand, and they didn't like non-Chinese people, so why try to understand them?" That was how Andre Kursancew, a 26-year-old, Caucasian Ivy-League graduate working at American Express, described his perceptions before coming to New York City. He hadn't known any Chinese people growing up in South Florida.

When Andre decided to become a volunteer in his company's Workplace Mentoring Program, he was assigned to mentor 13-year-old Michael, an eighth grader in Chinatown. Michael lives with his divorced mother, who works long hours at different jobs. Michael had been a "Little" in the program previously, and his "Big," who was Chinese, moved away. Michael wondered if it was possible for two such different people to actually bond.

Michael met with Andre at American Express every other week during the school year. "At first, Michael didn't speak to me, and wouldn't make eye contact. My stereotypes were reinforced. I would ask him questions like, 'Do you like school?' or 'What are you doing for the summer?' and he wouldn't answer, or just give one-word answers. He also would suddenly speak in Chinese to other students in the program, making me feel even further apart from him," notes Andre.

A Photo Reveals More Than Just Faces

A month later, they had a breakthrough when Michael observed a photograph on Andre's desk of his mother and her boyfriend. Andre shared with Michael that his own mother was a single parent. By recognizing they had a similar parental situation, they found a way to connect.

Michael constantly spoke about his cousins and other relatives and how much he looked forward to being with them. They also began discussing how they each shared a strong sense of family. As they communicated more, Andre learned that Chinese culture considered it disrespectful for a youngster to look directly into the eyes of an adult. He now knew why Michael looked away from him when they talked.

When they first met, Michael played Chinese poker with Andre, and Andre always lost. Andre didn't understand the rules, "But Michael taught me the rules, and now I beat him about half the time. The law of averages is the same for all of us," Andre explains.

The two now see beyond their differences and focus on what they have in common — a deeper understanding and respect.

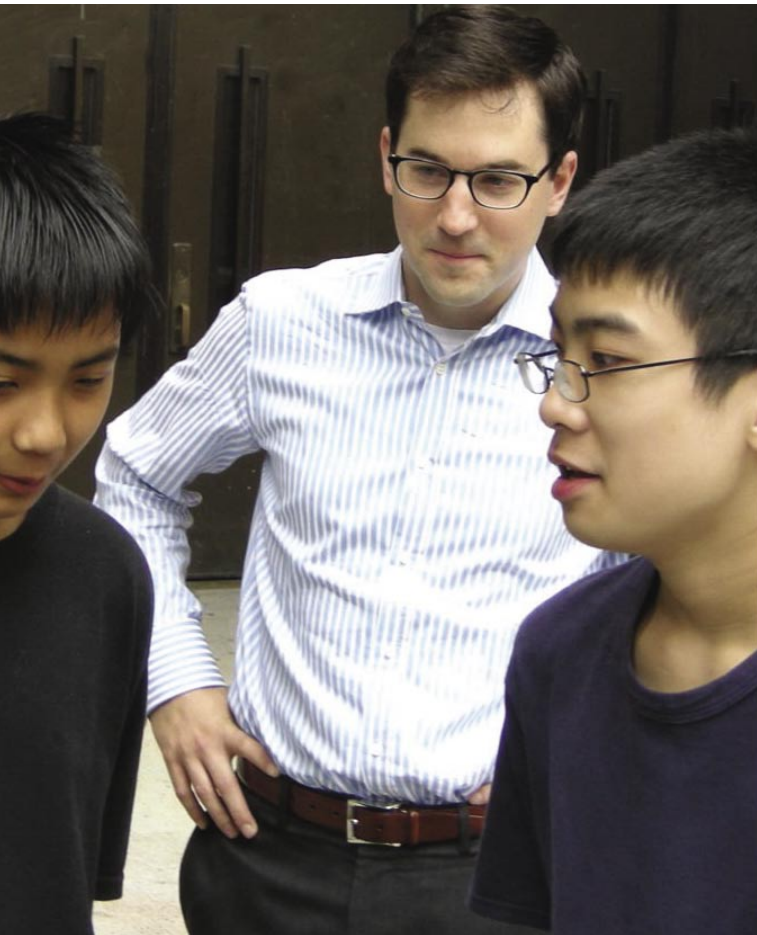


PHOTO: ALLAN LUKS



NEW AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The program helps immigrant youth overcome many obstacles. Adjusting to a new culture, language and customs, these youngsters often experience feelings of loneliness, isolation and prejudice. Participants in the program represent over 50 different nations.

