

**Lawrence Special Alcohol Fund  
Annual Grantee Program Report  
Big Brothers Big Sisters 2010**

**1. Give a brief narrative of the activities from July through December 2010, that were funded with City Alcohol Tax funds.**

As noted in the mid-year report, the funding allocation allowed us to maintain a full-time case manager who focuses specifically on the match process to get mentors for at-risk children. Over the balance of the year, this Case Manager has focused on intake of new volunteers to match with at-risk children.

This Case Manager now supports a match load of 57 community-based and 11 Bigs in Schools matches, and processes new volunteers and clients. Match support consists of contacting each member of a match – the volunteer, the client, and the client’s parent/guardian – once a month to ensure that the match is functioning well. If problems or issues are present then the Case Manager provides support and guidance. Volunteer processing consists of conducting interviews and home visits, obtaining references and background checks, training each new volunteer, and assessing the volunteer’s suitability for the program. Client processing consists of conducting an interview with both the child and the parent/ guardian, and assessing the child’s needs.

Case loads continued to grow during the second half of the year. By the end of the year the agency was supporting an active case load of more than 214 community-based matches and 107 school-based matches. Combined with turnover during the year, Big Brothers Big Sisters served 524 children (combined community program and Bigs in Schools program) during 2010. Numbers were slightly down from the previous year but significant management changes including the turnover of Executive Director and also of the Program Director caused significant hindrance to recruitment efforts. Match loads for Case Managers continue to be high and our quality of service has never faltered. Alcohol Tax funds continue to ensure that Big Brothers Big Sisters has adequate staffing to meet our program requirements.

Efforts continue to focus on recruitment of volunteers from community organizations as well as local businesses. Case Managers have joined in the effort to recruit volunteers, utilizing their relationships with current Bigs to spread the word about the program.

**2. Provide specific detail (and supportive documents, if needed) to demonstrate progress made toward the following items, as stated in your logic model:**

**a) Goals/objectives**

- Create and support at least 50 additional community-based matches
- Achieve a 10% growth in the overall number of children served
- Improve self-esteem
- Promote bonding with caring adults
- Improve academic performance
- Decrease likelihood of truancy
- Prevent aggression, acting out, antisocial behaviors
- Prevent early crime involvement
- Prevent early use of drugs and alcohol

In 2010, 91 new matches were made in the community based program. The number of total matches served fell by 22 matches since 2009. The 10% growth goal was not achieved.

For youth attitude evaluations, case managers continue to conduct Program Outcome Evaluation surveys at the six-month and one-year anniversaries of matches, in addition to the regular supervision interviews. The final numbers for 2010 indicate the great success our program has in the behavioral aspects of our goals. Those outcomes can be seen in the bullets below:

- **Improve self-esteem:**
  - 82.3% of children were reported to show better self confidence
  - 77.4% reported an improvement in ability to express feelings
  - 70.7% reported an improvement in decision making
- **Promote bonding with caring adults**
  - 81.1 % reported improved trust towards the volunteer
  - 59.5% reported improved relationships with family
  - 63.2% reported improved relationships with peers
  - 62.2% reported improved attitudes towards other adults.
- **Improve academic performance**
  - 72.7% reported improvements in academic performance
- **Decrease likelihood of truancy**
  - 66% show an improved attitude toward school
  - 57.1% report improvement in preparedness for school
- **Prevent aggression, acting out, antisocial behaviors**
  - 49.8% report improvement in classroom behavior
  - 58.6% report improvement in classroom participation
- **Prevent early crime involvement**
  - 45.2% reported an improved ability to avoid delinquency (this number does not take into account cases who opt out of this question because delinquency was not a problem before the match.)
- **Prevent early use of drugs and alcohol**
  - 43.7% reported an improved ability to avoid substance abuse (also does not account for cases that opted to not answer this question because substance abuse was not a problem before the match.)

#### **b) Strategies**

- Match children to carefully screened adult mentors

The screening process for volunteers, a standard protocol for all BBBS agencies in Kansas, is a very thorough one. Every volunteer must pass five background checks, receive a minimum of four positive references, provide acceptable answers during an interview, and prove, if a community-based match, that the home environment is suitable for a child to visit.
- Conduct 5-point background check on volunteers

The following agencies and registries are contacted to ensure a positive background check: Department of Motor Vehicles, Kansas Bureau of Investigation, State Child Abuse Registry, Court Diversions, and Registered Sex Offenders.

- Train volunteers in successful mentoring strategies

We have several training opportunities available for our volunteers. First is the initial orientation and screening, followed by a thorough review of agency policies, rules and procedures by the case manager at the time a match is initiated. Occasional group training sessions give volunteers information on age level characteristics, strategies to deal with common issues faced by the children - our "Littles," and a variety of other topics. The agency's monthly newsletter refers volunteers to community activities, training seminars, and other opportunities. We also have an extensive Resource Library available to our volunteers.

- Provide regular supervision by Case Managers to ensure match success

During the initial year of the match, the Case Manager contacts monthly our volunteer mentors – the "Bigs," the children in the matches – the "Littles," and a parent of every child. This can be done via phone, in person, or e-mail. A minimum of three contacts per year must be in person. Matches with more than one year's tenure receive quarterly contacts.

**c) Outcomes: Process, Behavioral and Impact**

As of December 31, 2010, we created 91 new community matches and 76 new Bigs in Schools matches. While this was slightly below our overall goals, we did exceed our goals for the share of matches provided by the funded position. The longevity of existing matches raised our active match count and our total children served for the year. This includes continuing matches, new matches and closed matches.

The US Department of Justice did a systematic review of more than 500 scientific evaluations of crime prevention practices. This study was done to identify what programs prevent crime. They identified what works, what doesn't work, and what's promising. Big Brothers Big Sisters is not modeled after a promising approach; it was identified as a working approach. The Department of Justice review identified that Community-based mentoring by Big Brothers Big Sisters substantially reduced drug abuse. They further stated that evaluations of other mentoring programs showed they did not work.

The Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence reviewed more than 400 delinquency, drug, and violence prevention programs. Of these 400 programs, ten were identified as a "Blueprint" agency, or a program that works. Big Brothers Big Sisters is one of the ten.

Big Brothers Big Sisters own internal statistical evaluations, taken from responses on the Program Outcome Evaluations, continue to show that the program is having a strong impact on the children served. Some representative factors include:

- 63% showed improvement in their attitude toward school
- 60% showed improvement in their class participation
- 65% showed improvement in their academic performance
- 82% of their children showed improvement in their self-confidence
- 66% of children showed improvement in their relationship with adults

37% of children felt more able to avoid substance abuse, and another 60% felt comfortable that they could avoid substance abuse.

That last statistic is particularly encouraging in that the positive guidance of a mentor, though providing no formal “anti-drug” or “anti-alcohol” training, does help change attitudes and is a preventative factor in the lives of these at-risk children.

**3. Review the 2010 line-item budget you provided in your application and summarize how the funds were used, giving detail to any changes that may have occurred since applying and receiving the grant.**

Funds allocated for 2010 were \$27,000, of which \$13,500 was received in April, 2010, and the balance in October 2010. As noted in the introduction, these funds provided for a full-time Case Manager enabling Big Brothers Big Sisters to serve more children. Without the support of the city’s Special Alcohol Tax funding, we likely could not have maintained that position, and those children would have missed the benefits of a formalized mentoring program.

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