



Jewish Big Brother Big Sister Program

WHO BENEFITS FROM MENTORING? EVERYONE!

The Jewish Big Brother/Big Sister Program (BB/BS), a program of JFCS, is a community-based mentoring program for Jewish-identified youth that is designed to promote positive social-emotional-spiritual development and increase engagement in the Jewish community. Since the program's inception in 1975, it has matched 400 Jewish youth with mentors.

HOW IT WORKS

Participants undergo a comprehensive intake process to understand their unique needs, goals, interests, and preferences for mentoring. They are matched with carefully screened and selected volunteer mentors based on:

- Preferences of the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian
- Age of the mentor and mentee
- Gender identity
- Common interests
- Geographic proximity
- Similar/complementary personalities
- Mentee's goals and developmental needs

ACTIVITIES

Goals and activities evolve as the participant and relationship grows and develops. Common match activities include visiting libraries or bookstores; arts and crafts; baking; exploring local parks; playing sports; going to museums; playing board games; attending community events.

PARTICIPANTS:

- > Are ages 6-12 at time of enrollment
- > Receive an intentional relationship that supports them in reaching their goals
- > Are provided with new experiences/opportunities
- > Experience enhanced connection to the Jewish community

MENTORS:

- > Are Jewish-identified adults and teens ages 16 and up
- > Have an opportunity to serve youth as a positive role model
- > Promote connection to the Jewish community

FAMILIES:

- > Promote positive match outcomes through their support and feedback
- > Benefit from the shared experience and support of our kehillah (intentional Jewish community)
- > Receive individualized referrals and streamlined access to JFCS programs and other community services

COST

There is no cost for program enrollment!

- Matches are encouraged to choose free or low-cost activities
- Program regularly offers donated tickets to sporting events, performances, museum exhibits, and other events and activities at no cost to participants or mentors
- Program able to subsidize costs of some outings or match enrichment activities (*examples include: theatre tickets, SkyZone, State Fair admission, and enrollment in a sushi-making class for a match*)
- Matches are able to access some areas of Sabes JCC for meet-ups, regardless of JCC membership



OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH:

- > Healthier relationships and lifestyle choices
- > Higher college enrollment rates
- > Enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence
- > Improved behavior, both at home and at school
- > Stronger relationships with parents, teachers, and peers
- > Decreased likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use
- > Increased likelihood of holding a leadership position in clubs, teams, or other student groups
- > Increased likelihood of volunteering in their communities
- > Enhanced Jewish identity
- > Promotes ongoing engagement in Jewish community

MINIMUM COMMITMENT

Matches meet at least twice per month for one year (may be academic year for matches with a teen mentor)

- Many of our matches continue well beyond the initial one-year commitment
- Average match length is 3.5 years

QUALITY MENTORING

- Supervision and support from licensed social worker with significant clinical and youth-work experience
- Partnership with MENTOR Minnesota (local affiliate of MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership)
- Use of evidence-based Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring

“ Young adults who had mentors [...] are more likely to report engaging in productive and beneficial activities than youth without a mentor. These activities translate into the higher self-esteem and self-confidence that are necessary traits for youth to engage in teamwork and community work. ”

– “The Mentoring Effect” study conducted by
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership

For more information, call Becky Lyle Sulkin at 952-542-4835, email bsulkin@jfcsmpls.org, or visit www.jfcsmpls.org.