



Big Brothers Big Sisters

OF JEFFERSON, ELK AND MCKEAN COUNTIES

A Program of The Guidance Center

1-877-776-1636

UPDATES FROM BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF AMERICA by Cinde Schuckers

As many of you are aware, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Jefferson, Elk, and McKean Counties (BBBS-JEM) is an affiliate of National BBBS of America. What does this mean? It means we abide by their Standards of Practice, and use their Service Delivery Model in order to provide support to the children, youth and families we serve; and to our volunteers.

National BBBS is undergoing some major changes. Most of these are needed to bring the program up-to-date and better in line with today's lifestyle and trends. This includes revising the Standard of Practice, updating the program image and look, and revising program requirements for affiliate programs like us.

We feel our volunteers should be aware of these changes in hopes of providing you with a better understanding of the BBBS-JEM program and what these changes will mean to us.

One of the first changes initiated is focused on what is needed for a program to remain an affiliate of National BBBS. The new minimum requirements are:

- Maintain an annual revenue amount of \$200,000.00
- Maintain 3 Full Time Equivalent Staff
- Serve 100 matches annually

BBBS-JEM is working towards all of these goals, however, we do have our work cut out for us. Our program served 43 matches for 2017-2018 fiscal year. This means we will need to recruit more volunteers among the three counties to help us reach the goal of 100 matches. Your suggestions and help would be greatly appreciated. Email us your ideas at bbbs@guidancecenter.net.

~ AUGUST Match Anniversaries ~

Big Sister Carrie & Little Sister Joshalynn - 2 years

Big Brother Roger & Little Brother Jace - 5 years

Big Sister Bonnie & Little Sister Madison - 4 years

Big Brother Jerome & Little Brother Cayden - 1 year

WAY TO GO!!!

Here's five ways to help children develop good decision-making skills.

1. Allow children to practice making choices. Give children opportunities to make choices. It is important that the choice really is theirs, so provide options that you will be happy with no matter what they choose. Showing interest in their choice helps to reinforce that you see their decision as important.

2. Talk about everyday decisions. Involve children in your own decision-making. For example, you might say, "I'm trying to decide whether to take up a sport to get fit or go to a dance class. Which do you think I should do?" Talk through the advantages and disadvantages of each suggestion so your child can learn how to thoughtfully evaluate different options.

3. Support children to use decision-making steps. As children develop their skills for thinking through decisions, teach them these steps of decision-making and show them how to use them effectively:

- identify the decision to be made
- think of options
- evaluate the options and choose the best one
- put your choice into action and check how it works

4. Ask questions that promote thoughtful decisions.

Asking open-ended questions like, "What do you like about that?", "What makes this the best option?", "How would this work?"

5. Encourage children to set achievable goals.

Appropriate goals for children to choose include developing a new skill (eg. learning to play chess, learning to swim), improving performance in school work or in an area of particular interest (eg. learning to play a particular piece of music, master a difficult skill in sport), or earning pocket money to save for something special.

For more details, go to: <https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au>.

A Letter to Myself

Directions: Write a letter to your future self, to be opened and read at the end of the school year. Use the guidelines below to help you compose your letter. During the last week of school, you will look back to see how much you have grown throughout the school year.

GUIDELINES

- Remember to use proper letter format (include the date you write it, a greeting, and a closing).
- Be mindful of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.
- Your letter should address all of the following questions:
 - What do you like and dislike about school?
 - What is your favorite and least favorite subjects?
 - What are you good at? What is difficult for you?
 - What are you looking forward to this year?
 - What would you like to learn?
 - What are your goals for the year?
 - How will you reach them?
- Ask someone to help you edit and revise before publishing a final draft.
- Place the letter in an envelope to be read at the end of the year!

Bigs: Write a letter with your Little to be read at the same time. Reflect on your likes and dislikes about school when you were their age!



There are 50 children in Jefferson, Elk & McKean Counties waiting for a Big Brother or Big Sister

Know someone who would make a great Big Brother or Big Sister? Have them contact us by phone (1-877-776-1636), on the web (www.bbbs-jem.org), or find us on Facebook (bbbs-jem)!

"We believe even the slightest POSITIVE influence has the POTENTIAL to CHANGE a child's life."

Local Community Events

National Night Out - Punxsutawney on Tuesday, August 7th from 5pm - 9pm at Barclay Square. Brockway on Tuesday, August 7th from 6pm - 8:30pm at Taylor Memorial Park.

Kersey - Tuesday, August 7th - Saturday, August 11th. Elk County Fair 2018. Takes place at the Elk County Fairgrounds (316 Dietz Road, Kersey). Enjoy entertainment, animals, events and more. For more information, call Mae Wolfe at 814-512-2468 or 814-965-3128.

Brockway - Saturday, August 11th. 2nd Annual Family Day in Brockway. Enjoy free concerts and games for all ages. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/126941757930387>.

Smethport - Sunday, August 12th - Saturday, August 18th. McKean County Fair 2018. Takes place at the McKean County Fairgrounds (7172 PA-46, Smethport). Enjoy entertainment, food vendors, animals and much more. For more information, call 814-887-5361 or email office@mckeancofair.comcastbiz.net.

Ridgway - Saturday, August 18th - Sunday, August 19th. St Leo's Summer Festival. Taking place at the Ridgway Fireman's Lot (North Broad Street across from Sheetz). Enjoy games, prizes, food, entertainment, crafts and much more. For more information, email klase4@windstream.net. Hours are 5pm - 9:30pm on Saturday and 9am - 7pm on Sunday.

Bradford - Saturday, August 25th from 10am - 5pm. Crook Farm Country Fair. Taking place at Crook Farm (476 Seaward Avenue, Bradford). Enjoy crafts, food, vendors and demonstrations. Get a chance to tour the 1800s farmhouse, carpenter shop, barn and school house. For more information, contact Bradford Landmark Society at 814-362-3906.

For more upcoming August events, check out your local Chamber of Commerce websites.