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SEPTEMBER IS
BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS
MONTH!



VISION

All young people realize
their full potential

MISSION

To enable life-changing
mentoring relationships that
ignite the power and potential
of young people

President's Annual Report 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to weigh on sentiment in 2021. Many thought we would be through this by now, to which the world has begun to find a way to live with this virus. Our amazing team at Big Brothers Big Sisters has done just that - acclimated and found a way to serve the needs of the children amongst a global pandemic. As the President of the Board I want to acknowledge how our team has worked so incredibly hard, without vacations and other time off, committing to the agency - to our very dedicated staff, our Board of Directors and all of the Service Delivery volunteers that do the real work of the agency in providing direct support to children and youth in our community- we thank you.

As an organization we continue to have a lot to be proud of. The agency staff always has the best interests of the children and youth at heart as they continue day in and day out to provide a high level of service to both the children and their families. The relationship that our organization has with community partners including area schools, other social agencies as well as local colleges to mention a few is recognized by the community as a whole. The number of children and youth served in a variety of programs maintains the Sarnia-Lambton agency as one of the top member agencies in Canada, as well as a leader in our community.

This past year we saw some of the largest changes to the agency that we have seen in decades. Our incredible Executive Director, a leader in the community and face of the agency, Mike Hurry, decided to retire from his position. I am so very lucky and fortunate to work alongside Mike for the past five years, he was truly a blessing to the agency as well as our community as a whole. Mike has touched so many people's lives and was truly a role model for us all on how we can live our lives by putting others first. Knowing Mike has made me a better person and I know many others can say the same.

Although they are big shoes to fill, we have found the perfect replacement as our Executive Director in that Kaylen Burgess has taken over the position and is doing an absolutely incredible job. Furthermore, Mike Hurry has taken a new position as the head of fundraising so we are still able to utilize him and his amazing connections for financial support. Kaylen has been working alongside Mike for many years so the transition couldn't have been more smooth. We are very fortunate to have such a strong team in our back office.

The Board had made a commitment to the continuation of the discussions with Big Brother Big Sister agencies in Chatham-Kent and Windsor-Essex around a possible unification of the three agencies into one regional entity. It was determined that this unification is not best for all entities at this time and thus we have ceased discussions and Big Brothers Big Sisters Sarnia Lambton will remain a stand alone entity. We may revisit this in the future should circumstances change, however we feel that our agency is stronger than it has ever been and there is no need to take on a strategic partner at this time.

Providing services to children and youth during the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to pose some challenges. Business, schools, and governments that were shut down have opened, and thus our agency is back to normal business and our team members have returned back to the office in a modified format. The agency has done very well in negotiating the move from mentoring face to face to a new focus on providing service through a virtual platform, renegotiating with both School Boards and transitioning to

new forms of fund-raising. One of the great strengths of this agency has been its ability to adapt and that has served us well.

In closing, I would once again like to thank the Board for their support this past year and again, we look forward to completing wonderful things as a team and serving as many children as we possibly can.

Respectfully,

Dr. Michael Rondinelli, HBSC, DDS

Board President

Executive Directors Report

September 2021

When I look back to March of 2020, I would never have imagined we would be navigating life so differently than we once did. Taking over as Executive Director from my successor of 40+ years has been an honour. Taking over during a global pandemic has not come without challenges.

As a society, as an agency and as individuals we have been forced to move forward, and adapt to what we still refer to as our “new normal”. We have been faced with many challenges, we continue to learn from them daily and persevere as a team of staff I am very proud to lead.

One year ago, we were in the final stages of an amalgamation with Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent. This new entity would be led by one Executive Director and would be one of the largest Big Brother Big Sister agencies in Ontario. Due to circumstances out of our control this amalgamation did not happen, a situation I look back on now with very mixed feelings. I have taken this as a learning experience that I am proud to have been a part of, in the end I feel we are stronger as an individual agency. This has allowed for us to build a strong board of local individuals who I am very proud to have part of our team.

