

Healthy Minds Healthy Hearts

The healthy development of every child is improved by positive, nurturing mentoring relationships. Effective mentoring relationships can build on the factors that help a child become more secure in themselves and increase their ability to cope and handle themselves.

The search institute has identified the building blocks of healthy development; they are called the 40 development assets. The more assets a child has the better set up they are in their lives. Mentoring is included in these assets, they are:

Other Adult Relationships | Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s), with the child sometimes experiencing relationships with a nonparent adult.

Adult Role Models | Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior and encourage the child to follow these examples.

Positive Peer Influence | Parent(s) monitor the child's friends and encourage spending time with those who set good examples. Peer mentoring can be positive for a child.

What can you do?

- Start building your child's assets today by looking for mentoring opportunities for your child. Agencies like Big Brothers Big Sisters can help with that
- Give back by becoming a mentor. You can volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters and volunteer in the school, in the community and in conjunction with other child serving agencies.
- Encourage others to become mentors
- Incorporate a mentoring mindset in all that you do.

What makes an effective mentor?

- A dependable, consistent friend who enjoys being around young people
- Integrity
- Respect for the young person's viewpoint
- Looking for opportunities to have 'fun'
- Listening to and accepting different points of view
- Flexible and open
- Getting to know the young person's family without becoming too involved
- Empathizing with the young person's feelings and personal issues

- Seeing solutions and opportunities, as well as barriers and assisting the young person to make sense of their confusion as they grapple with adolescent issues
- Being reliable
- Stable and secure as far as their own personal life is concerned
- Patient and non-judgmental
- Having the compassion and desire to reach out to someone in need
- A willingness to commit to a mentoring relationship for a specific period of time

Call Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lanark for more information:

18 William St. E

Smiths Falls, On

K7A 1C2

613-283-0570

fax-613-283-2251

<http://www.bigbrothersbigsisterslanark.ca>

<http://www.search-institute.org/about>

<http://www.opendoors.on.ca>