

# THE **BIG** UPDATE NEWSLETTER



## MATCH HIGHLIGHT

Big Brother, Julius, and Little Brother, Michael, have been matched for only 4 months, but have already shown each other their sense of adventure! They visit a duck pond near Michael's home, do amazing scientific experiments, and they have been to Skyzone and Reptilia. Michael is learning to golf and Julius hopes that Michael will teach him what he's learned, so they can golf together soon.

Great matches need the support of family to thrive: parents, Lisa and Robert, are 100% supportive and keep communication at its best. Mom, Lisa, says that Michael loves Julius and counts the days until he is back for their next visit.

**THANK YOU** to the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** for making our **traditional matches possible!**

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## CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE SUMMER CAMP 2021

This summer, we had the chance to welcome our campers back to our **Champions of Change Summer Camp**, in person, with modifications and safety protocols in place. We wanted to ensure we delivered a camp experience that was fun, yet safe for campers and counsellors. We achieved this by following strict public health measures such as ongoing sanitization, social distancing, wearing face coverings and thorough record-keeping. We worked hard to achieve a balance between making health and safety our top priority while delivering a fun-filled summer for campers.

*We would like to give a special shoutout to BBBS Staff, Emily and Camp Counsellors, Michaela, Sophia, Isabella and Karalayta for making this all possible!*

**Read ahead to see what a few of our campers' parents and camp staff had to say about the summer:**

"Thank you so much for EVERYTHING you've all done for my son. It was a fantastic program, and he really enjoyed his time spent with the counsellors!"

*-Parent of Camper*



"I wanted to thank all of the counsellors from the bottom of my heart; my daughter had the best week of camp last week. She had the greatest time! She was so excited every afternoon at pick up and every morning during drop off. The camp leaders were wonderful, so were the other campers in the group. Words cannot describe how grateful we are."

*-Parent of Camper*



# CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE SUMMER CAMP 2021

*Continued from previous page.*

"Having only planned for a virtual camp setting previously, I had nothing but my volunteer experience and my co-workers to guide me. However, thanks to such an amazing collaborative effort of the camp staff, we managed to plan a full fun-filled, six weeks of camp for our campers while following recommended COVID-19 protocols. These activities we planned allowed us to connect with our campers and help them regain some normalcy after lockdown. Having only eight kids to look after allowed for the counsellors to create deeper bonds with the children than they have in previous years. I personally loved this aspect because I got to see their many unique

personalities in depth. Their creativity and energy has persevered through COVID-19 and they will no doubt continue to keep their spirits high in the coming school year. I am incredibly grateful to have the opportunity to be able to help these kids in this transitional period and help them readjust to social settings."

*-Sophia, Camp Counsellor*



"Camp this year was such a blast! As a long time returning counsellor, I was excited to see the camp return to its previous in-person format. I had a long list of many fun games I wanted to try that I had thought up over the course of our time in lockdown! Seeing returning campers and meeting new faces was truly the highlight of the summer! The smaller camp format meant that I was able to connect and learn all about each of their own individual and unique personalities. In doing so, we were really able to personalize the camp activities to things we thought our group would really have fun trying! It was a really amazing experience this summer to help kids be kids again!"

*-Michaela, Camp Counsellor*

"Being a camp counsellor this summer, I've had the opportunity to make connections and learn from many of the children I worked with. During this time of uncertainty, the kids had the chance to readjust to being around and engaging with others outside of their families. Despite the many challenges the children were faced with through COVID, they came to camp ready to take on the day with a smile. Their spirit and energy contributed to a summer that consisted of many games, adventures, and laughs. It has been such a fun and engaging experience and I truly value the opportunity to work for an organization that has a meaningful impact in the community it serves."

*-Isabella, Camp Counsellor*



"This was my first year of being a camp counsellor with BBBSC. I felt it was a really good and positive experience overall. We had some great counsellors, some great kids and great adventures, activities and games. The isolation from COVID-19 has had a huge impact on everyone. With all of the changes throughout the last year and a half, it was great to get outdoors, hear some laughter, see a bit of normalcy, and get the kids socialized again. On our final day of camp, the "Camplympicstravaganza" event was a great way for all of the kids and the counsellors to come together as a team, and made for some fantastic memories."