As an agency I am proud to say we have matched a record number of youth this year in our 1:1 Community Based Big Brother Big Sister Program. Over the past 12 months we have matched 46 kids off of our waiting list. To compare years, in 2020 we had 14 news matches in the same program. Our staff came together to completely revamp core programs to meet the needs of our youth and schools. While the pandemic school restrictions have had a devastating effect on some of our school based programs, I am confident in our team’s ability to adapt.

While we have not had the opportunity to host any large scale fundraising events since 2019, we found our inner creativity and hustled to create new and exciting events to bring in those missing dollars. While they were on a much smaller scale, we found great success!

We saw a lot of change in our Board of Directors this year, saying goodbye to a couple of long terms board members. Dave Hill & Jared Dally, thank you for the time you have spent to ensure our success. I would like to once again welcome our new board members, Andrea Hands, Nick Stokley, Dayna Langlois & Zach Gast. New faces bring new ideas, thank you. Finally to Mike Rondinelli, Geoff Dale and Paula Lippiatt thank you for all you have done for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sarnia-Lambton.

As I reflect on this past year, how we have come together as a staff to support Sarnia-Lambton most vulnerable youth, I am filled with such pride.

Thank you to every staff member, board member, Mentor, our families, donors and volunteers in any capacity. As this agency continues to evolve I am proud to have you all along for this journey. We look forward to brighter day ahead, to kids in our hallways and our doors being open.

Thank you for all of your support over this last year.

Sincerely,

Kaylen Burgess
Executive Director

Spring Show & Sale— Cancelled

The Spring Show & Sale was the first of our events that had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. This would be the second year running this new event that was planned for the 25th of April. As we watched the pandemic worsen we quickly realized this was not going to be an option for 2020.

Three weeks prior to the event the decision was made to cancel the show in hopes of a strong return in 2021.

Thanks to very generous sponsors and vendors we were able to generate \$12,144.00 in proceeds from the event.



Kids Helping Kids Golf Tournament - September 1, 2020

On September 1st we held our first “Kids Helping Kids” charity golf tournament at Greystone Golf Course. This youth focused tournament was open to any youth aged 10-16. We had 13 teams participate, 52 youth in total. This event profited BBBSSL \$3,250.00. While this was not a big fundraising event, it certainly has the potential to grow in 2021. There are no other youth focused golf tournaments in Sarnia-Lambton, it was well received.

LiUNA was our sponsor for this event, covering all expenses. Multiple local businesses donated gift cards and door prizes for golfers. Greystone was a great host, we are looking forward to doing this event again in 2021.



Kids Golf Tournament 2020

Virtual Climb 2020

Covid-19 cause havoc for many charities, especially those like Big Brothers Big Sisters with no ongoing government funding, totally reliant on the generosity of the community to continue to provide service to area children and youth. Scheduled fund-raising events (primarily face-to-face) cancelled during 2020 were conservatively estimated to be in the range of \$212,000. One of the major ongoing events that was cancelled were our overseas adventure treks. In the fall of 2020 we were in the midst of planning possible trips to both Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and an area in Nepal known as the Upper Mustang. With the cancellation of these actual climbs we needed to be creative and came up with the idea of taking a virtual climb of North America's highest mountain, Denali. Dave Hill and I met for 22 mornings at a downtown 11 storey apartment building where we climbed the building up and down 10 times. That daily climb was the equivalent of climbing the CN tower every day. At the end of the 22 days we had virtually summited.

Our original goal \$10,000 was set when Geoff Dale at Robert E Dale donated \$5,000 and challenged the community to match his generous gift. In the end the Sarnia community came through way beyond our initial goal pushing the donations to approximately \$50,000. Not bad when compared to our actual past climbs. Especially when you realize that during this virtual climb we got to go home every night to sleep in our own beds rather than in a tent part way up an actual mountain.

Respectfully Submitted ,

Michael Hurry



The Big Night In 2020—June 5th, 2020

We ran our 1st Virtual Fundraising event in partnership with One Tooth Sarnia on Friday, June 5th 2020. The idea came from BBBS St.Thomas after watching them do a similar event in May. We approached Patti Jo & Heather of One Tooth about the possibility of partnering up following the cancellation of the Spring Show & Sale. We marketed this event as a “Virtual First Friday” to raise funds for BBBSL & showcase One Tooth’s spring & summer line.

