

TESTIMONIAL FROM A BIG SISTER/LITTLE SISTER MATCH

For Immediate Release

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Connie Hamilton, age 64, and Ashley Schoffner, age 17, both of Sidney, represent a successful Big Sister/Little Sister match within the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Shelby & Darke County agency. Their relationship shows the positive impact of mentoring. They were matched in May, 2002, and now have more than nine years of meeting twice a month for activities they both enjoy.

Ashley is the granddaughter of Orville and Sandy Schoffner. She was enrolled in the program at age 5, before starting kindergarten, when she was in need of a positive role model and additional learning experiences to expand her social skills. At that time, she enjoyed drawing, coloring, playing dress-up, and watching cartoons.

Connie volunteered to become a Big Sister mentor in 2002 because her two daughters were Big Sisters, and she understood the importance of the program in the lives of vulnerable children. She worked as a beautician and childcare provider, as well as teaching Sunday school. Because she is quiet and patient, she deals well with young children. Connie enjoys fishing, hiking, picnicking, roller skating, cooking, gardening, pets, museums, reading, arts and crafts, board games, movies, dining out, and music.

Connie proved to be a dependable, positive role model who soon became a needed friend and mentor for her Little Sister.

Ashley appreciated the attention and the time they spent together. Some of their outings have been to parks, fairs, museums, the library, theatrical performances, and art exhibits. They have enjoyed shopping, eating out, playing games and cards, baking and decorating cupcakes to share, decorating pumpkins, making Valentines and birthday cards, and other crafts they can give to friends.

The activities and interaction through the years has helped Ashley mature in personality and develop social skills. She has learned care and respect for others, as well as appropriate behavior, such as being polite.

Connie thought maybe the need for her Big Sister role would decrease as Ashley is getting older, but has appreciated the friendship they have developed through the years. Ashley trusts Connie and can confide in her. Connie is there for Ashley, still meeting twice each month.

This successful match, with nine years of experience, has developed into a lasting relationship built on trust and stability. So even when the match has to close when Ashley graduates from high school, per Big Brother Big Sisters of America guidelines, Connie and Ashley will continue to meet and share their friendship and life experiences!

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Shelby & Darke County is a non-profit United Way member, social service agency. Lisa Brown is Executive Director of the agency. The program specializes in matching children from at-risk families with adult volunteer Big Brothers and Sisters. These adults provide children with positive role modeling, as well as new educational and social activities. If you would like to make the difference in the life of a child but are unable to volunteer at this time, Big Brothers Big Sisters has many other opportunities throughout the year for others to become involved. Learn more about our agency by logging onto www.bigbrobigsis-shelbydarke.org or calling 937-547-9622 or 937-492-7611.



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