



BIG IMPACTS

- 1. FEATURE STORY
- 2. SANDRA'S PICK
- 2. BULLETIN BOARD
- 3. PARTNER'S CIRCLE
- 4. MARIANNE'S MENTION
- 4. "I GIVE WHAT I CAN"
- 5. CASEWORKER'S CORNER
- 6. BIG MOMENTS
- 7. ANNOUNCEMENTS



TWO LITTLES, TWO SISTERS — MEET MADDISON & CHLOE

"I think that everyone needs a Big Sister like Sarah." Maddison grins as she talks about her mentor and friend of nearly one year.

Sisters Maddison and Chloe live with their grandparents Nana Linda and Papa Peter. With their age and slightly limited accessibility considered, Linda and Peter knew their granddaughters would both benefit from having Big Sisters, and younger female role models.

Now matched with their Big Sisters for about one year, we met with Maddison and Chloe. After a short conversation, the positive impact of mentorship is clear.

Ten-year-old Chloe smiles and recounts the day she found out about her Big Sister Kayla: "When Big Brothers Big Sisters called and my Nana told me, I said 'yaaaa!'"

Chloe has a vivid imagination and is creative in nature. She enjoys arts and crafts, baking and being active. Big Sister Kayla has become the perfect companion to compliment Chloe's nature. It has now been just over one-year of a successful match and friendship between Chloe and her Big Sister.

Twelve-year-old Maddison is very enthusiastic about her Big Sister. Her face lights up, "I would definitely say that Sarah and I are a great match." In fact, Maddison adds, "Sarah feels like she's part of the family ... like an actual older sister."

During the last meeting with their caseworker, Peter said

that his granddaughters were matched to the 'perfect' Big Sisters. In addition to being a great match, Peter says that both Chloe and Maddison are much happier in general. They are more respectful to each other and to their grandparents at home.

"If I didn't have a Big Sister, I'd be more alone," Maddison says. Prior to being paired with Sarah, Maddison often kept her emotions inside: "I wouldn't talk about it. I would just keep to myself. I don't really like talking about my problems."

For Maddison, Big Sister Sarah has become a trusted confidant. "I trust her," Maddison says, explaining that she would talk to Sarah if she had a problem at school or if something was bothering her. "I think my Big Sister gives good advice," she says.

Maddison admits that it is helpful now that she has someone to talk to. Big Sister Sarah has helped Maddison talk through, and about, some issues she had internalized, which were causing stress and anxiety. As a result, Maddison has had more of a positive outlook.

"She's helped me quite a bit. There's actually someone I can talk to without worrying about being judged. I can just talk to her whenever I want to," Maddison says.

Maddison describes her Big Sisters as "kind, caring and respectful. With a big grin, she adds, "I definitely hope Sarah and I are lifelong friends."



SANDRA'S PICK

“To our cherished supporters—please accept my heartfelt thanks for all the big and little things you do for us.”

SANDRA BAKER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | 905.339.2355 x235
SANDRA.BAKER@BIGBROTHERSBIGSISTERS.CA

CELEBRATING PHILANTHROPY

You give to us in so many ways.

As I write this, a long-time donor of butter tarts is sharing stories with a colleague. Year after year, he donates a tray of magnificent tarts to the Oakville Father Daughter Ball, and year after year, remarkable supporters vie to buy these delectable treats. Tarts donated, money donated, and tarts shared with friends and family.

A sweet expression of the many ways people give to Big Brothers Big Sisters.

You probably agree that your most precious commodity is your time. No matter who you are, each of us has the same 24 hours a day! We know that your decision to give your time means that you are taking time away from something (or someone) else.

So many of you share your talents with us. Some of you serve as board members, some as office volunteers, some share their mentoring stories as guest speakers. Others share special expertise: we have a kind handy-person we call on frequently to paint, fix broken door handles and handle odd jobs! Still others organize events that raise money for us. Recently, a business networking group invited each guest to donate \$10—and together they amassed \$500. And, by giving a staff member the chance to share stories about the power of mentoring—we received another very precious gift—a new Big Sister!

To the more than 8,000 of you receiving this newsletter—our cherished supporters—please accept my heartfelt thanks for all the big and little things you do for us.

Best wishes for a holiday season filled with joy, peace and hope.



ZEESHAN HAMID

- BOARD DIRECTOR, BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF HALTON AND HAMILTON
- DAY JOB: MILTON REGIONAL COUNCILLOR
- FAVOURITE ANNUAL EVENT: “BOWL FOR KIDS SAKE, OF COURSE. IT’S A FUN FAMILY ACTIVITY THAT ALSO RAISES MONEY FOR AN AMAZING CHARITY.”
- “MY ROLE MODEL WAS, AND STILL IS, MY FATHER. VERY FEW PEOPLE IN THE WORLD HAVE THE PERSEVERENCE AND OPTIMISM HE HAS.”

