



 **Big Brothers Big Sisters.**
OF ORANGE COUNTY & THE INLAND EMPIRE

PARENT NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2026

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BBBS TEAM

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As summer begins, many families are stepping into a new rhythm. The school year comes to an end, schedules change, and the structure that many of our youth rely on each day suddenly looks a little different.

While summer often brings excitement, it can also bring new challenges. Parents may be balancing work, childcare, financial pressures, or simply trying to keep their children engaged over the next few months. We know many families are carrying a lot right now, and sometimes simply making it through the week is an accomplishment worth celebrating.

If there is one thing we hope families remember this summer, it's that growth doesn't stop when school ends.

Some of the most meaningful learning happens outside of the classroom. Growth happens when youth try something new, spend time with people who care about them, discover new interests, overcome challenges, and build confidence in themselves. It happens during conversations with family, experiences with mentors, and everyday moments that may seem small but leave a lasting impact.

This is one of the reasons mentoring matters. A caring, consistent adult can help a young person feel supported, connected, and encouraged as they continue growing and discovering who they are. Whether your child is spending time with their mentor, participating in a BBBS activity, exploring future goals, or enjoying time with family, these experiences all help shape their future.

At Big Brothers Big Sisters, we remain committed to supporting families throughout the summer months. Beyond mentoring, **our team is here to help connect families to resources, educational opportunities, community programs, and additional support when needed.**

As you read through this month's newsletter, we hope you'll find opportunities to stay connected, explore something new, and make the most of the season ahead. Thank you for allowing us to be part of your family's support system. We are grateful for the opportunity to walk alongside you.

In partnership,



Jessica González

Senior Director of Program Support Services

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To stay up on the latest news and updates for parents and guardians, visit ocbigs.org/parent-news

**BACKPACK DRIVE
& CAREER FAIR**

Saturday, August 1, 2026 | 10 AM - 12 PM
BBBS OC Office, Santa Ana

Families are invited to our Back-to-School Resource & Career Fair, where they can receive free school supplies and connect with academic and community resources to help students start the new school year strong. This event is a great opportunity for families to prepare for the upcoming school year while learning about helpful programs and services available in the community. *Limit 4 backpacks per household.*

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

PARENT TRAINING SPOTLIGHT | TENANT EDUCATION WITH FAMILIES FORWARD

This past quarter, we partnered with **Families Forward** to host a virtual Tenant Education Workshop, where 29 parents came together to learn more about navigating today's housing challenges. Families explored affordable housing opportunities, the rental process, common barriers to securing housing, and helpful community resources. Parents left with practical tools and guidance to help them feel more informed, confident, and supported as they work toward stable housing for their families.

Keep an eye out for more Parent Trainings coming soon—you won't want to miss the next chance to learn and connect!

FOOD DISTRIBUTION AT BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Our monthly **TEFAP Food Distribution** continues to be a vital resource for families in our community, providing both fresh and pantry foods to around 60 families each month. We are grateful for our volunteers and staff who make this event possible each month, and we're honored to support families facing food insecurity. We look forward to seeing you at our next food distribution!

NEXT EVENT: JUNE 25

Register now at ocbigs.org/food

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

**CAMPUS TOUR: LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH**

Sunday, June 28, 2026 | 10 AM - 12:30 PM
Loma Linda University

Is your child interested in a career in healthcare? Youth are invited to join an exclusive tour at Loma Linda University where they will explore the campus, connect with healthcare professionals, and hear from career panelists about different pathways in the healthcare field. This interactive experience is a great opportunity to ask questions, build connections, and learn more about the education and skills needed for a future in healthcare. Plus, attendees will receive a Starbucks gift card!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

BBBS COLLEGE & CAREER SPOTLIGHT

Big Brothers Big Sisters offers **free college and career support services** to help youth explore their future goals and build a path to success. Our dedicated team provides personalized guidance with college planning, financial aid and scholarship opportunities, career exploration, career planning, and job readiness skills.

If your child is interested in learning more about college or career opportunities, contact your Match or Program Specialist to get connected with our College and Career Resource Team.

COLLEGE & CAREER SERVICES INCLUDE:

- College and financial aid guidance
- Scholarship research and support
- Career exploration and planning
- Resume building and interview preparation
- Interactive workshops with community and industry partners



FOR COMMUNITY PROGRAM PARENTS

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As I step into my new role as Associate Manager for Match Support, I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself and share how excited I am to continue supporting the incredible families and matches in our Community-Based program.

At Big Brothers Big Sisters, we know the trust you place in us is incredibly meaningful. **Thank you for allowing us to be part of your child’s journey** and for the continued partnership, communication, and support you provide. The relationships built through our programs are made stronger because of the involvement and encouragement families give every day.