With the support of many local businesses including Sitara, Personal Touch Eatery & Catering and Bluewater Power we had a tremendous online turnout. David Burrows streamed this event and at last look we had over 4000 views (2800 the night of the event).

Sarah Woodley from The Fox was our host and with multiple giving incentives we turned this small idea into a BITG success. We will be looking to do another event like this in the future.

This event raised just over \$11 000.00 our agency.



Sarah Woodley & Patti Jo Pumble—The Big Night In 2020

The BIG Drop 2020—September 24, 2020

The BIG Drop fundraiser took place on September 24th LIVE from Greystone Golf Course on the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sarnia-Lambton Facebook page. We partnered with MAMMOET crane for this event. The crane dropped 2,500 golf balls and winner, Justin Grove won \$2500.00. This event sold out in its inaugural year.

Tickets for this event were sold on Simplyk, all tickets were sold using this online platform.

This event brought in \$16 000.00. The winner donated \$1000.00 of his winnings back to Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Event sponsors for The Big Drop are LamSar, Shell & MAMMOET.

The BIG Drop is certainly one we will consider running again in 2021



Morgan, Abby & Kaiden 2020 Summer Students

Big Brothers Big Sisters Sarnia-Lambton has a group of dedicated people who work both front line and behind the scenes to ensure we do our best for the young people and their families in Sarnia-Lambton. Thank you to all those who believe in our mission and what we do in our community.

BOARD

Chair - Dr. Mike Rondinelli

Director - Dave Hill

Director - Jared Dally

Director - Paula Lippiatt

Director - Geoff Dale

STAFF

Executive Director - Michael Hurry

Director of Programming - Kaylen Burgess

Administrative Assistant - Robin Wellington

PROGRAM DELIVERY STAFF

Community-based Mentoring

Donna Sharp

Autumn Hollinger

Sarah McSwain

Kaylen Burgess

School-based Mentoring

Katherine Boyd

Sarah McSwain

Afterschool Program

Samantha Hendrickx

Hayley Miller

MAGFRAT FOUNDATION

President - Ray Pichè

Vice - President - Joe Turner

Secretary - Robin Wellington

Director - Joel Eagleson

Director - Colin Bambrick

Director - Shauna Carr

Director - Ryan DeVries

What Impact We Made in 2020-2021

A highlight

- In collaboration with Ontario Trillium Foundation, we looked forward to bridging the gap in services in the smaller communities surrounding Sarnia. The response has been terrific and within a few months we were able to match 4 Littles in the county with their Bigs. We are also pleased to share that there are 5 Big applications in progress.
- Out of necessity due to the Pandemic Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sarnia-Lambton created a new virtual program, called Let's Go Guys and Girls that is suitable for presentation to the entire class. The focus in its development was to ensure that it carried the same key messages and lessons for adolescents from Game On and Go Girls regarding leading a healthy, active lifestyle, while engaging both boys and girls. 133 youth took part.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sarnia-Lambton will be SPREADING the JOY over the next few months thanks to United Way of Sarnia-Lambton & Sarnia Community Foundation. We will be handing out 50 boxes that has ingredients for a meal, along with fun activities for FREE to local families looking for a little JOY! We are hoping to give our community the tools to have a FUN, INTERACTIVE & HANDS ON night in with their families & promote positive family interactions in these hard times.
- Go Girls 5-week online group meets in the evening weekly for 1 hour and 30 minutes via Zoom. The program designed for female identifying youth between the ages of 9-12. 14 girls took part.

2020-2021 was a year of uncertainty. COVID-19 has affected hundreds of vulnerable kids in ways we have yet to fully understand. It has severed them from the few connections they have, the people they look up to and the support they need. Without it, their mental and physical health is at risk, and they are in danger of being left behind.

We are dedicated to ensuring that the kids and families we serve have the resources to be successful now, and in the future.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS



THANK YOU....DONORS

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