BULLETIN BOARD



“I became a board member because it is important for me to enable other mentors to connect with children and youth who will benefit from it.”

I have been fortunate enough to have a series of mentors and role models who took interest in me throughout my life. The trajectory of my life, both professional and personal, would be very different without them.”

- Zee



PARTNER'S CIRCLE

“WE WOULD LITERALLY DO ANYTHING TO HELP THE KIDS ... WE WOULD HELP EVERY CHILD IF WE COULD.”

- MELANIE ALLISON

OAKVILLE FATHER DAUGHTER BALL EVENT DIRECTOR



GIVING TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

A larger than life idea was born seven years ago when Melanie and Jamie Allison, alongside long-time friends, Trisha Warwick and Tom Zaks, dreamt up a charity initiative to help support local youth. The Oakville Father Daughter Ball concept arrived – “We loved the challenge. Let’s go for it,” Melanie recounts.

Melanie and Trisha began to lead the planning as Event Directors, while Jamie and Tom played supportive roles. All were unaware that they had created the next hype event in Oakville.

This past November marked the 6th Annual Oakville Father Daughter Ball. Nearly 300 fathers and daughters were in attendance. Since year one, the Ball has continued to grow in popularity. “We’ve been very lucky and blessed that this has happened through social media and word-of-mouth,” Melanie says. As in past years, tickets to this year’s Father Daughter Ball were sold out several months in advance of the event.

This year’s theme was Winter Wonderland. From the moment you step in the ballroom straight through to the end the night - the details, glamour, sparkle, precision, and the team’s extraordinary efforts are everywhere you turn. Turn again, ball gowns fill the room, then more sparkle, snowflakes and twinkling lights. The night would not be complete without a dinner buffet, candy bar, a guest dance performance, celebrity guests, raffles, games and a father-daughter dance, of course. Without question – a memorable fairytale land for any father and daughter alike.

Melanie thrives on expressing her creativity – “All the details are my heart and soul pouring out,” she says, admitting that her dream job would be event planning. “The event itself is a huge success. Anyone who comes is just in awe,” Melanie

explains, and after being at the event, you would agree.

The goal of each year’s event is to surpass the previous goal. This year, \$15,000 was raised to support Big Brothers Big Sisters’ local mentoring programs. To date, \$80,000 has been raised.

“Our sponsors are our lifeline,” Melanie explains that there is an army of personal and professional contacts who volunteer their time and/or make a donation towards the event. The Ball would not possible without them.

Planning the Ball is no easy task. In fact, it takes one year of dedication. Melanie says. “It’s such a big event ... it’s like planning a wedding each year.”

Their motivation: “We would literally do anything to help the kids ... we would help every child if we could,” Melanie says.

The end result makes it all worth-while. “We’re doing it to help as many people as we can,” Melanie says. Specifically, she hopes that their work inspires others through their own means: “You just hope that people are watching and listening. Our kids have been watching us, we’re teaching them kindness and empathy.” Melanie says that the most profound impact of her philanthropy is passing it along to her daughter, 14, and son, 13.

Big Brothers Big Sisters is grateful for the myriad of big and small ways individuals choose to exercise their creativity and give. We thank Melanie and Jamie Allison, Trisha Warwick and Tom Zaks for dedicating their time, talent and treasure to our charity. Your gifts of philanthropy are such precious commodities.

The Oakville Father Daughter Ball returns December 7, 2019.

For more details, visit: OakvilleFatherDaughterBall.ca



MARIANNE'S MENTION

“As we approach the New Year, ensuring that one child has the support and guidance needed for a happy and productive future is a great place to start, and may in fact, be the most important thing we ever do. Let's welcome 2019 knowing that the amazing power of one is alive and well at Big Brothers Big Sisters.”

MARIANNE NOAKES, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER | 905.525.3860 x312

FORECASTING 2019

We are writing the road map to the future of your organization and we need you to be part of that! As a mentor, volunteer or parent, we value your perspective.

As you know, we (meaning BBBS of Halton and BBBS of Hamilton and Burlington) recently became one organization. We are now embarking on the process of Strategic Planning. We need your input to help us answer some key questions - things like what our new priorities should be. Things like how we can serve our community through mentoring in a way that is most meaningful. We are not likely to get this part of the project until the New Year, but for those who are interested in participating, we will make every effort to survey your opinion and thoughts in a way that is both user friendly and respectful of your time. Watch for further details in the New Year.

