



JANUARY 2022 • VOL. 1

MATCH SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF METRO ATLANTA



Match Highlight / Tip • Page 2

Match Activities / Mentor Resources • Page 3

Teen Central • Page 4

Important Reminders • Page 5

Get to Know Us • Page 6

Celebrating National Mentoring Month!

BY SUSAN STUBBS, EDITOR

Mentoring has been growing in popularity as both a prevention and intervention strategy over the past decades. It provides youth with mentors who can develop an emotional bond with the mentee by sharing life experiences and wisdom, and providing support, guidance, and opportunities to help youth succeed in life and meet their goals. On behalf of BBBSMA, we would like to take this opportunity and say **THANK YOU** to all of our volunteers in the program because without your service, this valuable gift of mentoring would not be possible for our Littles!

As we begin another blessed year, it is important to implement goals in the match relationship so youth can stay focused and on track. Our match support specialists will be asking every match for a goal(s) to work on throughout the year and will be reviewed for progression throughout the updates and assessed at the match's anniversary. The following suggestions can help our matches achieve and set their goals:

- create a vision board and set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time Bound) **check out the third mentor resource article on pg. 3 for guidance*
- define a strategy and action plan (ex. improve communication with mentor and schedule call to speak every Wednesday at 3pm)
- keep track of progress



Match Highlight of the Month

BY MARVIN BROADDUS, SENIOR MATCH SUPPORT SPECIALIST



BIG SISTER SABRINA and **LITTLE SISTER AALIYAH** were matched in March 2021, and were matched because of their shared interest in art! Being virtual for the first 3 months of their relationship, Sabrina had to get creative with getting Aaliyah to open up. Then she remembered their shared passion of art so they spent several Zoom meetings painting and drawing; this helped Aaliyah to express help thoughts and feelings more easily. They were able to successfully complete their virtual time period and have successfully transitioned to community outings. They were so excited to meet one another for the first time and decided to further explore their passion of art together and went to a paint studio and had a blast! Most recently, they were able to worked with a team of other Bigs and Littles to help paint the mural that can be seen on the exterior of our new BBBSMA Headquarters and were so grateful for this opportunity! It has now been 9 months and Sabrina has expressed how much more open her Little Sister Aaliyah has become with her, and they are both looking forward to continuing their relationship for years to come through art and sisterhood!



Match Tip of the Month:

Decide on Virtual and In- Person Outings Together

Part of being in a relationship is to compromise with one another. Explore each other's interests and decide together on what to do for outings!

MATCH ACTIVITY IDEAS AND EVENTS

V Virtual Event

O Ongoing BBBSMA Partnership

I In Person

● College Football Hall of Fame **I**

Thanks to a generous donation from Georgia Power company, Bigs, Littles, and Families can attend the College Football Hall of Fame as part of a VIP tour with a social justice playbook on 01/08/22, 10:00am - 12pm. Email Brynn Crosby, brynn.crosby@bbbsatl.org to reserve tickets (limit of 4 tickets per person) and for more info.

● Celebrate MLK Jr. Day **I** **V**

Celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in his hometown of Atlanta through a variety of virtual and in-person activities. Click [here](#) for more info.

● Repticon **I**

Matches can now experience and learn about the exotic reptiles and animals from around the world. There are multiple locations and dates and choose what best suits your fancy! Click [here](#) for more info.

● Havana Eats **V**

Matches can participate in this virtual cooking class and learn how to make a variety of delicious cuban dishes including flavorful black beans, sheet-pan chicken and traditional fried plantains. Click [here](#) for more info.

● Vatican Museum & Sistine Chapel **V**

Get the chance to enjoy an unforgettable experience in one of the most fascinating and most visited museums in the world, the Vatican Museums! Home to some of Italy's most important artworks—from paintings and sculptures to tapestries and classical antiquities. Click [here](#) for more info.

● American Sign Language Lesson

See how language and fun come together to create learning and progress with no-voice instruction to give you an understanding of ASL. The best way to learn a language is to use it - so come prepared to participate! Click [here](#) for more info. **V**

Mentoring Resources to Empower Bigs

ARTICLES

- [What is My Role as a Mentor?](#)
- [Expressing Gratitude in Mentoring](#)
- [How to help your mentee set and achieve their own goals](#)
- [5 Tips on Using Music as a Mentorship Tool](#)
- [Setting Boundaries](#)
- [50 Things to Do with Your Mentee](#)
- [Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors](#)

WEBSITES

- [BBBSMA's Match Resources](#)
- [BBBSMA's Virtual Activity Guide](#)
- [ATL Bigs](#) on Facebook
- [MENTOR](#)
- [Mentorga](#)
- [The Search Institute](#)
- [PFLAG](#) (supports LGBTQ+)



TEEN CENTRAL

Teen Central is a resource page supported by the Big Futures program that contains valuable resources available through our agency and in the community including scholarships, career programs, workshops, and more to support BBBSMA's teens and their future.

.....

