



Big Brothers Big Sisters.
OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

2024 Impact Report



IT TAKES LITTLE TO BE BIG

**Littles
have said**

87% WERE MORE CONFIDENT

79% WERE MORE EAGER TO LEARN

76% RELATED BETTER TO PEERS

73% IMPROVED ACADEMICALLY

Dear Supporters and Community Members,

We're excited and proud to share our annual Impact Report, celebrating a year of growth, resilience, and positive change for our Littles, their families, and our community. Your partnership has been essential to our success.

This year, we expanded our High School Big and Middle School Group Mentoring programs, opening new pathways for peer support and mentorship. We strengthened our mental health initiatives, teaching Littles skills like resilience and confidence through programs such as Natural High, which addresses substance misuse, and Ready, Resilient, Strong, which promotes mental wellness.

Thanks to generous donors, Littles enjoyed enriching experiences, some of which included exploring the Biltmore Estate, tackling ropes courses, attending therapy horse lessons, learning auto maintenance and engaging in gem mining. They gave back by participating with local Humane Societies and Senior Living Communities. These moments, along with milestone celebrations such as graduations and holiday parties, show our Littles that they're part of a caring community that believes in their potential.

We're incredibly proud of how staff and volunteers stepped up in disaster relief efforts, showcasing the power of relationships in times of need. We're enhancing programs with trauma-informed care, mental health resources, and resilience training to support our Littles in the aftermath.

Together, we're making a difference. Thank you for your ongoing support, which empowers us to continue inspiring young lives. We look forward to another impactful year with your help.



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“Amidst the heartache and pain ...

... I discovered a profound sense of purpose in giving back to my community. This experience not only deepened my empathy but illuminated the strength of connection. In these trying times, supporting one another has become a lifeline, reminding us, even in the darkest moments we can find hope and resilience together.”

Melissa Dale, program coordinator



In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, our agency has been deeply involved in relief efforts. Thanks to generous donations, we've been able to support our Littles, their families, volunteers, and our team through this challenging time. The BBBSWNC team has worked tirelessly to assess needs, deliver essential resources, and provide support for trauma-related stress and mental wellness for Littles affected by the storm.

We're especially grateful for the Board members, Advisory Councils, and Bigs, who have driven supplies, cooked meals, sorted clothes, and cleared debris alongside other agencies. Their dedication underscores our commitment - this is about more than short-term relief. Together, we stand as one as Western North Carolina rebuilds and recovers, no matter how long it takes.



ABOUT BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS



WINNING RECOGNITION, STRIVING HIGHER



Big Brothers Big Sisters of America has honored our agency with both the Growth Award, for increasing the total number of children served, and the Platinum Award, recognizing the exceptional dedication of our leadership and staff in delivering high-quality programming for our Littles.

GROUP MENTORING

Our Group Mentoring Program empowers youth by providing a safe space to discuss real-life challenges. Cohorts of 8 to 10 students, led by Group Mentors, meet for a semester. Guided by the "Restorative Practices" model, lessons cover conflict resolution, friendship building, stress management, future planning, and leadership. Sessions create a supportive, engaging environment where youth feel valued.



HIGH SCHOOL BIGS

The High School Bigs Program pairs high school students with elementary Littles for impactful, weekly mentoring relationships. High School Bigs meet their Littles during or after school, offering guidance, friendship, and support. Through activities like reading, games, and conversations, they provide positive role models, fostering empathy and responsibility. This helps Littles build confidence, improve academically, and develop a hopeful outlook on life.



BIG FUTURES



Big Futures aims to empower our Littles with the tools and experiences they need to thrive beyond high school. Through hands-on learning, mentorship, and exposure to diverse career paths, Big Futures helps Littles develop essential leadership and life skills. The program offers workshops, job shadowing, and networking opportunities that broaden career horizons and equip youth with practical skills like financial literacy, resume building, and goal setting. By fostering confidence and preparedness, Big Futures empowers Littles to step into adulthood ready to succeed and make a positive impact in their communities.

PROJECT MARS

Project MARS/AmeriCorps served 2,371 children during the 2023-24 school year. The results? 92% of the kids behaved better in school, and 91% had a better attitude about attendance. Twenty full-time and 30 half-time members served in Buncombe, Mitchell, Madison, Graham, Swain, Cherokee, and Transylvania counties.



BBBS LITTLES GIVE BACK

Throughout the year Littles and Bigs frequently volunteer at community activities such as Truck or Treat in Robbinsville, the Asheville Runway 5K, United Way's Days of Caring in Mills River, and many more. On MLK Day, matches created delicious treats for the Asheville Humane Society. BBBSWNC brought together hundreds of people to celebrate events like Día del Niño. Modeling service and giving back is BIG!



PERFECTION NOT REQUIRED

BEING BIG IS BEING REAL

Ready to make a lasting impact in your community? By becoming a mentor, you can change a young person's life – and yours too! As a Big, you'll be matched with a child (ages 6-16) who's waiting for a positive role model. Whether it's sharing a hobby, exploring the outdoors, or offering support, your time can create a ripple effect that lasts a lifetime.



Big Sister of the Year

When Little Sister Caitlyn wanted to open her own animal shelter, she and Hannah, now a BBBSWNC board member, volunteered at an animal adoption and rescue agency. When Caitlyn wanted to improve the world, she and Hannah adopted a street that they regularly clean. Together, they are changing the world. Caitlyn, once a struggling reader, has joined her school's A/B honor roll and is a key player on the school soccer team.



Big Brother of the Year

Admittedly a "less than perfect" kid, Big Brother Brendan is helping Aydien make better choices. Because of their relationship, Aydien is having fewer problems with family and teachers. With newfound pride, Aydien suggested the match start a pre-dawn workout. Aydien's courage "motivates me to be better and push myself harder in the gym," Brendan says, "as well as in other areas of my life."





SUPPORT GOES A LONG WAY

SPONSORS AND CONTRIBUTORS ARE BIG FOR BBBSWNC



Thank you for putting the "fun" in fundraising! From Bowl for Kids' Sake and Boots & BBQ to Fall Galas, Golf Cards, and Sporting Contests, your support makes each event unforgettable. We couldn't do it without you!

Yabba Dabba Do, our next Bowl For Kids' Sake fundraiser, is in March!



HOW MUCH GOES TO PROGRAMMING?

Our Littles in a snapshot

Programs **88%**
Administration **9%**
Fundraising **3%**



White 48% Black 23%
Hispanic 19% Asian 1% All others 5%
American Indian/Alaskan Native 4%

951 Number of children served
Children on waiting list **291**

Big Brothers Big Sisters. OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA



OUR MISSION

Create and support
one-to-one mentoring
relationships that ignite the
power and promise of youth

OUR VISION

All youth achieve
their full potential

LEARN



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