96% of youth who were matched for one year showed significant improvement in psychological resiliency.

YOUNG MOTHERS PROGRAM

This program provides special training to female mentors who give emotional support to pregnant teens or teenage mothers. In addition, social workers provide housing, health care, career, education and child care information. Through these matches, the teenage mothers increase their feeling of self-worth and learn to become more self-sufficient. Research shows that connecting young mothers to society enables them to avoid further unwanted pregnancies and long-term dependence on welfare.

94% of the young mothers showed measurable improvement in school performance, motivation and attendance after being matched for at least six months.

INCREDIBLE KIDS PROGRAM

This program uses the proven one-to-one mentoring model to help low-income youth, between the ages of 7 and 18 who have disabilities, overcome the effects of social and educational exclusion. Mentors must show a commitment to working with this particularly vulnerable young population. They receive specialized training on disabilities and how to provide empowering support. The program also includes special group activities that provide fun and positive challenges. In addition, support services are provided to parents and siblings.

91% of the parents said the mentor had helped their child feel as capable as anyone else.

The power to be a better parent

Service is the rent you pay for being a citizen of the earth." When Matt Flynn saw that quote on a wall of a building he agreed, because that's how he felt about becoming a Big Brother. He always knew he wanted to give something back, but after the 9/11 tragedy devastated his downtown community, he felt the time was right to volunteer.

Dimitri, an eight-year-old from the South Bronx who lost his closest male role model on 9/11 started acting out at school and getting into fights, so his mother enrolled him in the BBBS NYC 9/11 program.

As a child of a single working parent from one of the city's poorest neighborhoods, Dimitri did not get a chance to get out much. That changed when he was matched with Matt, a professional photographer and father of a 12-year-old daughter.

While Matt could see that Dimitri enjoyed having a mentor who cared about him and took him places, he also observed that his daughter took pride in his volunteering activity. "She thought it was great that I was doing this," he comments.

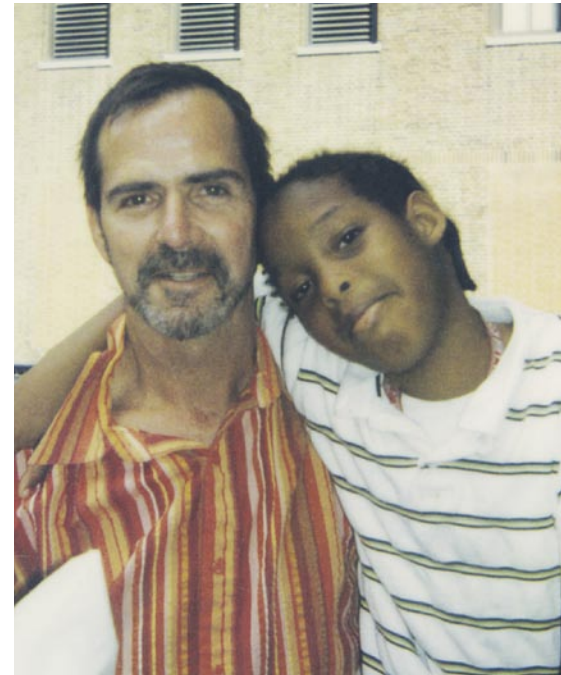
A New Perspective as a Parent

Matt felt that his mentoring experience improved his own parenting skills, allowing him to be more patient and tolerant of his own child's choices. "Being a mentor to another child gives you some perspective when it comes to your own," adding that it allowed him to step back and view his own daughter as more of an individual, not a clone.

Matt and Dimitri spent four years together, until Dimitri's family moved out of state. The two remain in touch, and Matt feels confident that Dimitri is on solid footing as he enters his teenage years. "He's a good kid, and I've always told him that. I tried to be positive when I was with him and help him see that he can create a good life for himself."