V Virtual Event **O** Ongoing BBBSMA Partnership **I** In Person **R** Resource

★ **BBBSMA's College Essay Writing Assistance**

In partnership with Equal Edge, high school seniors will have the opportunity to work with a professional writing coach to compose strong essays and write their way into the college of their choice! Few slots left and email Susan Stubbs, susan.stubbs@bbbsatl.org to express your interest and get started. **O** **V**

★ **National USA Gap Year Fair**

Attention, High School Seniors! Tune in to learn the ins and outs of gap year planning from expert gap year counselors, then catch a few info sessions at the fair. Both counselors and program providers will be available to speak to directly and answer any questions you might have. Please note that the provider info sessions will NOT be recorded, so plan to tune in live and come prepared with questions! Click [here](#) for more info. **V**

★ **Volunteer Opportunities for Youth**

Besides building character and finding out what excites them in life, volunteering also teaches youth important life skills that aren't always as easy to teach in school. They learn hard work ethic and gain the confidence they need to become leaders among their peers. Most importantly, they learn the importance of helping and caring for others while giving back to their communities. Click [here](#) for a list of opportunities. **V**

★ **BBBSMA's Big Futures High School Resources**

Whether a high school Little is considering higher education, military service, or preparing to join the workforce, our online resources offer roadmaps to success and other things to keep in mind along the journey. Click [here](#) to access the resources on our website. **R**

★ **Year Up Career Program**

In partnership with BBBSMA, Year Up is a career readiness program that supports young adults 18- 26 to move from minimum wage to meaningful careers in just 12 months. This opportunity is available for all high school seniors who plan to attend Atlanta Metropolitan College and will gain 12- 22 college credits after successfully graduating from the program. Click [here](#) for more information and [here](#) to register for an informational session. **Ensure to add "BBBSMA" as your referral source. **I** **O**

★ **Coding for Women by Women**

Event will discuss the approaches to beginner problems, share resources that helped get on the road to code, answer questions learners may have, and more. These events will discuss fundamental JavaScript concepts and computer science terminology to provide the building blocks to tackle code on your own. Click [here](#) for more info. **V**

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Communication with your Match Support Specialist

Maintaining consistent communication with us is vital to the success of the match relationship. Please inform of any challenges that you are experiencing so we can work through them together and ensure to schedule your appointment on a timely basis. A lack of communication will lead to match closure.

Survey Completion

The Strength of Relationship survey is important for you to complete because it allows us to better understand how your match is progressing. It is a short survey to complete and is automatically sent to your email 45 days before they are due. Please ensure to complete it as they provide us with valuable feedback so we can better support your match.

Important Update Regarding Overnight Stays

Please be advised that overnight stays will no longer be permitted between Bigs and Littles as of 1/1/2022. The National Big Brothers Big Sisters' office has decided this is in the best interest for our matches. Please talk to your Match Support Specialist if you have any further questions regarding this change.

***Note: this change is only relevant for matches made prior to 1/1/2018. If you were matched after this date, overnight stays were never permitted.**

COVID-19 Match Safety Checklist

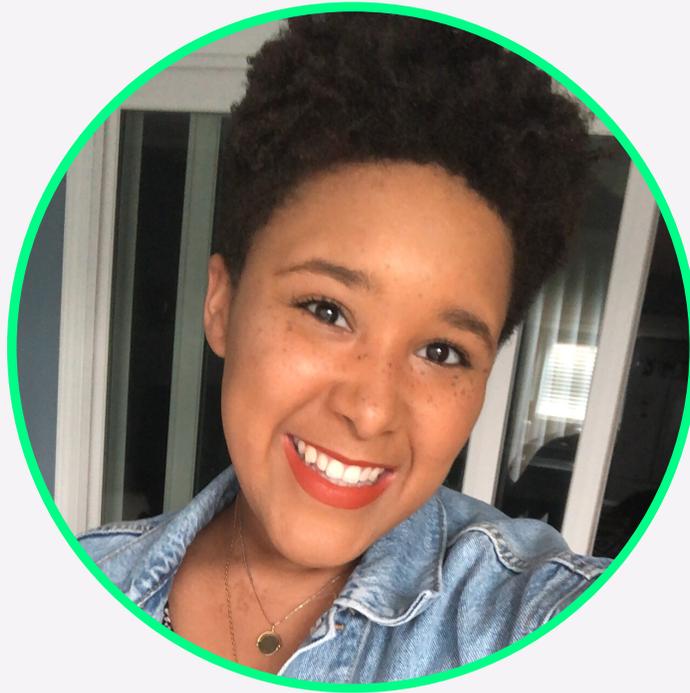
Safety and health will always be our main priorities for our community-based matches. If your match decides to meet in person, we strongly encourage all matches to follow the [CDC](#) guidelines:

-
-
- ✔ get vaccinated and boosted to protect yourself and others
 - ✔ wear a proper mask, use hand sanitizer and wash hands often
 - ✔ monitor your health daily and be aware of any symptoms
 - ✔ choose to do an activity that provides social distancing
 - ✔ discuss the level of exposure and comfortability in the community for all parties in the match, including parent/guardian
 - ✔ meet in an open, well-ventilated area and avoid groups of people



If a Big or Little has been infected or exposed, please **DO NOT** meet in person. Quarantine yourself for the time recommended by the CDC and ensure you test negative before resuming outings. You can continue to maintain the relationship through phone or virtual chats and reach out to your MSS for further support.

GET TO KNOW US



Brynn Crosby

Program Events and Activities Coordinator

MEET BRYNN!

Brynn has been a part of BBBSMA team since June 2021 and has made valuable contributions by creating and organizing fun and exciting events for the Bigs and Littles in our program. She ensures that all our matches have an opportunity each month to get together and learn something new while having fun and continuing to create a lifelong bond with one another. She is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Social Work at the University of Georgia and will be graduating next spring which she is very excited about!

When Brynn is not studying or planning an activity, she enjoys baking, reading, and listening to crime podcasts. Thanks, Brynn for your efforts with ensuring our matches have enjoyable activities to partake in!