



Introduction to One-to-One Mentoring

Background

Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters and The Susie Foundation are uniquely collaborating to launch an innovative pilot program designed to deliver intentional, evidence based, and professionally supported community-based mentoring services that meet the unique needs of children experiencing parental ALS.

Relying on the bevy of research¹ that details the various protective factors introduced into a child's life through regular access to high quality one-to-one mentoring, we believe the many adverse emotional and behavioral consequences demonstrated² by children experiencing parental ALS will be mitigated through program participation, which will provide a lasting positive impact on each child's cognitive, social, and psychological well-being and overall development.

Program Overview

This pilot will serve as an enhancement to Big Brothers Big Sisters' existing Community-Based Mentoring Model, which has been serving children across the United States for the past 100 years.

In this program, screened, trained, and professionally supported volunteer mentors (Bigs) works closely with parents and agency staff to provide their mentees (Littles) with dedicated time and attention for at least 6-10 hours each month. During unstructured bi-weekly activities, filled with conversations and shared activities, Bigs and Littles develop a relationship that helps youth manage the everyday challenges of growing up. Over the course of time, children gain confidence in themselves, acquire new skills and competencies, and develop the abilities they need to reach their highest potential.

In collaboration with The Susie Foundation, participating Bigs and agency staff will be provided specially designed training and support in order to help meet the unique needs of children and families living with parental ALS. Additionally, participating Bigs and Littles will also be provided supplementary activities and opportunities that encourage positive relationship development between Bigs and Littles, overall program endurance, and lasting connections with peers.

Participating Volunteers & Youth

This program is designed for children aged 6-14 and volunteers 21 years of age and older that reside within the 132-town area served by Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters. We expect the pilot program to have the capacity to enroll 5-10 youth.

How to Get Involved

Program enrollment will begin in the spring or summer of 2019 through direct referral from community partners. Interested participants or partners are encouraged to call or email Ryan Matthews, Executive Director of The Susie Foundation, (203- 490-6694 / Ryan.Matthews@TheSusieFoundation.org), with any questions, concerns, or requests for additional information.

¹ Herrera, C., Dubois, D., and Grossman, J.B. (2013) *The Role of Risk Mentoring Experiences and Outcomes for Youth with Varying Risk Profiles*. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

² Calvo et al. (2015) Impact on children of a parent with ALS: a case-control study. *Frontiers in Psychology* (6), 288.