Looking back, mentoring also had a healing effect on Matt. "I don't think I wanted to admit to myself how much 9/11 really affected me, but spending time with Dimitri helped me turn my feelings into something positive."

His daughter, now 16, also feels changed by the experience. She, too, volunteers with younger children after school. Seeing a parent give back to someone less fortunate sparked her own desire to help others.



Finding the power within to pursue dreams

Evina Scott moved to New York after college to start a job as a retail merchandising executive at Macy's. Shortly after, she attended an employee volunteer fair and met representatives from BBBS NYC, who told her about the need for mentors residing in the Bronx. She was matched in the Young Mothers Program with Marsha, a 17-year-old who had a one-year-old daughter, Kayla. Marsha's previous Big Sister had moved away, and she was eager to have another Big Sister.

Only 23 years old, Evina worried that Marsha would not think she had much to offer in terms of guidance and support. Marsha was quite shy and closed off, so it was a slow process of getting to know each other. In addition to her own daughter, Marsha frequently cared for her two younger siblings because her mother, a single parent, worked long hours as a nurse. Marsha felt that she had a lot of responsibilities and little time for herself or her schoolwork.

A Concert Changes Everything

Things changed between the two when Evina received a call from their BBBS case manager who had received last minute tickets to an Eminem-50 Cent concert. They quickly arranged childcare and the two enjoyed a fabulous evening. During the concert, Marsha saw her "Big" dancing and singing all the words, and realized that this was someone she could have fun with.



They laughed the whole night, and suddenly the invisible barriers were gone.

Now more than two and a half years into their relationship, they truly feel like sisters. Evina encouraged Marsha to finish high school and not take a break before starting college, worried that it would be harder in the future to return to school. Evina helped with Marsha's college applications and essays, and she was accepted to

Brooklyn College last year. Concerned about childcare for Kayla while attending school, Evina encouraged Marsha to do some research and she found a program that worked with students in her situation. Recently, Marsha was able to arrange for Kayla to stay with relatives in Jamaica and enrolled her in a pre-school program so she can take a full semester's course load to speed up her graduation timetable. She is now able to hold a job while going to college and Kayla simultaneously receives a quality early education.

Marsha is on her way to obtaining her college degree, with plans to become a nurse. Evina loves the fact that the formerly shy girl now picks up the phone regularly to share news, ask advice and just talk. And the same holds true for Evina, who couldn't wait to call Marsha to share the news of her recent engagement. That kind of open communication and support for each other is a powerful bond.



Evina with Kayla

EAST NEW YORK FAMILY CARE AND MENTORING PROGRAM

Located in East New York, Brooklyn, this program aims to prevent foster care placement of children and adolescents from homes that are facing challenges. It provides a full range of preventive and supportive counseling, including mentoring relationships for the children. One of the mentoring programs, "Mentoring through Medicine," is in partnership with physicians at Brookdale Hospital. There is also significant support for the parents and guardians to help stabilize their lives.

98% of the children and families avoided foster care placement.

HOUSING AUTHORITY MENTORING PROGRAM

This initiative provides on-site mentoring to youth in public housing and the surrounding neighborhoods. It emphasizes the recruitment of mentors who attend local colleges and live in the community.

Without effective intervention strategies, 70% of these children will commit criminal offenses.

SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAM

Adult volunteers visit participating schools on their lunch hour or before school begins to meet their "Littles." During the time spent together, the two can have personal discussions, do homework or study together, play educational games, or use the time however needed. An on-site BBBS social worker oversees the program and provides on-going counseling and support.

Research shows significant personal and academic improvement — 67% of participants showed improved school achievement, 69% have better school attendance and 62% indicated increased trust in teachers.

The power to turn a bad experience into something positive

Michelle recalls that initial moment, nine years ago, when she was a 15-year-old meeting her Big Sister, Ana, for the first time. "She seemed really nervous, really eager to make me comfortable," adding, "She seemed so interested in me."