As you know, there are many ways to give to your charity of choice. One particular way that you may not be as aware of is how much we appreciate you opening your doors to us. Whether it is through your workplace, through your community club, through your network of friends and family or through your place of worship we need you to help us spread the word of our need to recruit additional mentors for the many children on our wait list. We would love an opportunity to come and speak, add a link to your website, put a short advertisement in your publication, or simply share a line about how mentoring works! Please be in touch if you can facilitate any type of communication for us. We would so appreciate that! *Please contact me at Marianne.Noakes@bigbrothersbig sisters.ca to get started.*

Greetings of the season to you and yours.

“I GIVE WHAT I CAN”



CHRISTEEN SALIK

- THIRD-YEAR STUDENT IN EQUITY STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO.
- ASPIRES TO OBTAIN HER MASTERS OF SOCIAL WORK + LAW DEGREE TO EVENTUALLY HOLD A CAREER IN HUMAN RIGHTS LAW.

Twenty-year-old Christeen is a busy university student. Not unlike other students, she commutes to school, juggles classes, maintains her grades, and keeps up with assignments, all the while holding a part-time job. One thing that sets Christeen aside - her philanthropy.

Christeen became a monthly donor in September 2018. Each month she gives an automated \$10 donation to Big Brothers Big Sisters through Canada Helps. “I give what I can,” says Christeen, the youngest of the charity’s active monthly donors.

Each month, Christeen skips going out for lunch once, or passes on grabbing two coffees in her travels. She donates this money instead. “Initially, I thought of not going out to eat for just one day. That’s how I justify my spending to myself,” she said, adding, “I don’t notice the \$10 donation per month is missing.”

Christeen says it was an easy decision to give to Big Brothers Big Sisters. The charity became particularly important to Christeen seven years ago when she began volunteering in the

Homework Club, an after school program for elementary-aged youth. This is when Christeen experienced first-hand the impact a mentor can have on a vulnerable child. “Sometimes kids don’t realize how much they can achieve, and when they have a role model encouraging them, it helps to inspire them to go down an avenue which they never may have done down before.”

Christeen credits Big Brothers Big Sisters for helping her grow as a person. Through her volunteerism, Christeen received an Ontario Volunteer Service Award in Grade 12, and received bursaries towards her university tuition. Most recently, Christeen completed a placement at the charity in Summer 2016.

“Big Brothers Big Sisters volunteering literally changed my life path,” said Christeen. She encourages others to volunteer: “Do your part, without assuming that everyone has the same privileges you have in life.”

To become a monthly donor call Natalie at 905-525-3860 x310 or visit MentorsForKids.ca



CASEWORKER CORNER



NEW MENTOR HIGHLIGHT | YASMEEN SHUBBER, CASE MANAGER

Laura had been on our waitlist, anxiously awaiting her Big Sister, for six months. When her younger brother got matched with his Big Brother this past summer, Laura was happy for her brother, but was also wondering when it would be her turn.

Soon enough, Laura was matched with her Big Sister Christina. Now matched for just over one month, Laura and Christina make a great pair and both are very enthusiastic about their new friendship - it has hit the ground running, so to speak. They have already gone to the ROM, made pizza, enjoyed ice cream and have developed a long list of activities to do. Most recently, Big Sister Christina took Laura to a high-school information night and helped her choose courses for Grade 9 next September. This match is quickly establishing a solid foundation. Laura and Christina have quickly developed a friendship, and we look forward to seeing wonderful growth in this match.



MENTEE SUCCESS STORY | ZACK JONES, GROUP PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The Connections Project provides role models and friends to newcomer youth. It has been a positive experience for its mentors and mentees. And, at one Hamilton school, this is especially true for Ali.

On the first day of the program, Ali came into the gym seeming shy and reserved. He kept to himself and would only talk when prompted. As the weeks progressed, Ali became more comfortable with the setting. Now, he is the first person present at the gym. He comes with a big smile, gives 'high fives' to the mentors and initiates conversation. Ali enjoys being helpful, and proactively assists in setting up program equipment. He always asks if there is anything else he can help with. Ali has also stepped up and invited some of the younger program members to be his teammates during group sports.

Ali continues to be a positive influence in the group and his progress is an encouragement to the volunteers, who are happy to see his ongoing personal development.



BIG/LITTLE ACTIVITY IDEAS | EMILY HELPARD, CASE MANAGER

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Winter is the perfect time to bundle up, drink a hot chocolate and go for a scenic walk. Mentors and mentees can enjoy conversations and one-on-one time while delighting in the holiday lights in our communities. To check out decorated trees and light displays in Georgetown, visit Dominion Gardens Park; in Burlington, the Festival of Lights is on at Spencer Smith Park; in Hamilton, Pier 8.