Our team remains committed to continuing to improve the quality of support and care we provide to all of our families. As we work through strengthening our Match Support processes and finalize Match Support Specialist assignments, **you may hear from different staff members checking in on your match.** We truly appreciate your flexibility and patience during this time as we continue working to best support our families, youth, and volunteers.

We want every parent and guardian to feel heard, supported, and connected throughout their experience with BBBS. Please know that **we are always here as a resource, and we encourage you to reach out** anytime you have questions, concerns, or simply need support.

Thank you again for being such an important part of our BBBS community. I look forward to continuing this work alongside you and your families.



Michelle Urquiza

Associate Manager, Match Support
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MATCH EVENT ROUND UP

Over the past few months, our Bigs and Littles have come together for a variety of **free Match Events** to help deepen their bonds through new experiences. From getting creative at our **Crafts & Sweets** workshop to expressing ourselves through movement at our **Hip Hop Class**, there has been something for everyone to enjoy.

We are grateful for our **Mentor Success Manager, Kenny Torres**, who curates these meaningful experiences for our matches to learn and grow together—all while having a ton of fun!

Take a look at some of our favorite moments from this quarter.





FOR HIGH SCHOOL BIGS PARENTS

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As the school year has officially come to a close, we want to take a moment to reflect on and celebrate all that our High School Bigs matches have accomplished this year. Through consistent mentorship, engaging activities, and meaningful conversations, **students have continued to build confidence, strengthen social connections, and develop valuable life skills that will support them both in and outside of the classroom.** We are incredibly proud of the growth and commitment shown by our Littles, Bigs, and families throughout the school year.

We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to our families for your ongoing partnership and support. **Your communication, encouragement, and involvement play an important role in the success of the program** and help create a positive and supportive experience for every match. The impact of mentorship is strengthened when students feel supported both at school and at home, and we are grateful for the trust you place in our program.

As we enter summer break, **High School Bigs sessions will be paused until the start of the new school year.** While regular sessions are not taking place during the summer months, we remain excited about the continued opportunities ahead, including celebrating our matches at the Summer Celebration on July 9.

We also want to recognize and congratulate those students and mentors who are promoting, graduating, or completing their time in the program this year. We are thankful to have been part of their journey and look forward to supporting our returning matches again in the fall.

We wish all of our families a safe, restful, and enjoyable summer break.

In community,



Maria Muret

High School Bigs Senior Program Specialist

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2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR: 1,400 YOUTH IMPACTED

Did you know the High School Bigs program is at **40 elementary schools** in Orange County? This year, we made **471 new matches** this school year, serving a total of **1,400 youth!**

FOR HIGH SCHOOL BIGS PARENTS

PROGRAM REMINDERS

- **Summer Break Communication Reminder:** As a reminder, High School Bigs sessions are officially on summer break. Per agency policy, **communication between Bigs and Littles outside of facilitated program sessions is not permitted**, including during the summer months. This policy is in place to help maintain safety and appropriate boundaries. We appreciate your support and understanding of these guidelines.
- **Summer Letters Tradition:** Although matches will not be meeting over the summer, we are excited to continue our annual Summer Letters tradition. Before the school year ended, Bigs and Littles had the opportunity to write letters to one another reflecting on their time together throughout the year. So, be sure to check your mailbox! **Program Specialists will mail these letters to students' homes during the summer** as a special way for matches to stay encouraged and connected while sessions are paused.
- **Update Contact Info:** **If your family has recently moved or plans to move during the summer, please be sure to notify your Program Specialist** as soon as possible. Keeping your contact information updated helps ensure that your child receives important program communication, including their Summer Letter and updates for the upcoming school year.

SITE ACTIVITIES



"My Big is really nice and he knows how to color - this inspires me to draw. It was a good experience because of the activities and I made a close bond to my Big."
- Matias, 4th Grade



"My experience at BBBS was very nice because I got to do a lot of activities with my Big."
- Litzy, 6th Grade

"I like how my Big always talks to me in a good way and as a mentor is always trying to teach and help me learn throughout life."
- Brody, 5th Grade



"My Big draws good, so she helps me; always asks how I am and talks to me a lot."
- Melissa, 5th Grade





FOR HIGH SCHOOL BIGS PARENTS

As the school year comes to an end, so does another year of High School Bigs. So, **what's next for your child?**

FOR RETURNING LITTLES

If your child will be returning to the same elementary school in the fall, weekly High School Bigs site sessions will restart in Fall 2026. You do not need to submit a new application to participate in our program again next school year. If you plan to change schools next year, please contact your Program Specialist.