Michelle's parents had divorced when she was young, and her younger brother had recently been diagnosed with schizophrenia, so her single mother felt that Michelle needed some positive guidance and support while she concentrated on her son's condition. Michelle was also beginning to hang out with a crowd that was less focused on school, and her grades were slipping.

Their relationship grew slowly over time. They got to know each other by doing various activities such as going to the park, movies, and lunch. One thing they had in common was their unique ethnic backgrounds: Michelle is of Chinese and Puerto Rican descent while Ana is of Bolivian and French descent.

Ana stressed the importance of education, and the two spent many visits at the bookstore, searching for books that Michelle would find of interest. Ana also helped Michelle with her schoolwork, particularly in the area of math where Michelle was struggling. Since Ana had majored in math in college, she was able to share study tips with Michelle. In time, Michelle's grades improved and she became more motivated. She went on to graduate from Hunter College and is now applying to law school.

A Person to Turn to During a Difficult Time

Shortly after the two met, Michelle was date raped. Ana's emotional support, guidance and attention was a huge help in Michelle's recovery. With Ana's encouragement, and support, Michelle was able to turn that terrible experience into something positive by organizing V-Day (the global movement to stop violence against women and girls) and the play "The Vagina Monologues" at Hunter College. The event, attended by nearly 1,000 people, was the most successful V-Day event in the school's history.

Today, Michelle and Ana are still in touch. Over their nine-year relationship Ana went on to obtain her Masters in secondary math education, got married, and recently started a family. Michelle says that watching Ana go through these stages of life helped her set standards for her own relationships. She has learned by watching Ana to be confident and maintain her sense of self. "I know Ana will always be there for me."



The power to give back after receiving so much

Marjorie's first contact with BBBS NYC was 16 years ago, when her son, Robert, was 12. As a single mother living in the Bronx, she felt her son could use a positive male role model and someone to talk to about the things he couldn't discuss with his mother.

Robert was matched with Bill, a lawyer from Manhattan, who became an important part of both of their lives. Bill took Robert to ball games, played sports with him in the park, and spent lots of time talking with Robert, who began to open up not only with Bill, but with his mother as well. Marjorie attributes the Big Brother relationship with helping her and her son become closer. Bill also helped Robert focus on school, and even met with Robert and his teacher after a tense incident in school. Subsequently, Marjorie saw a significant change in Robert's attitude toward school and he went on to graduate, attend college, and became a social worker.



After spending five years together, Bill moved to Florida, but Robert and Bill remain in touch to this day, and Marjorie and Bill also communicate regularly. Recently, Robert has decided to change careers and Bill is helping Robert with law school applications

A "Little" Grows Up and a Mom Becomes a "Big"

But the journey did not end with the Big Brother match. With her son grown and living on his own, Marjorie felt it was time to give something back to her community. She contacted BBBS NYC and began volunteering, spreading the word about the benefits of mentoring and helped to recruit volunteers. Two years ago she decided to become a Big Sister, herself, and was matched with 10-year-old Janet.

Because Janet was a very quiet girl from the Bronx, Janet's mother felt her daughter needed someone to talk to. It took time for Janet to trust and open up to her "Big", and now Marjorie gets to enjoy spending time with a pre-teen girl (which she never experienced with her only son) and they speak



regularly on the phone. "I feel needed, and it makes me feel good that she knows that I am there for her, and she can pick up the phone any time she needs me to listen," Marjorie explains. With Janet on the cusp of adolescence, having someone to rely on will become even more crucial, as Janet moves into the next stage of her life. And at the same time, Marjorie will watch her son, now in his late 20's, segue into the next stage of his life.

FDNY PROGRAM

Developed in conjunction with the New York City Fire Department, this program matches youth who lost a firefighter parent on September 11th with mentors who work in the fire department. In addition, they participate in group activities organized by the Kids Connection, a FDNY-run organization that supports bereaved fire department families. The FDNY handles recruitment of both volunteers and youth for the program, while BBBS NYC provides the social workers to oversee the matches.

Surveys indicate that 60% of participants express less fear about self and family and 56% have improved ability to concentrate at home and school.

