OUR COMMITMENT

At Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, we believe that all children and youth deserve to live in a world that makes them feel cared for and protected.

Helping to ensure the safety and well-being in the life of every child that engages with one of our local agencies is our highest priority.

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF CARING ADULTS IN PREVENTING VIOLENCE AND HEALING TRAUMA

As a nationwide organization, we are committed to being part of the solution toward reducing the violence and victimization children and youth face, and addressing the impact of trauma in children’s lives across the hundreds of communities served by our local agencies.

Research shows that children need caring adults in their lives to build protective factors that help to reduce their chances of victimization of all kinds.

Research also demonstrates that caring adults can play a critically important role in helping to heal youth that have been exposed to violence and trauma in their neighborhoods, schools, communities and sometimes their own homes.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

If you have any questions or concerns, contact your local affiliate through www.bbbs.org/get-involved or contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of America at child safety@bbbsa.org

YOUTH PROTECTION IN BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Brought to you by Big Brothers Big Sisters.
Adverse Childhood Experiences research informs us that more than 50% of children in the U.S. will experience at least one type of trauma. Some children will experience multiple types of trauma, severe enough to negatively impact their ability to learn, grow, and develop their full potential.

Nationally Required Standards of Excellence

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) affiliated agencies are separate 501©3 organizations that have the primary responsibility for risk management and youth protection in their organizations. This includes the establishment of local policies and procedures that best protect youth, effective screening and selection of staff and volunteers, and professional monitoring of match relationships.

For decades, BBBSA has worked with local agencies and national violence prevention experts to implement nationwide standards based on industry best practices of high quality in service delivery. On a constant basis, we work with agencies and outside experts to carefully examine our standards and service delivery model as emerging best practices in child safety evolve.

Training in Child Protection

Everyone associated with a Big Brothers Big Sisters program, including professional staff, parents, volunteers, children and board members, is required to be trained in recognizing and responding to suspected child abuse.

Parents as Partners

When it comes to the future of our children and the well-being of our communities, we are all in this together. So it should come as no surprise that we need the parents and guardians of Littles to be involved every step of the way. Parents approve the selection of their child’s Big and remain in close contact with professional staff to look out for their child’s best interests and to help achieve the best possible outcomes for their child. Parents approve all activities and outings between Bigs and Littles and communicate regularly with their child and their Big to help ensure healthy and safe relationship development.

Screening & Selection of Bigs

Making the best possible match between a Little and a Big is critical to the growth and development of a child. But before we begin the matching process, agency professional staff start by thoroughly screening potential Bigs.

Big Brothers Big Sisters National Standards of Excellence require each volunteer to complete an extensive screening process that includes:

- Completion of a formal written application
- Background and reference checks
- An in-person interview
- Professional monitoring of adherence to safety-related policies and procedures focused on maintaining appropriate boundaries and healthy relationship development
- Nationwide technology that tracks and monitors match activities and Littles’ progress in areas such as academics, avoidance of risky behaviors, socio-emotional development, and aspirations

Realize the impact of trauma and the potential for recovery

Respond by integrating knowledge into policies, procedures and practices

Seek to actively reduce re-traumatization

Safeguarding Children in Local Big Brothers Big Sisters Programs

Sadly, all youth serving organizations, including sports, schools, recreation, and mentoring programs, face the reality that the children served may be hurt by the adults who are supposed to protect them. Each Big Brothers Big Sisters agency has put in place important policies, procedures, and training designed to help keep children safer while participating in a local program.

Child sexual abuse is a tragic and complex societal issue. Although leading experts report that annual rates of substantiated child sexual abuse in the U.S. have declined significantly over the past two decades, we recognize that childhood victimization remains much too prevalent. Experts believe that in the U.S., 1 out of 4 girls, and 1 out of 6 boys will be sexually abused by the age of