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“
He has so much
personality and reminds
me a lot of myself
when he was my age.

- Big Brother Simon

”

BIG BROTHER GOES THE DISTANCE

Originally from Keswick, ON, a job opportunity brought Simon and his (now) wife to Hamilton. He settled in the area, started a new job, bought a house, got married and became a Big Brother within a two year span. Though it was a busy time with lots of change, Simon wanted to give back to his community. “I wanted to be a role model for someone and make sure they were on a good path,” Simon says. At the time Simon was (and still is) aspiring towards a career in law enforcement, which was part of what drew him to the charity.

When Simon first met his Little Brother two years ago, he says, “Darius was withdrawn, he didn’t want to talk and was very shy.” At the time, Darius had a poor attendance record at school and his grades were lacking. “I took on the role of being a friend and mentor at the same time,” Simon says, and ever since, “I have always maintained the balance of being the friend, the ‘authority figure,’ as a police officer in training, and a mentor.”

Within their first few months together, Simon and Darius’ bond quickly grew. Then, four months into their match, Simon suddenly lost his job. He and his wife made the difficult decision to move back to their hometown of Keswick.

Though a one-hour and forty-five minute drive would now exist between them, Simon refused to end their match—he did not want to let Darius down, nor did he want to break the bond they had been forming. Simon continued as Darius’ Big Brother.

Now a year-and-a-half later, Simon and Darius have built a strong friendship. They see each other biweekly and keep in touch in between by phone or text. Simon says they have very similar interests: “He has so much personality and reminds me a lot of myself when he was my age.”

“I am most proud that he is comfortable enough to come to me about anything,” Simon says, explaining that they have built a trust. Darius not only reaches out to Simon as someone to talk to, but also when he needs advice or help with a decision. “There’s nothing he wouldn’t tell me,” says Simon.

Thirteen-year-old Darius is off to high-school in September, and Simon is very pleased. Over the past two years, Simon has encouraged Darius to do well – at school, home and in general. Simon has also been a big advocate of respectful language and behavior to adults and authority figures. As a result, Darius’ attitude at home and towards school improved, as did his grades and attendance. Simon explained that Darius was held accountable, and “He didn’t want to disappoint me. His grades went up; he wanted me to be at his graduation.” And of course Simon was this past June.

Simon’s favourite part of being a Big Brother is the difference he is making: “Every day I see Darius improve. I know that I’m doing something good and I’m sending him on the right path. It gives me satisfaction knowing that I am having a positive impact.”



MARIANNE'S MENTION

“I absolutely believe in the life-changing power of mentoring. I have seen it firsthand. Mentoring is all around us.”

Marianne

MARIANNE NOAKES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 905.525.3860 x312
MARIANNE.NOAKES@BIGBROTHERSBIGSISTERS.CA

SUMMER GREETINGS TO ALL

Now with the end of the school year complete, we would like to give a special thank you to our school-based volunteers for all that you do. Our school-based programming is the fastest growing component of our service, thanks to so many wonderful volunteers. A reminder to our school-based volunteers that the summer brings closure to your face to face contact with your little or mentee, but our hope is that you will reconnect in the fall with lots of new memories to share.

Summer brings many opportunities for outdoor adventures, and we hope that our Big and Little matches will enjoy all that the beautiful season has to offer. We encourage our community-based mentors (Big Brothers and Big Sisters) to be reminded of

our overnight policies. You will find these policies highlighted in the following pages.

There is a lot happening here at Big Brothers Big Sisters as we lead up Big Brothers Big Sisters Month in September. During the fall our big focus will be recruitment, as we will aim to match a wide selection of the children on our waitlist for a mentor. Stay tuned for more updates this September!

I continue to admire the thoughtful care our staff takes to ensure that the children in our programs are met with the positive news of a special friend for them. Great job team!

Until next time, thanks for being part of something BIG. I wish you all a safe and meaningful summer!