SEPTEMBER 11TH PROGRAM

This program provides long term mentoring for children who lost a parent or close relative in the World Trade Center attacks. It also provides professionally supervised, caring, adult mentors for children seriously touched by the events of September 11, including children whose families suffered economic distress from the World Trade Center attack and children who have had increased difficulty at school or at home because of 9/11.

Research has shown that for this population, having a stable adult in a child's life, who provides consistent friendship, reassurance, safety and security, all of which a Big Brother/Big Sister relationship does, is the number one factor in preventing the development of serious problems, such as post traumatic stress disorder.

Children in this program have demonstrated an average decrease of 51% in symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder after one year of the mentoring relationship, and a decrease of 61% after two years.



The power to change perceptions

The Federal Law Enforcement Foundation started in 1988 and raises money to support programs that help improve the relationship between law enforcement and the community. In 2005 the foundation funded a Workplace Mentoring Program through BBBS NYC at the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) offices in Manhattan. Employees were paired with at-risk youth from a local public school on site, meeting every other week throughout the school year. This was the first time a federal agency participated in a Workplace Mentoring program.

At first, officials at the DEA were concerned that they might not have enough employees interested in volunteering, but the response was overwhelming. After going through the match process, 15 youths were matched with 15 DEA employees, including enforcement agents, diversion investigators and support staff. All the match relationships proved to be very successful and nearly all matches are still together, going into their third school year.

John Gilbride, the Special Agent in Charge of the DEA offices in New York, helps run the program (and is a "Big" in the program, too). Gilbride felt that the relationship between the officers and the "Littles" is particularly enjoyable for his staff because they embrace the opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of children in the community. "We're often viewed as the bad guys, so it's great to show these kids our human side in a relaxed environment, and demonstrate what we do." The officers appreciate the opportunity to help a young person at a critical time in their development, and introduce other



avenues available to them. Gilbride adds that all of the “Littles” and “Bigs” have returned year after year to the program which means they are getting something out of the experience.

An Entire Organization Thrives on its Participation

Gilbride explains that the organization, with nearly 700 employees, feels the enthusiasm when the children come for their visit. In fact, the entire staff got involved with a project where they re-created a drug investigation process. They planted clues around the office, helped the students set up surveillance cameras, had them obtain search warrants (with real judges coming in to hear the evidence), find evidence and witnesses to testify, and finally presenting their cases to a judge.

Everyone experienced the excitement over the weeks, and was reminded of their early days in law enforcement when everything seemed new.

In addition, more than 100 DEA employees participated in the past two annual BBBS “Run/Walk for Kids,” and in both years the DEA won the award for most participants. Anthony Bergamo, Chairman of the Law Enforcement Foundation, reports that of all the programs they fund, the mentoring program is one of the most satisfying. Based on its success, the Foundation has opted to increase funding to expand the program to other federal agencies, including the FBI and the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Southern District, enabling 50 more matches in the coming year. “Small successes build big successes, and when a child feels special they feel good about themselves,” he explains, adding that the volunteers also get a great deal out of the relationship, too.



The power to find peace within turmoil

Growing up in Harlem in the 1950’s, 12-year old Richardine started playing hooky from school. She was sent to the family court where she was assigned a mentor through Big Sisters of NYC. Helene became her Big Sister.

Helene opened the world up to Richardine, taking her not only to the movies, the circus and plays, but to museums and libraries, all of which were new experiences for her. Helene had Richardine read aloud to her from books in the library, and then moved on to newspapers where she learned about what was going on in the world. “She showed me another side of life in so many ways,” Richardine explains.

While the pair often received stares from strangers because they were of different races, Richardine learned the true meaning of friendship from her mentor. Helene taught her patience and perseverance. Despite coming from a home filled with turmoil, Helene showed Richardine how to find peace within herself.

Encouraging a Passion for Education

Helene also spoke about the importance of education, and tutored Richardine whenever she struggled with subjects in school. Richardine went on to graduate from high school, which she never would have done without her “Big.” “Before I met Helene I had no aspirations,” she explains. The two stayed in touch for several years.

