

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Winnipeg

Annual Report 2006/07

Through the Eyes of the Littles



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Winnipeg



Little Mission Big Meaning

Our mission is to provide children with mentors for friendship, support and guidance.

“It feels good. I care about his life now. I know I have an influence on him. He’s just like any of my other friends.”

- Big Brother



"it takes my mind off things; it's good to have someone to talk to and shows more what I could be when I'm older; gives me ideas and gives encouragement & respect. I would most definitely be a Big Brother when I grow up."

-Little Brother, Gord





PRESIDENT

Karen Fonseth

It has been ten years since Big Brothers of Winnipeg and Big Sisters of Winnipeg merged the two agencies to become Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Winnipeg. As with any merger or alliance, there are many challenges to ensure the transition is streamlined, prior to reaping the benefits of the newly formed agency.

Thanks to the efforts of a truly committed and caring group of staff and board members over the year, we have many success

stories to celebrate which you will have the opportunity to read about throughout this report.

As outgoing President, it is with tremendous pride and endless admiration that I thank a number of retiring board members this year for all of their vital contributions over the years: John Graham, (12 years including Past President), Leah Shaw (11 years), Carla Pelletier Gray (11 years including Past President), Catherine Schinkel (5 years), Bill Gardner (4 years), Joe Keszi (2 years) and David Northcott (1 year).



My heartfelt thanks as well to Michelle Harrison and her team who bring a remarkable degree of dedication and professionalism to their work.

It has been an exceptionally busy year for us, both in our ongoing service to children and families in our community and in our planning for the future. In connection with the national strategic plan set out by Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Canada, here in Winnipeg, our commitment to the community remains with a clear goal being that "every child who needs a mentor will have a mentor".

We have as always, focused on the continuing growth and quality of the care and friendship offered through our Traditional Big Brothers Big Sisters, In-School Mentoring and Big Buddy Program throughout the community. However, in working vigilantly toward reaching that day when every child who needs a mentor, does in fact have a mentor, as outlined in our agency's business plan, we have looked more deeply into the needs of Winnipeg children with very specific life challenges and have developed a number of new programs designed to make mentoring an integral tool in assisting those youth in meeting their challenges.





As a result, we have partnered with other community groups and organizations to launch a number of new mentoring programs including; "Empowering our Little Sisters," with professional Aboriginal women committed to volunteering as Big Sisters to help young girls in their community grow up with a sense of their potential as individuals, women and representatives of their culture and heritage; " Ototema II, Youth in Conflict with the Law" in cooperation with Manitoba Justice, will provide mentoring support to children identified as being at risk of offending. While working with the NEEDS Centre, "Mentoring Children from Refugee Families," will provide children who have just moved to our country with mentors who have a special understanding of the challenges these children face when relocating from vastly different cultures and often extraordinarily difficult circumstances.



Empowering our Little Sisters - Susan Aglukark

These new programs are indicative of the fact that Big Brothers Big Sisters of Winnipeg remains a vital organization because we evolve as our community evolves. We cannot do this without the continued support of our major funders who are increasingly generous with both their financial assistance and their belief and encouragement in the work that we do. They, along with our media partners and the many individual donors and volunteers who faithfully support us, are truly the lifeblood of our organization. While too numerous to name, a sincere thank you to all of our funders, donors, volunteers and supporters for your efforts in bettering children's lives in our community.

Most of all, thank you to the Bigs and Littles. You continue to educate us, enlighten us and inspire us.

Karen Fonseth
President





EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Michelle Harrison

The Agency continues on a remarkable journey to mentor more children and youth along with their families and caregivers who have indicated they are looking for a positive role model to share valuable time with.

Partnerships were the focus this year with other organizations, government departments and the community. Through seeking out opportunities to collaborate, we have expanded our capacity to serve more children/youth while creating sustainable programming with our partnerships.

The staff have worked hard in all our programs and this is the first time in history, since the merge of the agency, that we have seen triple digit numbers of volunteers matched. The number of males who applied and followed through to match was outstanding. The incredible support from James A. Richardson and his family were the driving force behind this. With a generous two year grant that provided the agency with much needed resources to address the need for more males to volunteer and the ability to sustain those numbers, we will continue to move forward with new marketing plans and enrollment procedures to ensure future success.

To handle the growth of our programs, we also expanded our space by taking over the 1st floor of our building. Under the creative guidance of Paulette Kyryluk, a long-time Big Sister, co-owner of Think Design, the design experience, the new space is amazing and has been put to good use with additional offices, training and workshops for our clients. If you have not visited us yet, please do so and we would be thrilled to give you a tour!

In February, the Board reviewed our major pilot fundraiser, Big Smiles Collection Crew and made the decision for it to be an official fundraiser for the next three years (and we hope more). We would like to thank our partner, Value Village, who mentored us through the startup phase and provided the expertise and financial support to ensure we would be successful in the upcoming years. We look forward to this fundraiser, as it will allow us to become sustainable and support the growth in our programs as we serve more children in the upcoming years. I would like to thank Bob Aldridge who was our Director of Operations during the pilot phase. He was key in getting this up and running to the point where we could make the decision to commit.