SHAFIQ MOHAMED

- BOARD DIRECTOR
- HUSBAND & FATHER OF TWO BOYS
- DAY JOB: OWNER/FRANCHISEE OF FULLY PROMOTED & STRATUS BUILDING SOLUTIONS OF HAMILTON/BURLINGTON
- “WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I WAS A BIG BROTHER—I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING GOOD IN THE COMMUNITY THAT I WORKED AND LIVED IN. I WAS FORTUNATE TO GROW UP IN A HOUSEHOLD WITH TWO SIBLINGS AND PARENTS THAT ENSURED WE ALL DID WELL. THERE ARE KIDS IN OUR COMMUNITY THAT NEED THE SAME.”

BULLETIN BOARD



“I believe every child needs a role model. Some are fortunate to have one, and unfortunately, some are not.

By sharing positive values and introducing youth to new experiences, mentors help young people avoid negative behaviors and achieve success.”

- Shafiq

PARTNER'S CIRCLE

“ I WOULDN'T BE WHERE I AM TODAY
WITHOUT THE MENTORS I HAVE IN MY LIFE. ”

- ERIC MORIGILA
BIG BROTHER, THIRD PARTY EVENT PARTNER



MENTORSHIP ENCOURAGES PHILANTHROPY

“Everybody needs a mentor in their life - if not one, multiple mentors,” says Eric. Twenty-four-year-old Eric knows first-hand the importance of having a role model.

Growing up, Eric says he relied on a lot of valuable and good mentors. In fact, he credits the influence of these childhood mentors to helping him succeed. Eric says, “I’m pretty understanding that I wouldn’t be where I am today without the mentors I have in my own life.” Because of the impact positive role models had on him growing up, Eric says, “I had always wanted to be a Big Brother from the moment I heard of the program. Then, when I was 18 or 19, it was definitely something I took into consideration.”

Eric has now been a volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters for three years – he spent two years as an In-School Mentor, and one year ago, he became a Big Brother to Kean. One year in, Eric thoroughly enjoys being a Big Brother, and all the activities it brings. “We’ve done everything you can really think of,” he says. The duo spend time together each week, unless Eric is otherwise away for work. During their time matched, Eric says he has witnessed positive development in Kean: “I’ve definitely seen his confidence grow a lot.”

Because of the impact mentorship had in his own life coupled with the difference he is making in Kean’s life, Eric wanted to host a fundraising event for the charity. He says he had wanted to do so for some time. And the motivation behind his fundraising - to help match more youth in need of a mentor with a mentor. “In order for more people to be matched, we

need more volunteers, of course, but we need more money and resources to assure that there are more Big and Little matches, Eric says.

In spring 2019, Eric’s fundraising vision became a reality as the inaugural Paintball for Kids Sake took place – the event raised \$3,000.00 for local mentoring programs.

Eric explained that his inspiration for choosing paintball was to target the younger male demographic. “I know that there is usually long waiting lists for boys to get matched with a mentor,” Eric says, adding, “I wanted to think of an event that could be about fundraising, but could also attract younger males to come out, hear about the charity and learn about being a Big Brother.” Among the event’s participants were Eric’s recruits of friends, family, colleagues and friends-of-friends, who each raised \$100.00 to participate. “Everyone had fun and I was happy with the turnout,” says Eric. Paintball for Kids Sake will return in April 2020.

Eric says hosting the fundraising event to give back is the least he could do: “We wouldn’t be a match without Big Brothers Big Sisters.” Eric encourages everyone to give what they can. “It’s up to everyone to do their part to chip in time or money,” he says.

We are so grateful for Eric and our community of generous volunteers and donors — thank you for making a difference in the lives of local youth! To learn more about how you can host an event benefitting Big Brothers Big Sisters, please contact Natalie at 905-525-3860 x310.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



“MY FAVOURITE DAY AT SCHOOL IS MONDAY BECAUSE JOANNE COMES.”

- SAVANNAH, AGE 8
MENTEE, IN-SCHOOL MENTORING PROGRAM



IN-SCHOOL MENTORING—SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER

“My favourite day at school is Monday because JoAnne comes,” says eight-year-old Savannah. Then, with a big grin, Savannah describes JoAnne in three words: “She’s fun, playful and kind!”

