

Heart of Illinois Big Brothers Big Sisters

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Big Brothers Big Sisters

Heart of Illinois Big Brothers Big Sisters

3618 N. Sterling Ave.
Peoria IL 61604
(309) 637-1771
(309) 655-1577
hoibbbs.org

Facebook: [facebook.com/hoibbbs](https://www.facebook.com/hoibbbs)
Twitter: @HOIBBBS

Jeff Parmenter, Executive Director
Jami Truelove, Program Manager

Mission

To provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever.

Vision

That all children achieve success in life.



The Heart of Illinois Big Brothers Big Sisters (HOIBBBS) has been serving low-income, underprivileged youth from single-parent families for more than 35 years. HOIBBBS serves Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, Knox, Fulton, Marshall and Stark counties. Our mentoring programs prevent juvenile delinquency and divert thousands of youth at risk of becoming involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Big Brothers Big Sisters provides mentoring services to clients in two ways. The first is *community-based mentoring*, where the mentor and child meet outside of school hours—usually evenings or weekends. The second option is *school-based mentoring*, where mentors visit with their child once weekly during the school day. Both options require the same screening, training and ongoing support for both mentor and the child's family.

Children are referred to our program for various reasons, most commonly:

- Single-parent homes, most often a single mother with children;
- Low-income homes;
- Low self-esteem, academic issues and behavior issues; and
- Exposure to violence, criminal activity or the incarceration of a parent.

We strive to make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth, primarily through a professionally supported one-to-one relationship with a caring adult, and to assist them in achieving their highest potential as they grow to become responsible men and women.

HOIBBBS serves approximately 400 youth annually, and we believe mentors can provide these children hope. Mentoring develops many positive assets in children that are absolutely critical to their well-being. It is also a proven method for preventing negative behaviors.

Public/Private Ventures has published several landmark studies on the effectiveness of mentoring programs. This independent research solidified our Big Brothers Big Sisters method as the gold standard for mentoring. These findings confirmed that children matched with a Big Brother or Big Sister are:

- 46 percent less likely to begin using illegal drugs;
- 27 percent less likely to begin using alcohol;
- 52 percent less likely to skip school and 37 percent less likely to skip a class;
- More confident of their performance on schoolwork;
- One third less likely to resort to violence to solve a problem; and
- Better equipped to get along more effectively within their individual families.

The purpose of Big Brothers Big Sisters is to help children develop attributes that will help them find success in life. Through these mentoring relationships, we are helping the children in our program:

- Graduate from high school;
- Avoid involvement in the juvenile justice system; and
- Go to college or gain employment as contributing members of our community.

Upcoming Events

Golf Fore Kids' Sake
June 5, 2017
Country Club of Peoria

How to Help

Start Something Big in a child's life by becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister in our community-based program or in our Lunch Buddies program by calling our office. You can also support our services by making a tax-deductible donation at our website. For more information, email jeff@hoibbbs.org.