

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kawartha Lakes-Haliburton
Executive Director's 2017 Report

Mentoring programs offer children, youth and their single parent or guardian some hope that they do not have to face the challenges of society without assistance. This organization continues to work hard at recruiting volunteers to serve as caring mentors for children and youth. We feel that success isn't reached through quantity but rather the quality of the relationship we help create.

The year of 2017 was a year of sacrifices by the staff and our stakeholders as the organization worked to stabilize the finances. The case managers had to continue their duties with less hours, but with the same expectations. The demand for mentoring services continued and the staff were able to maintain service for the children and youth.

Our service delivery reach includes all of The City of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County, a very vast area for a small organization to cover, which is a testament to the abilities of staff and board to provide quality programs.

The benefits that our community receives from mentoring programs included youth attending post secondary education at a higher rate than if they were not involved with a mentor, youth having a better chance of securing employment, youth having financial literacy and being more successful as adults. Children and youth who have been mentored tend to give back to their community as adults through volunteerism and donations. Additionally, this organization provides camp opportunities, books and other educational items through donations from Scholastic Canada.

The mentoring success is accomplished with the support of United Way and other funders. We were fortunate to receive other local funding in 2017 from The City of Kawartha Lakes Community Social Investment Fund, which was very helpful in assisting with the continued provision and growth of mentoring programs during a difficult financial year for this organization. Our partnership continued with Commonwell Mutual Insurance through our continued inclusion in their Christmas Tree Giveaway, with BBBS receiving any donation and their donation of funds from their annual golf tournament.

The organization continues to hold yearly fundraisers to supplement United Way funding. These events include Wing Fest, Bowl for Kids Sake, The Enforcers Dance and BIG Dinner/Auction; all continue to be well attended. We also participate in other small fundraisers such as Paint Nite, Tag Day, BBQ's and the great Canoe Raffle by big brother Ted Garrels, as well as accepting support through third party events. Our major events continued to receive presenting sponsorships through local business such as Zack Kennedy of Kennedy's Quality Major Appliances and The Flat Panel Shop and Nissan Economy Wheels. Many businesses stepped forward to sponsor The Enforcers Dance and we have some wonderful sponsors of the Bowl for Kids Sake that come back on a yearly basis. This organization continues to always look at new ways to raise funds to support mentoring programs.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Executive of the Board for being so supportive throughout the whole year! I would like to thank all the employees and Board members for their dedication and commitment to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kawartha Lakes-Haliburton. Everyone's efforts during 2017 resulted in the organization being in a more secure position to continue its operations. I look forward to working with everyone during the year 2018.