From September to June, JoAnne and Savannah spend one hour together each week through Big Brothers Big Sisters’ In-School Mentoring Program, which takes place on school property, during school hours. Together, JoAnne and Savannah enjoy lighthearted conversations while participating in recreational and leisure activities. Most commonly, their shared time includes doing crafts, beading jewelry or playing board games, and by far their favourite activity is colouring. “We love to colour,” says JoAnne.

Although literacy-based activities have sometimes crept on their agenda, JoAnne and Savannah’s time together is mostly fun, games and bonding. And of course, Savannah doesn’t mind this one bit—“Playing is my favourite part of when JoAnne comes to visit,” she says.

JoAnne began volunteering with Big Brothers Big Sisters 13 years ago when she was 50 years old. At the time, JoAnne learned about In-School Mentoring through her employer’s corporate volunteerism program, which allowed JoAnne to volunteer for one hour a week during work time.

Her original motivation to volunteer - “I had always wanted to be a teacher, and this program was the closest thing to it,” said JoAnne. And though she may have never formally taught as a career, JoAnne has certainly been making a difference on school grounds since.

Over the past 13 years, JoAnne has been a mentor to seven elementary-aged children. Her first mentee was Chantel: “Sometimes I imagine if I ran into her today. She would be a young adult, but I think we would recognize each other for sure.” JoAnne spent three years as Chantel’s mentor and remembers her fondly. “Though I never expected anything in return, she gave me an angel that said ‘best friend,’” JoAnne reminisces. She has this memento to date.

Alicia was another one of JoAnne’s mentees. After she and JoAnne were matched for one year, Alicia was sad to let JoAnne know she would be transferring to a new school because she was being bullied so badly. JoAnne followed Alicia to her new school, and they continued their friendship. At the end of their match, Alicia gave JoAnne a hand-painted mug that read ‘Best Mentor Ever!’ It sits on JoAnne’s desk at home.

Now retired for six years, JoAnne is an especially avid volunteer, and she wouldn’t have it any other way. In-School Mentoring is only one of JoAnne’s many local voluntary commitments. “Until my health does not allow me, I will continue volunteering,” she says, adding, “You’re never too old; there’s no age limit.”

What keeps JoAnne going? She says gratification is one of her key motivators. “I get such a rewarding feeling when I go to class and Savannah is so happy to see me that she jumps up and down,” JoAnne says, smiling.

During the summer months In School-Mentoring is out of session, but JoAnne and Savannah look very forward to continuing their friendship in September.



BIG MOMENTS



(1) Congratulations to three of our Homework Club student mentors, who were recognized as young leaders, and won the a Class of 2019 Ted Rogers Scholarship for their post-secondary education: "I am so thankful to receive this scholarship because it will give me the opportunity to focus on school work and my community service, which is important to me," says Madeline. (2) Ted Rogers Scholarship winner Elsie says, "I am honoured to be selected from a pool of highly accomplished candidates. I feel proud of my accomplishments, and being acknowledged for these accomplishments inspires me to continue to be involved in my community." (3) "I am incredibly humbled to be recognized for my dedication to my local community. I promise that I will continue to give back to my community and work tirelessly towards my goals," says Hayley, Scholarship recipient. (4) We hosted more than 100 teams over nine bowling events this spring at Tim Hortons Bowl for Kids Sake's Neon Brights and Bowling Nights edition. We are pleased to announce that over \$90,000.00 was raised for local mentoring programs. Pictured is Team Montclair Public School of Oakville. (5) Thank you to the Knights of Columbus of Oakville for your continued generosity and support of local youth. Pictured, Roberto Pegoraro, Grand Knight, presents a \$2,000.00 donation to BBBS staff. (6) The Dundas Lions Club have been long-time supporters of Big Brothers Big Sisters, and we are so grateful. Pictured, members Wayne Hay and Jamie Zimmerman present a \$1,000.00 donation to Natalie Michlewicz of BBBS.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUMMER SAFETY REMINDERS



Overnight Policies for Community-Based Mentors and Mentees:

- Overnight visits are not permitted before your first yearly review is completed.
- No more than 4 sleep over events are permitted per year.
- Each overnight event may not be longer than 3 nights in a row.
- Volunteers and guardians must complete an overnight form and return it to their caseworker prior to their overnight event.
- All overnight events must take place in Canada.
- Please contact your caseworker if you require an overnight form.

