

Frequently Asked Questions

Can volunteers and mentees communicate during the summer?

During the summer volunteers and students may exchange emails, provided the student has access to the Internet.

What is involved in the volunteer onboarding process?

New volunteers will go through a two hour training process (which may be conducted at the volunteers' workplace) and brief enrollment interview with a Big Brothers Big Sisters staff person.

What email system does the program use?

The email exchanges between students and volunteers will be conducted on a closed, proprietary system monitored by Big Brothers Big Sisters staff members.

What is the content of the program's curriculum?

Weekly email interaction will be guided by a subject prompt from Big Brothers Big Sisters. Early in the mentoring relationship, prompts would be about building familiarity between the volunteer and student. For example:

- Week 1: Making these Statements My Own. This writing prompt opens the relationship by having pairs complete sentence starters about themselves. The goal is for mentees and mentors to get to know each other through personal sharing.
- Week 2: My Favorite Place in New Mexico. This writing prompt asks pairs to describe their favorite place in New Mexico. By talking about their favorite place, mentees and mentors teach each other something new while also learning about one another's individual interests.
- Week 3: Where I'm From. Created as a poem, this writing prompt helps pairs share where they are from by completing statements such as "where I'm from sounds like..." This approach allows mentors and mentees to speak imaginatively about where they are from and discover commonalities in their backgrounds.

The email exchange would be followed by a Big Brothers Big Sisters hosted event where participants answer a set of questions about themselves and then share their answers with the goal of identifying similar responses.

As the relationship evolves, other email prompts cover areas such as:

- Problem Solving Skills
- Motivation and career selection
- Use of soft skills in interviewing
- A Leader I Admire
- Coping with Stress
- The College Admissions Officer

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