Winter offers an abundance of fun, seasonal activities for mentors and mentees. If you wish to engage in the weather full force, put on your helmets and get ready for a thrill as you go tobogganing, snow tubing, or skiing. If you have less of a need for speed, head to an outdoor skating rink. In Oakville, check out Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park; Hamilton, Pier 8; Burlington, Spencer Smith Park.

Consider taking a step back in time to the year 1900 to visit a Victorian Homestead during the Christmas season. Visit Victorian Christmas at Bronte Creek, Oakville, during Dec. 27-30 and Jan. 3-6 between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. This free opportunity includes traditional Christmas games, crafts and activities, designed for all ages. In Hamilton, Victorian Christmas festivities are taking place at Dundurn Castle daily from 12 – 4 p.m. through to Dec. 30. (Fees apply.)

If the weather is simply too frightful, make it delightful by watching a favourite holiday classic with some hot chocolate and cookies! Try a new recipe and create a cookbook or scrapbook of your favourites. (My favourites are double chocolate chip with candy canes crushed on top!)



BIG MOMENTS



(1) Mentors, Karina and Jenny, with mentees, Maiya and Joshua had some special visitors recently. They were joined by Program Supporters, John Nunnikhoven and Lisa Noble representing Glenn Graydon LLP along with Michelle Snow of TD and Maureen O'Neill of the Joyce Family Foundation. Collectively, these Program Supporters have donated over \$50,000 towards our Homework Club Program this year. We are so grateful for your continued support! **(2)** Three Lions Promotions (TLP) hosted The Return, live professional boxing this October, with proceeds being donated back to BBBSSH. A BIG THANKS to the 50/50 winner, Philip Gravelle, who generously donated his winnings back to the charity. In total, \$3,200 was raised. Pictured are Philip Gravelle, Shana Otter of TLP, Dean Collett, alumni Board Director, BBBS, Dan Otter of TLP and Sandra Baker, CEO, BBBSSH. **(3)** A BIG THANKS to our army of volunteers who have been tirelessly giving their time to lend a hand at the IKEA Burlington Tree Lot benefitting BBBSSH this holiday season! **(4)** Our hallways turned into Santa's workshop, as a whole truckload of gifts were dropped off for client and families. Thanks to the Rotary Club of Burlington for their generous sponsorship, 30 of our families will have a little extra Christmas magic with this special surprise. **(5)** A BIG THANKS to the awesome volunteers from Deloitte Canada who volunteered their time visiting 28 local schools to help us get our In-School Mentoring bins in order for a great school year.



PAUSE TO REMEMBER

TWO MEMBERS OF OUR BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS FAMILY HAVE RECENTLY PASSED AWAY. PLEASE JOIN US IN REMEMBERING THEM.

JUSTIN BENDO

Fourteen-year-old Justin Bendo was a kind boy who loved animals. Like many children his age, he enjoyed online games with friends, rock concerts, comic cons, hosting his own Youtube channel and chasing Pokemon GO around town.

After a brave battle with complications of Chronic Mucocutaneous Candidiasis (CMCC), an immune disorder of the T cells, Justin passed away in his mother's arms on November 27, 2018.

Although Justin spent a large portion of his life in hospitals, his Big Brother Trevor played a supportive role in between hospital stays for the last seven years. As a mentor and friend, Trevor and Justin would enjoy one-on-one time, conversation, playing board games and the occasional escape room when they were able to spend time together.

A Justin Bendo Memorial Fund has been opened to help Justin's Mother pay a fitting tribute and memorial to his brave battle. To make a donation to the Justin Bendo Memorial Fund, visit GoFundMe.com and search "Justin Bendo."

KADEEM PHILIP

In his 21st year, Kadeem Philip was on a good path. He was in the prime of life, with a loving family, dozens of close friends, a great job and a bright future.

After a motorcycle accident this past summer, Kadeem incurred extreme trauma and injuries, in which he had no chance of recovery. Kadeem passed away on July 21, 2018.

Big Brothers Big Sisters has played an important role in the Philip family since 2008. Kadeem was first matched with a Big Brother when he was 11-years-old, and he continued with the program until age 16. Since then, his sister has also benefitted from having a Big Sister.

It is Kadeem's family's wish that he be remembered through a memorial fund for families who are faced with life-changing trauma injuries suffered by their loved ones. The Kadeem Philip Memorial Fund will be administered by the Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre, an organization close to the family. To make a donation to the Fund, visit OPNC.ca and flag your donation as "Kadeem Philip Memorial Fund."