Reminders for school-based Mentors and Mentees:

- As an In-School Mentor or Mentee, you are not permitted to have face to face, social media, phone or texting contact outside of the time that you spend together in school, including the summer months when schools are closed.



COMING UP NEXT

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

PLEASE HELP! SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE



We are in need of supplies for our 50+ school-based program locations, and could sure use your help. We are looking for donations of any quantity of the following items:

SCHOOL-SAFE SNACKS:

- Peanut free/Individually wrapped/Easy to serve/Non perishable
- Examples: granola bars, cereal bars, rice crispy squares, gold fish, fruit gummies, bear paws, pudding, fruit cups.

IN-SCHOOL MENTORING SUPPLIES:

- Arts and crafts supplies (paint, paint brushes, canvases, markers, craft kits, pompoms, pipe cleaners, foam cut outs etc.)
- Board games or small fun games (2-player friendly)

HOMEWORK CLUB SUPPLIES:

- Plain erasers, plain HB pencils, basic calculators, educational games.

For more information about our school-based programs or supply needs, please call 905-525-3860. Donations may be dropped off at:

Hamilton Office: 639 Main Street East (M-F, 8:30-5)

Oakville Office: 464 Morden Road (M-F, 9-4:30)

JULY 18, 3-6 PM: REACH NEW HEIGHTS

ALTITUDE, McMaster University (1280 Main St. W., Hamilton)

Reach new heights to help Halton & Hamilton youth reach their full potential! Join us at McMaster University's ALTITUDE to participate in games, walk the slackline, and climb the 50 foot alpine tower. Purchase your ticket on [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca) for early-bird pricing (\$15) OR at the event for \$20. To sign up or for more information, contact Events.BBBSHB@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca or 905-525-3860 x108

JULY 20, 11 AM-10 PM: BURGERS BENEFITTING BBBS

Five Guys (#E4 - 518 Centennial Pkwy, Stoney Creek)

Five Guys (1807 Stone Church Rd. E., Stoney Creek)

20% of the price of whatever you're craving from the Five Guys' menu will go to BBBS. When paying for your meal, say that you are participating in the fundraiser, and Five Guys will donate 20% of your purchase to BBBS.

JULY 22, 4-7 PM: Indigo FUNdrasier

Indigo (737 Golf Links Rd, Ancaster)

Come visit us at Indigo to purchase your summer favourites! When you register with our in-store booth, Indigo will donate 15% of your purchase back to BBBS.

AUGUST 17, 10 AM-2 PM: GROCERY BAGGING BLITZ

Fortino's (173 Lakeshore Rd. W., Oakville)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED—a great opportunity for Bigs and Littles! Lend a hand bagging groceries while collecting donations from shoppers and spreading the word about BBBS. For more information and to sign up, contact Sara.Douglas@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca

AUGUST 24-25: BRIAN KNOX MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT

Canlan Ice Sports (2300 Cornwall Road, Oakville)

ICE HOCKEY TEAMS AND PLAYERS WANTED! In its eighth year, this tournament invites competitive, recreational, and women's teams to compete in a two-day tournament benefitting BBBS. Team fee: \$700 – Free Agent fee: \$60 includes 3-5 games | BrianKnoxMemorial.com

SEPTEMBER 16-23, HAIRCUTS FOR KIDS

All Sport Clips locations across Canada

Visit a Sport Clips location near you and \$3 from each MVP haircut will be donated back to Big Brothers Big Sisters | SportClips.ca

OCTOBER 21 - NOVEMBER 8, CHANGE FOR CHANGE

Fundraising Boxes Available for Pickup at BBBSHH Offices

NEW FUNDRAISER FOR MENTEEES! Collect spare change to make change! Prizes for top fundraisers. More details to come soon.