Your Program Specialist will be in touch in September-October to update you on your site start date and 2026-2027 schedule. Please note that Big Brothers Big Sisters is open all year round; please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or require community support or resources—we are here to help!

FOR PROMOTING LITTLES

If your child is promoting to middle school this fall, their High School Bigs match will be officially closed in June, meaning your child will no longer be active in our program. Your Program Specialist will send you a closure letter for final communication from our agency.



IS YOUR KID HEADED TO MIDDLE SCHOOL?
Their mentorship journey doesn't have to end here!

Enroll your child in one of these Big Brothers Big Sisters programs and **help them realize their potential**. By giving them the opportunity to continue to be mentored, you can keep your Little on the path to a bright, promising future.

SPORTS BUDDIES

Connecting young people with a mentor through sports.

- >> **Mentor (Big):** Adult volunteer (18+)
- >> **Mentee (Little):** Youth (ages 11-14)
- >> **Structure:** Matches participate in 1 or 2 group activities per month facilitated by BBBS

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

COMMUNITY-BASED

Big Brothers Big Sisters' traditional mentorship program!

- >> **Mentor (Big):** Adult volunteer (18+)
- >> **Mentee (Little):** Youth (ages 6-16)
- >> **Structure:** Matches schedule their own one-on-one outings in the community 2 times per month

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)



FOR WORKPLACE MENTORING PARENTS

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Workplace Mentoring Program (WPM) **Loara High School** cohort recently celebrated the successful completion of their second year with our incredible partner, **Disneyland Resort**. These students began the program as 10th graders and will **return this fall as seniors to complete the final year of this three-year journey!**

Throughout this past year, students participated in a variety of engaging workshops and experiences focused on **personal growth, career readiness, and future planning**. Topics included team building, time management, college and post-high school planning, strengths and career exploration, presentation skills, and mental health and wellness. Students also had the opportunity to tour college campuses, helping them envision and prepare for life after graduation.



As we close out another successful year with a special celebration honoring their accomplishments, we are incredibly proud of the growth, dedication, and resilience these students have demonstrated. We wish all of our WPM students a safe, restful, and productive summer and look forward to welcoming them back in the fall as seniors for their final year in the program.

Parents and guardians continue to play an important role in the success of our students throughout the program. **We encourage families to stay involved by having regular conversations with their youth** about what they are learning, encouraging attendance and participation, and supporting their goals for college, career, and personal growth. As students enter their senior year, family support and encouragement will remain a key part of helping them confidently prepare for life after high school.



Renee Valencia

Workplace Mentoring Program Specialist
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COMMUNITY RESOURCES & EVENTS



Delhi Center Summer Camp (June 29 - July 31)

Looking for a fun and enriching summer experience for your child? The Delhi Center's Summer Camp offers youth ages 6-19 the chance to explore STEAM activities, hip hop classes, environmental learning, leadership development, and exciting teen-led activities. It's a great way for children and teens to stay engaged, make new friends, and build skills while having fun all summer long!

Call 714-481-9600 to learn more and register.

[View Flyer](#)

OC Parks Summer Concert Series & Sunset Cinema

Looking for free family fun this summer? OC Parks is hosting **free outdoor concerts and movie nights** throughout Orange County from June 5 through September 3. These events are open to all ages and include free parking, making them a great way to enjoy summer evenings with family and friends.

Summer Concert Series: Thursdays | 5 PM, live music at 6 PM

Sunset Cinema Series: Fridays | 6 PM, movie begins at sunset

[View lineups](#)



City of Santa Ana 4th of July Celebration

The City of Santa Ana invites families to its annual Fourth of July Celebration at Centennial Park. This free community event will feature live music, food vendors, inflatables, and an exciting fireworks show finale. Families are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, blankets, and picnic items for a fun evening of celebrating with the community.

Date & Time: Saturday, July 4 | 6 PM - 9 PM

Fireworks begin at 8:45 PM

Location: Centennial Park

3000 W. Edinger Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92704

[View flyer](#)





COMMUNITY RESOURCES & EVENTS

California Community Resource Guide

This easy-to-use online directory helps families locate state services and support in areas like children and families, healthcare, food assistance, mental health, housing, education, jobs, and more. It's a valuable tool to connect with essential resources that can strengthen well-being and provide help when navigating everyday needs

[| Learn More](#)



CalKIDS College Savings

The CalKIDS program automatically provides eligible California children and public school students with a college savings account and seed money to help jump-start their future educational savings with scholarship funds waiting to be claimed!

[| Learn More](#)



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