I want to welcome all our new funding partners for our pilot projects and also our new corporate sponsors for this fiscal year. They are profiled in this report and have contributed immensely to building the capacity of our programs. One of our most exciting opportunities was the sponsorship by Capital One of our Big Brothers Big Sisters float in the 2006 Grey Cup Parade. All the matches and staff had an awesome time and we were thrilled to have received national coverage on CBC.

“He is just so cool, I wish everyday was Wednesday so we could be together.” (male mentee Grade 3 Prince Edward School)

It has been three years that I have had the honour of working for this agency and have watched with great pride the achievements that all the staff and Board have made in exceeding the goals we set in our five year strategic plan.

Michelle Harrison
Executive Director



Guiding Principles

We believe in the life-changing impact that a mentor can have on a child.

We believe that rigorous screening, matching, monitoring and training standards must always be maintained to ensure the safety of the children in our programs.

We believe that as a staff, or a volunteer, we must be respectful, caring and accountable in all that we do.

We believe that mentors, staff and children in our programs should reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of our community and our commitment to the principle of inclusion.

We believe that the delivery of our services in the community will be strengthened by collaborative initiatives with other organizations sharing a commitment to our values.



***IN-SCHOOL
MENTOR OF
THE YEAR
Stuart Brown***

Jane Wedgwood

The year in review April 1st, 2006 - March 31st, 2007

Service Report

As last year we saw a lot of change and diversification of programming, this year it has been a year of development and stabilization; though our programs are still new and have room to grow - the roots have taken and are very strong. There is so much success to celebrate this year!

Children Served:

We increased the number of children served; reported for 2006-2007 was a running total of 488 children.

New Volunteers:

A lot of work was done this year, aligning our enrollment process with our Strategic Plan in order to recruit more male volunteers. This has been a challenge that Big Brothers and Big Sisters Agencies have struggled with across the country; I am pleased to announce that the male applicants in our Agency, increased this year by 235%.

Overall, we approved 100 new volunteers through our programs. I would like to highlight that this is the first time that we have been in triple digit figures for new matches/volunteers at year end. We have seen approximately 23% growth in approved volunteers this year.

Opportunities:

This year we saw 6 of our children selected to take part in Air Canada Dreams Take Flight and travel for the day to Disneyworld.

Our well-developed relationship with Tim Horton Children's Foundation allowed for 26 of our children to go to Camp and take part in the phenomenal experience they offer to children who could not otherwise have this experience.

Programs:

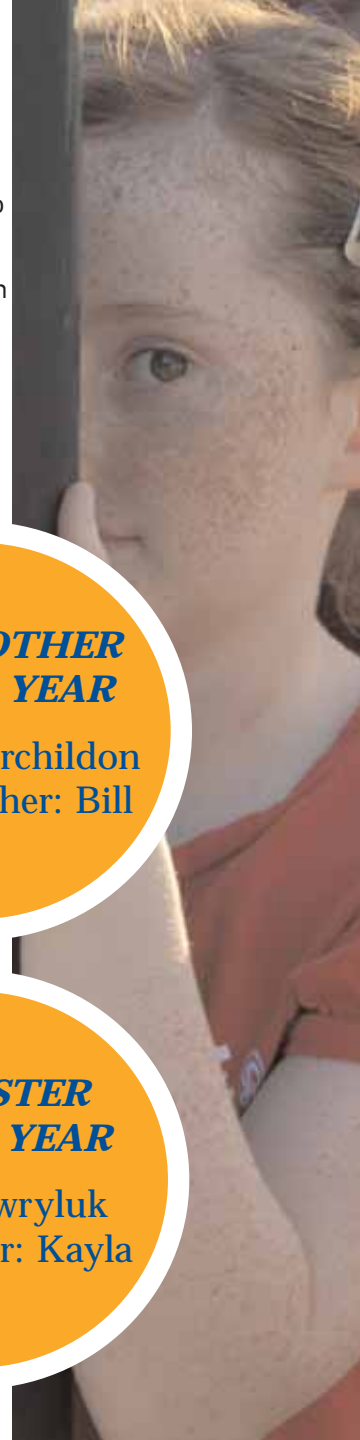
As I write this, I am reflecting over the numbers that we have seen this year; each time I see double digit matches made at the end of a month, I am excited and pleased. Indeed there have been several months like this in the past year due to the tremendous recruitment efforts and hard work of all our Caseworkers. However, I also know that numbers do not often translate or express the tremendous amount of work that goes into a program, especially during the first years of implementation.

