

THE MATCH GUIDE



Big Brothers Big Sisters.
OF NODAWAY COUNTY

GETTING STARTED

If you're reading this, that means you're officially a Big! Hooray! Your first match hang out will happen minutes after receiving this guide — how exciting (and maybe nerve-racking, too)!

During the course of a few outings, one of the following questions may cross your mind: "What in the world are we going to talk about? Why are they so quiet? Am I doing this wrong? Do they not like me?"

If so, don't worry — you're in good company! It's very normal for the first few outings to feel a little awkward. Think back to some of your early friendships: Were you immediately best friends, or did it take time? Did you immediately trust them with all of your secrets, or were you a little shy at first?

More than likely, it took time for you to build the relationships you are in today. Awkward silences are inevitable, and one-word answers will be common. The most important thing to keep in mind when you are just getting started is that everything takes time — relationships are often built in baby steps! Embrace the awkward.

In the following pages, we've included some great tools to get you started:

- **Ice breakers:** These are great questions that you can take turns answering to learn more about each other. Check out the next page for a list of our favorites!
- **Activity ideas:** These are some of our favorite go-to options for Bigs and Littles to do together. Whenever you're drawing a blank on what to do, refer to this list!

- **Favorite Things worksheet:** This is a great way for you and your Little to share a lot of your basic likes and favorites.
- **Match Bucket List:** On your second or third outing together, take time to make a list of things you want to do together. Do they want to try new activities? Do you have shared hobbies or favorite foods? This list can serve as your idea list that you can use to plan your future outings!
- **Match Goals:** Keep track of your match goals with the goal worksheet completed at the teaming.



01. IF YOU COULD LEARN A NEW SKILL, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

02. WOULD YOU EVER WANT TO BE FAMOUS? IF SO, WHAT FOR?

03. IF YOU COULD BE ANY ANIMAL, WHICH WOULD YOU BE AND WHY?

04. IF YOU WON A MILLION DOLLARS, WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU WOULD BUY?

05. IF YOU COULD TRAVEL ANYWHERE, WHERE WOULD YOU GO?

06. IF YOU COULD HAVE ONE SUPER POWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

07. IF YOU COULD HAVE ONE WISH, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

08. WHAT IS YOUR DREAM JOB?

09. EAT ONLY ONE FOOD FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, WHAT DO YOU CHOOSE?

10. HANG OUT WITH ANY TV/CARTOON CHARACTER, WHO AND WHY?

ACTIVITY IDEAS

01. ACTIVITY PARTNERSHIPS

BBBS has some great partnerships that we encourage you to take advantage of, especially in the winter months when outdoor activities might not be an option.

Bearcat Lanes - Little's bowling and shoes are free, Bigs pay regular rates.

Maryville Community Center - Matches use walking track, courts and swimming pool free of charge.

The Hangar Entertainment Center - Free movie tickets for Little's.

Watson 9 - Matches can golf for free. No clubs, no problem, the clubhouse has clubs for Bigs and Littles to use.

02. TIME IN THE KITCHEN

Cooking, baking, and grilling are some of the all-time favorite of Bigs and Littles! Reading and following recipes is an added bonus!

03. EXPLORE LAKES

Mozingo Lake offers great walking trails, both paved and unimproved. There are also several playgrounds, shelters for picnics and fishing. www.mozingolake.com.

Nodaway Lake is located north of Maryville and offers excellent fishing and hiking opportunities. No pole, no problem, stop by the office, we have several available for matches to use.

*Bigs must have a fishing license to fish, Little's under 16-years-old do not need a license

04. PARKS

Take your dog to the park, bring along a picnic lunch or a board game, walk or jog the trails — maybe even try a mini photoshoot! Get creative, the options are endless!

05. GEOCACHING

Geocaching.com lists 160 geocaches in our community, so get outside and explore.

06. GO OUT TO EAT

During the teaming you were given a packet with various coupons to some of our local restaurants. Dinner is a great time for conversation and a quick option if time is limited.

07. GET CREATIVE

Paint, build, chalk, draw — it's doesn't matter! Get creative and have fun.

08. MUSIC & MOVIES

Share playlists and/or your favorite movies to learn a little more about each other!

