

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS HOSTS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

For Immediate Release

Thursday, December 20, 2007

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

—Big Brothers Big Sisters of Shelby County held its annual Christmas Party on Monday, December 3rd at the Sidney American Legion Hall. Approximately 125 people joined in the celebration to kick off the holiday season and honor our volunteer mentors. Those in attendance were comprised of community volunteer mentors, area high school volunteers, program Littles, representatives from the Big Brothers Big Sisters Board of Trustees and agency staff.

The festive evening included a carry-in meal, as well as, entertainment provided by the Sidney Dance Company. Santa concluded the evening with a visit and gifts for all Littles in the program.

During the evening, new volunteers for 2007 were honored. New Big Brother and Big Sister volunteers in Shelby County include, Sarah Buehler, Kirsty Briggs, Amber Couchot, Dusti Fisher, Tiffany Frasure, Christopher Geissler, Jenna Geissler, Ryan Johnson, Amy Odberding, Elizabeth Polston, Mary Robinson, Jennifer Salinas, Yvonne Schmidt, and

John Shurts. New volunteers for Darke County include; Bruce Heft, Gayle Kinnison, Mike & Liz Kniesly, Brad Koopman, Alice Rayburg, Samantha Tomlin, Scott & Kim Ward, Bruce & Mary Williams, and Stephanie York. The agency has a total of 90 core volunteers throughout the two county area.

In addition to the above volunteers, there are currently 113 high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors who volunteer with a site-based Big Buddies Program at Central, Whittier, Lowell, Longfellow, and Jackson Center Elementary Schools.

The local agency currently has a waiting list of over 75 children in Shelby County waiting to be matched with a volunteer mentor. The agency is promoting volunteer recruitment at this time in an effort to reduce the large waiting list of children from the area in need of a mentor. Agency representatives are available to make presentations to area service groups or interested parties regarding the Big Brothers Big Sisters program and the need for volunteers.

The local agency is a non-profit United Way Agency specializing in mentoring 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. "We can never underestimate the powerful and lasting impact of the mentoring relationships fostered by the Big Brothers Big Sisters initiative," said Board President, Stephanie Klingshirn. These positive role models go a long way in helping the children develop into their full potential."

If you would like to become a volunteer and put a little magic in the life of a child this holiday season please call the BBBS office at 492-7611 Or 937-547-9622 or you can log on to the agency website at www.bigbrobigsis-shelbydarke.org. "Volunteers are critical to the success of this program. The more volunteers we can recruit and train the more children in the area we can match," said Lisa Brown, Director of the local Big Brothers Big Sisters Program. "It's easy to get involved and only takes a few hours a month to make a big difference in a child's life. Couples and families can even volunteer their time together."

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. Our annual fund raising event, Bowl for Kids' Sake is quickly approaching and volunteers are needed in many different capacities. This event is scheduled for Sunday, March 9, 2007 at Bel-Mar Lanes in Sidney and McBo's Lanes in Versailles.