*-Karatayta, Camp Counsellor*

# NEW BBBSC PROGRAM

## Introducing **In-school Mentoring PLUS!**

BBBS Clarington is adding an exciting new program that is designed to assist with academic needs of some of our Mentees. Starting in the 2021-2022 school year, families will have **two options** for In-school Mentoring:

1. In-school Mentoring

- One hour, each week
- Currently virtual (in-person option dependant upon public health restrictions)
- Fun activities

2. In-school Mentoring **PLUS!**

- One hour, each week
- Currently virtual (in-person option dependant upon public health restrictions)
- Fun activities (approximately 20 minutes per visit)

**PLUS:** Academic support (math, reading, etc. – approximately 40 minutes per visit)

*Mentors will be coached in how to deliver the academic support, designed specifically for each child, with input from teachers and families.*

Watch for more information from us in September about how to access these programs for your child!



# OPERATION BACKPACK

Everyone loves that “back to school” feeling—that feeling of renewed excitement and anticipation for the new school year ahead. Unfortunately for some, the financial cost associated with purchasing new school supplies can be stressful and overwhelming.

For it's 14th consecutive year, the United Way of Durham Region is once again running a program that is designed to counteract the financial stress of shopping for back-to-school supplies for Durham students and families in need.

This year Big Brothers Big Sisters of Clarington is a proud program partner of **Operation Backpack**.



Operation Backpack will help to ensure that over 50 students in Clarington (and many more throughout Durham Region) receive school bags and school supplies for the year ahead. We want to thank the United Way of Durham Region and all of the donors, suppliers, volunteers and program partners who have worked hard to make sure all students in our community are ready for the new school year ahead!

*Thank you!*



## SPRING CLOTHING DRIVE

Over the past few months, several individuals in our community generously donated soft-good items to our Donation Drive. On July 13, BBBSC staff and camp staff successfully loaded and delivered over 5,000 lbs. of donated items to a nearby Value Village location. Value Village runs a great program where they pay not-for-profits for each pound of collected goods.

The 5,000 lbs. of items collected, resulted in close to **\$800** for the agency! That money will go directly towards helping to ignite the power and potential of the close to 500 children we serve in our community.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Community Connections Virtual Gala

Saturday, November 6, 2021

We will once again be celebrating Gala virtually this year! Join us on Saturday, November 6, 2021 for our virtual video Gala. We will highlight the important work we continue to do in the community to ensure that our matches and families receive the support they deserve.

This year's theme, **"Community Connections"** plays a central role in many of our lives, especially through these tough times...connection between our Bigs and Littles (digital and in-person), connection between community partners and our agency and connection between one another—near or far. The Virtual Gala will include testimonials, great stories, musical performances and more. You will be able to access the event through our website, Facebook page, or YouTube, and we will once again be offering a VIP Donation option which includes recognition and a gala swag bag.



**September is BBBS Month!** During this month we highlight the positive impact that mentoring has on our young people. We also place focus on our ongoing commitment to our young people and celebrate our wonderful volunteers, families, supporters and donors! With your ongoing support, we are able to continue providing essential services to the young people of our community. Stay tuned for our BBBS month social media campaign in September!

### Become a BIG BOOST **Monthly Donor.**

The matches mentioned are only possible through the generous contribution of our community including our Monthly Donors. You play a large part in helping the children and youth of our community to develop into self-confident, emotionally strong and socially-responsible adults.

#### To become a monthly donor, visit:

<https://clarington.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/monthly-giving-program/>

### We Believe in the value of MENTORING.

That is why we are always looking for new volunteers, especially BIGS! If you have a few hours each week to ignite the potential of a young person through one-on-one mentorship, please consider becoming a BIG with our agency!

**To start the process of becoming a volunteer mentor, please email us at:**  
[kids.clarington@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca](mailto:kids.clarington@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca)

#### Follow us on social media!



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#### Big Brothers Big Sisters of Clarington