COMING UP NEXT

MARK YOUR CALENDARS, HERE ARE UPCOMING EVENTS ...

NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22: IKEA TREE LOT

IKEA Burlington, 1065 Plains Road E., open-close each day

Buy your Christmas tree and support Big Brothers Big Sisters at the same time. We have been selected as the charity beneficiary for the IKEA Tree Lot. Please help us raise \$25,000 for mentoring this holiday season! Seasonal volunteers are also needed for 3+ hour shifts. Contact: Tracey.OConnor@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca

DECEMBER 31, MIDNIGHT: DONATIONS FOR 2018 TAX YEAR

Last chance to get your donations in for the 2018 tax year.

Donate at www.MentorsForKids.ca

JANUARY 4, 6 - 9 PM: BIG SKATE NIGHT OUT - FREE

Skyway Arena, 129 Kenwood Ave, Burlington

Volunteers, clients and families are all welcome to join. RSVP to your caseworker or call 905-525-3860 x0. Please bring your own skates and helmets as rentals are not available. *A special thank you to our anonymous donor for sponsoring this event!*

JANUARY 7 - 31: ONLINE MONTHLY DONOR CAMPAIGN

MentorsForKids.ca | Your change can make a change.

FEBRUARY 23: CURL FOR KIDS SAKE BONSPIEL

Oakville Curling Club, 224 Allan St., Oakville

More information and registration call Kristin at 905-339-2355 x222

FEBRUARY 24: MAYOR BONNETTE BOWL FOR KIDS SAKE

MARCH 1: HCDSB & HDSB BOWL FOR KIDS SAKE

APRIL 5: ZEE HAMID BOWL FOR KIDS SAKE

Champs Family Entertainment Centre (300 Bronte St., Milton)

More information and registration at MentorsForKids.ca

MARCH 14, 6 - 9 PM: BIG SKATE NIGHT OUT - FREE

Aldershot Arena, 494 Townsend Ave, Burlington, ON

Volunteers, clients and families are all welcome to join. RSVP to your caseworker or call 905-525-3860 x0. Please bring your own skates and helmets as rentals are not available. *A special thank you to our anonymous donor for sponsoring this event!*

MARCH 22: TIM HORTONS/KEVIN FLYNN BOWL FOR KIDS SAKE

MARCH 29: PAM DAMOFF BOWL FOR KIDS SAKE

Classic Bowl, 3055 Dundas St. W., Mississauga

More information and registration at MentorsForKids.ca

Stay tuned for more April and May Bowl for Kids Sake dates!



THERE IS STILL TIME

The **2018 tax year is fast coming to a close.** There is still time to make a tax receiptable donation to Big Brothers Big Sisters AND receive a tax receipt for the full amount of your donation.

Your gift, whether Big or Little, will be used to support children who desperately need a kind, supportive mentor in their lives.

IT'S EASY TO GIVE!

1. **ONLINE DONATIONS:** Visit [MentorsForKids.ca](#) and click the Donate button
2. **CREDIT CARD DONATIONS:** Complete the form below and mail your donation, or call one of our two offices during business hours (Hamilton: 905-525-3860; Oakville: 905-339-2355)
3. **CASH DONATIONS:** Visit one of our two offices in either Hamilton or Oakville during business hours
4. **CHEQUE DONATIONS:** Complete the form below and mail your donation; or visit one of our offices

HAMILTON OFFICE: 639 Main Street East, M-F 8:30-5; OAKVILLE OFFICE: 464 Morden Road, M-F 9-4:30.

Please note that both offices will be closing to observe Christmas holidays beginning Monday December 24 at 1 p.m., and will reopen January 2, 2019.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

→ **CLICK HERE TO MAKE A DONATION
IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL MENTORING TODAY**

[MentorsForKids.ca](#)



Yes, I'd like to make a **special
year-end contribution**

MAIL TO:

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF HALTON AND HAMILTON
639 MAIN STREET EAST, HAMILTON, ON L8M 1J4
OR VISIT [MentorsForKids.ca](#) and click DONATE

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ POSTAL _____

PHONE _____

CREDIT
CARD # _____

EXPIRY _____ MC VISA CHEQUE ENCLOSED

SIGNATURE _____

Start Something (\$25)

A \$25 donation will help start a new friendship by providing the necessary training to a new mentor.

Grow Something (\$50)

A \$50 donation will help grow our school-based programs, by helping to provide activities and healthy snacks.

Build Something (\$100)

A \$100 donation will fill an In-School Mentoring bin with games, supplies and crafts for one school year.

Give Something \$ _____

Your donation will be invested in a program that is currently most in need of support.