***BIG BROTHER
OF THE YEAR***

**Jerome Marchildon
Little Brother: Bill**

***BIG SISTER
OF THE YEAR***

**Josee Gowryluk
Little Sister: Kayla**



Many of our programs outside the Traditional One to One mentoring and In-School Mentoring are young and growing, and these programs that we have started are meeting a diversity of youth that we have not before seen in the Agency. As such, these programs have required trust building and slow and steady work with the individuals who are connected to these children and youth; establishing relationships with not only the youth themselves, but also those in their networks of support. Working now with not only social workers and guidance counselors but also probation officers and language interpreters, we are working to help enhance the overall psycho-social development of a broad group of youth in our community. This takes time, dedication, consistency and patience.

The Staff in each of our programs have excelled this year, at entering into their respective partnerships and tackling program challenges with tact, humility, and vision. They have been sensitive to the issues that they are faced with as they navigate new waters; they have been patient and have now seen success. This year we celebrated the introduction of the first matches in four new programs.

We are now able to hear the stories of youth on probation requesting cooking classes and refugee youth asking to go swimming for the very first time ever. We are now able to see the looks of joyful anticipation when our new elementary school mentees at Radisson Elementary School wait for their Transcona Collegiate Institute high school



mentors to come through the door for their lunch visits, and we are a part of the growing circle as Aboriginal women and girls celebrate their first feasts as new friends.

Concurrent to all of this new work, we have also sought to look at creative ways to increase the number of male volunteers in the Traditional program and have seen an incredible increase in our male matches this year. We were able to build in several efficiencies, without diminishing our ever important focus on making safe and healthy matches.

It takes a team effort to have this kind of success. We have, over the course of the year, both welcomed and said goodbye to teammates and friends - all of whom have helped us meet this

level of success. I cannot express a more genuine and heartfelt thank you to the staff and our mentors for all of your tremendous work this year. The achievements that you have made this year cannot be overstated. I truly hope that you never underestimate the significant impact that each of you have on our community by facilitating and participating in the powerful act of mentorship.

Jane Wedgwood
Director of Service





Special Thanks!

Special thanks to some special people who made it possible for us to continue to develop our Empowering Our Little Sisters Program.

Susan Aglukark - Spokesperson for Empowering our Little Sisters

Kerry Potts - Susan's wonderful Assistant

Mae Louise Campbell - Elder

Laverne Contois - Empowering Our Little Sisters Board

Angel Bye - Empowering our Little Sisters Board

Media

NCI

Grassroots News

Thunder Voice News

Corporate

Manitoba Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce

Strongfront Productions - Jesse Green

RBC Foundation





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Mike Blackburn

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Sandra Egi

Jessika Ellement

Shelley Gallagher

Stacey Grocholski

Jacquie Lylyk

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Judy Moar

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Sandie Warren

Jane Wedgwood

Executive Director

Program Coordinator, Ototema II

Caseworker, Community Matches

Program Coordinator, Big Bunch

Program Coordinator, In-School Mentoring

Caseworker, Intake & Assessment

Director of Development & Community Relations

Program Coordinator, Empowering Our Little Sisters

Caseworker, Community Matches

Director of Special Events

Manager of Finance & IT

Program Coordinator, In-School Mentoring

Casework Administration & Support

Director of Service

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Karen Shute

Collin Yatsko

Operations Manager

Office Support

Driver

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Thank you!

Your big hearts and generous donations make life changing impact possible. Thank you for your support!

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Province of Manitoba
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GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Correctional Services Canada
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Province of Manitoba, Justice Manitoba

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- St. James Centennial Pool
- Fort Rouge Leisure Centre
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The Shoe Company
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Winnipeg Free Press

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Kinsmen Club of Winnipeg

Manitoba Moose Yearling Foundation
Standard Aero Family Christmas Party
The Northern Lights Prince Rupert
Masonic Lodge
Thomas Sill Foundation
Tim Horton Children's Foundation
Value Village Kid's Day

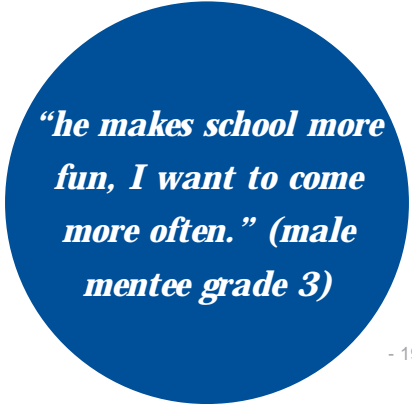
SPECIAL EVENT TICKET DONATIONS - CORPORATE

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Bieber Securites
Bridgeport Office Solutions
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Winnipeg Goldeyes Baseball Club
Winnipeg International Children's Festival
Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra - Share The Music Program

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De Athe, D.
Diamond Car Club
Fierce, M.
Huggard, S. & J. & A.
Huzel, J. & J.
Jackson, K. & L.
Minish, B.
Nelson, V. E.
Painter, P.
Plett, F.
Rafter, L. J.
Richardson, J. A.
Robinson, B. A.
Thomas, G.



*"he makes school more
fun, I want to come
more often." (male
mentee grade 3)*

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Winnipeg

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**Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Winnipeg**