FAVORITE THINGS

01. FAVORITE CANDY:

02. FAVORITE SONG:

03. FAVORITE TV SHOW:

04. FAVORITE SPORT:

05. FAVORITE BOOK:

06. FAVORITE FOOD:

07. FAVORITE CELEBRITY OR ATHLETE:

08. FAVORITE SUBJECT IN SCHOOL:

09. FAVORITE EMOJI:

10. FAVORITE WEEKEND ACTIVITY:



MATCH BUCKET LIST

PLACES TO GO:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

FOODS TO TRY:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

MOVIES TO WATCH:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

SKILLS TO LEARN:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

BUILDING A MATCH

Safety first! If you haven't already, be sure to save the Case Manager's and the office numbers in your phone. If a Little has a medical emergency, has been abused, or is perceived to be in danger, contact us immediately. If you're unable to reach your Case Manager on their cell, you can call the office at 660-562-7981 and select the option to be connected to another staff member. If no one is available, call 911. Remember, children and teens notice everything, so be sure to model safe behaviors like wearing your seatbelt whenever you're in the car.

Communication is key! You should communicate with your Little's parent/guardian and your Case Manager on a regular basis. Create a regular process for how you will set up match outings together with your Little's parent/guardian.

Be consistent! When possible, try to keep a consistent schedule/set days for outings so it is easier for the family to anticipate and plan around your outings. Some Bigs even make calendars with their Littles and coordinate them with their parents/guardians! If you know your schedule a month in advance, make the plan now so that everyone knows what to expect.

Be patient! It's important to remember that people open up at their own pace. Big and Little relationships are very unique — nothing like them exists out in the "real" world! Give them time to adjust and get comfortable with you.

The best thing you can do is regularly express that you care about them and want them to be safe and happy. Over time, they'll grow to truly believe this, and you'll bond as a result!

Have realistic expectations. Especially early on in a Match, Bigs sometimes wonder if their Little likes them or not. Developing trust is a huge part of developing your friendship with your Little, and it may take some time for them to show you or tell you how they are really feeling.

Remember: just because your Little doesn't say "I like you!" out loud doesn't mean they don't! Over time, being consistent in your Little's life could help them come out of their shell, and they may eventually become comfortable enough to show how they truly feel about you and the Match.

It's okay to say no. We want you to feel comfortable in your Match, which means there may be times where you need to say no. For example: If your Little is asking you to buy them something, you can use that opportunity as a teaching moment to explain why that's something you can't do. If you want, you can potentially use what they're asking for as a reward for good grades, attendance, etc.

Stay in contact with BBBSNC! Monthly check-ins with your Case Manager are required for the first year of your Match. While your Case Manager will work with you to schedule a time to talk each month, don't feel like that's the only time you can talk to them! We're here to support you in any way we can — don't be afraid to call or email us whenever you need help or advice.

Remember: you're not alone! It's not your responsibility to make sure your Little is getting A's in school, maintaining perfect attendance, and always on their best behavior at home. When you do decide to help with one or more of these, take advantage of the people around you! Your Case Manager, school counselors, teachers, and so many more professionals can be great partners for you as you support your Little.

STAY CONNECTED

CONNECT WITH US

- **Social Media** — Follow us on social media to stay up to date!
 - Facebook, Pinterest & Twitter
 - Facebook Bigs Only Group - facebook.com/groups/bbbsnodawaybigsonly/
- **Simple Texting** - We utilize this platform to send important text messages to our Bigs and Parents. You will be added automatically to this platform and agree to accept message upon enrollment. If you wish to no longer receive messages, you may unsubscribe.

OTHER WAYS TO CONNECT & SUPPORT

- **Become a Match Maker:** You can make a big difference for the children and teens we serve by becoming a Match Maker. Match Makers are monthly donors that help transform our communities one match at a time.
- **Donate Clothes:** When you donate gently used clothing and household items to BBBS, you help raise important funds that help BBBSNC support Matches in Nodaway County — including yours!
- **Bowl for Kids' Sake** is our largest annual fundraiser, typically raising over \$40,000 each year. Form a 6-person team, use your personal fundraising page to meet your goal, and celebrate with your team by enjoying free cosmic bowling, pizza, beer, and prizes in April!

POLICY REMINDERS

MATCH AGREEMENT

Keep in mind the commitment you have made and the rules laid out in the Match Agreement contract. Refer to the Match Agreement document to review all guidelines.

OVERNIGHTS

Overnight outings are not permitted in the BBBSNC program. Please reach out to your Case Manager if you have a special circumstance you would like to discuss.

SOCIAL MEDIA & PHOTO

Always get parental permission to post about your Little. Be aware of our confidentiality policy and be sure to not post identifying information including last names, addresses, family details, etc. Be safe and thoughtful when using social media. Refer to the full policy with any questions.

TRANSPORTATION

We require volunteers to have a valid driver's license and current auto insurance on their vehicle. Bigs must follow the state laws when transporting Littles. Seatbelts should always be used.

90 DAYS

As a reminder, matches are not allowed to go back to a Bigs residence for the first 90 days. This would include the residence of friends and family of the Big as well.