
High School Big Buddy Mentors Make Big Impact in the Lives of Local Children

For Immediate Release

October 21, 2011

**Contact: Lisa Brown
BBBS of Shelby & Darke County, Inc.
(937) 492-7611**

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Shelby and Darke County is excited to announce that another great year of the Big Buddies program is up and running. This is the twelfth year the program has been in place. The Buddies program is an eight-month commitment where high school sophomores, juniors and seniors agree to work with and mentor elementary aged children two times per month. During these meetings, the high school students, under the supervision of Big Brothers Big Sisters staff, work with one or two children on different educational and recreational activities. The program continues to promote social and educational enhancing activities, as well as fitness, nutrition, and personal safety.

The Buddies program this year is at a total of five different sites in both counties for the 2011-2012 school year. These sessions are held at Woodland Heights and Versailles in Darke County, as well as Longfellow, Northwood, and Whittier Elementary Schools in Shelby County. “Due to the closing of Central Elementary, we were able to

establish a new site at Northwood, as it changed from an intermediate to an elementary school,” stated Executive Director Lisa Brown.

High school mentoring programs have become a widespread component of many nationally affiliated Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies. Studies prove that children from who spend time with a positive role model are more likely to become healthy productive adults. The Big Buddies program has proven beneficial not only for the “Littles” but for the high school volunteers, as well.

The agency is pleased to announce that all after-school programs are up and running! This year we kicked off the programs with a total of 126 volunteers from Ansonia, Anna, Botkins, Christian Academy, Edison, Fort Loramie, Greenville, Houston, Jackson Center, JVS, Lehman, Russia, Sidney & Versailles.

The following high school volunteers for the fall of 2011 are:

Ansonia: Nichole Birt, James Drees, Kelsey Gelhaus, Alysia Hoying, Kari Kramer, Kelsey Kremer, Sierra Leonard, Jennifer Mayo, Katie Yount. **Greenville:** Pankti Bhausar, Britnee Dunfree, Jeanna Gnade, Savannah Hauberg, Amanda Helfrich, Samantha Jay, Brittany Kuhn, Will McCabe, Ryan Simons, Brandi Spille, Douglas Taylor, Jessica Thompson, Hugo Vanderwalt. **Versailles:** Logan Adkins, Cole Albers, Courtney Anderson, Sharon Baltes, Josie Barga, Bridget Berger, Brittany Brand, Tori Bulcher, Maddy Buschur, Cassidy Condon, Alex Cordonnier, Samantha Dilsaver, Macy Drees, Katie Grieshop, Allison Grilliot, Jessica Heitkamp, Joel Hemmelgarn, Megan Hemmelgarn, Todd Higelfort, Sumer Keenan, Madison Keiser, Megan Knapke, Samantha Kremer, Kristen Kueterman, Kacie Lawrence, Emily Marshal, Abbie Monnin, Kelly Murphy, Jenny Neiberg, Brooke Robinson, Haylie Schlater, Rebecca Shreffler,

Kori York. **Anna:** Keavash Assani, Kara Baker, Kayla Blankenship, Alissa Brown, Zach Hess, Amanda Hoehne, Courtney Inman, Kasia Krauss, Kathy Latimer, Ryan Smith. **Botkins:** Heather Brown, Nate Cisco, Faye Kennedy, Caitlin Lane, Colleen Maurer, Preston Running Hawk, Abby Russell. **Christian Academy:** Anna Congdon, Ashley Inman, Lauren Jenkins, Caleb Ordean. **Edison:** Elizabeth Butcher. **Fairlawn:** Emily Boerger, Tori Butterfield, Olivia Cummings, Trey Fletcher, Samantha Morris, Samantha Sayre, Alexis Smith. **Fort Loramie:** Hillary Blagg, Mandesha Thornton. **Houston:** Sara Bensman, Layla Ivey, Lena Kellerman, Cynthia Larger, Kyle Patterson, Rachel Slater, Jill Walker, Alyssa Yia. **Jackson Center:** Tabatha Myers, Jakeb Woodrum. **JVS:** Elizabeth Smith. **Lehman:** Emily Bensman, Mackenzie Brown, Madilyn Brown, Abby Ciriegio, Laura Cisco, Meghan Earhart, Lexie Froning, Joe Fuller, Carley Harrod, Alyx Meyers, Katie Rossman, Marla Schroeder, Masie Sherman, Lexi Steineman, Matthew Ulrich. **Russia:** Danielle Francis. **Sidney:** Christina Akin, Abigail Ball, Zara Boyer, Kassi Edwards, Bethany Erickson, Morgan Headings, Kayla Oldiges, Samantha Sharpe, Audrey Snavley, Lillian Wildermuth, Kaitlyn Wolfe.

In addition to our after-school program, the agency has 103 community-based matches throughout Shelby and Darke County. These matches meet with each other twice a month for outings which are planned around the volunteer's schedule. The goal of the community-based program is to match a local child with an adult mentor, who can serve as a positive role model, and expose the child to enhancing and uplifting activities. There are still over 40 children waiting for a Big Brother or Sister in the program, so now is the time to think about how you could put a little sparkle into the life of a child! If you are interested in becoming a

mentor in our community-based program, please call 547-9622 or 492-7611 for more information.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Shelby & Darke County is a United Way member agency and an affiliate of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. If you would like more information about how to become a volunteer, you may visit the agency web site at www.bigbrobigsis-shelbydarke.org or call the Sidney office at (937)492-7611 or the Greenville office at (937)547-9622.



Photo: Big & Little Buddies work together to build a tower during an after-school session.