Today, Richardine, the 65-year-old mother of three grown children, works for the Women’s Advocate Ministry, in a variety of supporting roles. Richardine explains that she thinks of her Big Sister frequently to this day. “I’ll react to something and then say to myself: that’s not the way Helene would have wanted me to think. She is always on my mind.”



THE CENTER FOR TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Since 1992, the Center has trained more than 900 youth agencies on how to establish their own mentoring programs. Conducted in partnership with Fordham University's Graduate School of Social Service, the Center provides a semester-long, 32-hour intensive course on running a mentoring program. It is the only graduate level mentoring training center in the country. Each year, the Center also provides hundreds of youth agencies ongoing, on-site technical assistance, borough network coalitions, and a database to monitor matches, so they can establish mentoring programs in their communities with the highest standards.

The Center coordinates the 140-agency statewide coalition that in 2006 succeeded in obtaining passage in Albany of the Safe Mentoring Act to better protect children being mentored. It requires agencies to inform parents of the kind of background checks agencies run and gives agencies access to state records.

Bringing together the experiences from all BBBS NYC programs, the Center has made our organization a "teaching hospital" for the mentoring field.

The power to change course

In 1999, Joshua, a 14-year-old in the Bronx, got into trouble with the law and was put on probation. The court system put his family in touch with the BBBS NYC Juvenile Justice Mentoring Program. They matched Joshua with a Big Brother named Michael who helped turn things around at a crucial time in his life. As a child from a single parent home with no adult male role models, living in a neighborhood with a high crime rate, it was the first time Joshua had someone to give him direction and encouragement.

Joshua recalls thinking that a Caucasian "Big" in his late 20's would be boring, but was happily surprised to find out how wrong he was. The two went to movies, went ice skating, explored places around the city, and most enjoyably, played a lot of basketball. The spent a lot of time talking, especially about the importance of school and possible careers. At the time, Joshua wanted to be a rapper, but Michael, who worked in the music industry, gave him the facts about the chances of success and encouraged him to do well in school as a means to open the door to other possibilities.

A Game Plan and the Determination to Succeed

Joshua went on to graduate high school, and spent several months working as a data entry temp at the BBBS NYC offices in midtown. Staff at the agency helped him create a polished resume, and in January 2007 Joshua got a job in data entry at the American Arbitration Association. His next step is to save enough money to pay for a course to become a radiology technician.

Now 22, he looks back at his journey and knows that if it weren't for his "Big" having confidence in him and helping him stay on track, today he would be in jail or worse. "Having a Big Brother gave me the drive to succeed that I never would have had on my own," he explains. "Now I've got a plan and there's no turning back."



PHOTO: MARK DAVIS

Statement of Activities

for the year ended June 30, 2007

	Unrestricted Operating	Unrestricted Board Designated	Temporarily Restricted	TOTAL
Revenue and other support				
Private grants and contributions	\$3,372,618		\$13,975	\$3,386,593
Special events, net	2,570,285			2,570,285
Government grants and contracts	2,086,712			2,086,712
United Way	42,439			42,439
Interest and dividends	85,885	219,182		305,067
Net realized and unrealized gains on investments		1,922,895		1,922,895
Net assets released from restrictions	11,650		(11,650)	
Miscellaneous and training fees	175,588			175,588
Total revenue and other support*	\$8,345,178	\$2,142,077	\$2,325	\$10,489,580
Expenses				
Program	7,317,243			7,317,243
Management and general	614,523			614,523
Development and fundraising	836,120			836,120
Total expenses	\$8,767,886			\$8,767,886

*Does not include the value of donated services of approximately \$4.6 million in 2007.

A full copy of the annual audit can be obtained from Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City, Inc. This report is filed with the New York State Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, located at 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.



Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent evaluator of charities.

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Argent Ventures
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Assistant Case Planner
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Kathoucha Edouard
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Fran Elliott
Interviewer
Sarah Heller
Interviewer
Anna Le Mon
Interviewer
David Lenihan
Interviewer
Kathleen Maher
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Operations Assistant
Luis Velez
Operations Assistant

Over 3,500 people participated in the third annual BBBS NYC "Race for the Kids" in 2007. This event symbolizes the power of volunteers to come together to create change.



**Big Brothers Big Sisters
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