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MATCH SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF METRO ATLANTA

THANK
you

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Importance of Expressing Gratitude

BY SUSAN STUBBS, EDITOR

Expressing gratitude is one of the most important things you can do in any relationship or partnership. Taking the moment to reflect on who and what we are grateful for in our lives has a number of benefits which includes fostering a deeper connection and trustworthiness, improving mental and emotional strength, and increasing empathetic thought and behavior to name a few. As Thanksgiving is approaching, it is important for matches to take the time to state why they are grateful to be in this mentoring relationship with one another.

The following are some conversation starters matches can use to begin expressing gratitude:

- I am grateful for...
- I appreciate it when you...
- I find it very helpful when you...
- I value you and try to show you by...
- Your partnership with me means...
- Our conversations help me...
- This relationship has given me...

MATCH HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH



BY RAMZEE MCGEE- WILLIAMS
MATCH SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Little Brother **Jacob** and Big Brother **Bob** have been matched for six months, but they are a true example of "time doesn't matter". It has been a match made in heaven from the beginning and they started with virtual meetings but then met in person a few weeks later. For their first outing, they went to the park and had a great time. At some point, they played a game of cops and pretended to be partners. Jacob described their outing as "the best ever" and stated, "It was fun playing games with my Big." When Big Brother Bob was asked what his biggest success as a mentor has been, he answered, "My biggest success has been the relationship we have built and being able to connect with him through humor has been a great experience." Ms. Jordan, Jacob's mom, has been very supportive of their relationship and believes they are a perfect fit. In just half a year that they've been matched, she has already seen the impact the relationship has had on Jacob evidenced by his excitement when he sees Bob. They have such a strong connection and talk weekly through Zoom along with going places like the Georgia State Fair, The Pumpkin Patch, and playing games. They both truly cherish and enjoy their each other's company.



Match Tip of the Month:

" Say Thank You!"

Matches can write a letter, text, or email a message to one another expressing gratitude. It does not matter how you express it, as long as the other person feels appreciated!

- Susan Stubbs, BFC

MATCH ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

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

● **BBBSMA's STE(A)M TRUCK**

In partnership with BBBSMA, matches will have the opportunity to engage in activities that involve science, technology, engineering, arts, and math. Workshops will be held every second Saturday of the month and the next one will be on 11/12 from 10 am- 12 pm at BBBSMA. To sign up, click [here](#) and space is limited. **I** **O**

● **Native American Festival and Pow Wow**

Matches can now experience the energy and color of the largest Native American gathering in Georgia. Featuring dance, music, authentic craft demonstrations, cooking traditions, storytelling, wildlife presentations, and more. Click [here](#) for more info. **I**

● **Garden Holiday Lights**

Matches can expect new twists, including an all-new exhibition in the Anne Cox Chambers Garden by French artist Cédric LeBorgne and three massive sculptures from the spring/summer exhibition, ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN. Click [here](#) for more info. **I**

● **UPS Second Sunday at High Museum of Art**

On the second Sunday of each month, they offer FREE admission for all visitors and special family-friendly programming! Enjoy art-making activities, performances, and the High's permanent collection and special exhibitions. Click [here](#) for more info. **I**

● **Atlanta Air Show**

The Atlanta Air Show soars over Peachtree City on Nov 5-6, 2022 featuring the U.S. Navy Blue Angels when the AirDotShowLive Tour lands at Atlanta Regional Airport! Click [here](#) for more info. **I**

● **Dia de Muertos**

For the first time ever, the traditional Day of the Dead Festival will take place at historic Oakland Cemetery! Visitors of all ages will learn what it is about and will enjoy traditional dancing, crafts, authentic Mexican food, and entertainment. Dressing up for the occasion is encouraged and there will be a costume contest. Click [here](#) for more info. **I**

Mentoring Resources to Empower Bigs

ARTICLES / VIDEOS

- [Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors](#)
- [5 Ways to Use Gratitude to Grow Stronger Relationships](#)
- [100 Ideas to Use When Mentoring Youth](#)
- [13 Most Popular Gratitude Exercises & Activities](#)
- [How to help your mentee set and achieve their own goals](#)

WEBSITES

- [BBBSMA's Match Resources](#)
- [Atlanta Parent Magazine](#) (outing ideas)
- [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 initiative 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.

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★ Big Futures' College Essay Writing Assistance Now Available!

In collaboration with Equal Edge, high school juniors and seniors are highly encouraged to take advantage of this amazing opportunity! Students and parents will meet with Mike for the first virtual session and learn how to get started with composing strong essays to get into the college of their choice! Email Susan Stubbs, susan.stubbs@bbbsat.org to get started! **V O R**

★ Readiness Workshop for High School Girls

Girls will learn important skills and knowledge such as developing a positive attitude, money matters, discovering your purpose, college, and career prep, making good life decisions, and much more. Click [here](#) to register! **I**

★ Scholarships Resources for Latino Students

This quick guide offers links to websites that contain information on scholarships and financial aid for Latino college students, as well as helpful resources for applying to college. Resources include the Hispanic College Fund, the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute, and Sally Mae, among others. Click [here](#) for access. **R**

★ 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 include college roadmaps, life skills, life paths, and the future planning form that will help Little be prepared for their journey. Click [here](#) to access the resources on our website. **R**

★ Girls Link Up for College-Soaring to Success

Girls Inc. will host a Girls Link Up for College event to help inspire girls to create early connections to post-secondary education. The theme of this year's event is "Soaring to Success". They will host an array of women professionals, college students, influencers, and civic leaders in an afternoon of workshops, social activities, and panel discussions. Click [here](#) to register. **I**

★ HIRETEEN: Teen Job Resource

Are you a teen who is ready to enter the workforce or is looking for another job? HIRETEEN is a resource job bank that contains current job listings based on the county you live in. To get started, click [here](#). **R**

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Communication with your Match Support Specialist

Maintaining consistent communication with us is vital to the success of your match relationship and please inform us of any challenges that you are experiencing or questions you may have so we can work through them together. Ensure to also schedule your appointment on a timely basis by using our scheduling system and keep in mind that a lack of communication may lead to match closure.

Survey Completion

The Strength of Relationship survey is important for Bigs and Littles to complete because it allows us to better understand how your match is progressing. It is a short survey to complete and you will receive an automated reminder via email and text. Please ensure to complete it because it provides valuable feedback for us to know how to better support your relationship.

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. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America headquarters have decided this is in the best interest of our matches. If you have any further questions regarding this change, talk to your Match Support Specialist for guidance and support.

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

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:

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- ✔ 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.