Happy 50th Birthday Big Brothers Big Sisters!

As YOU know we are 50 this year! For 50 years we have kept kids away from risky behaviors, pulled kids back from the brink of suicide, helped kids stay in school, and listened to their needs, fears, hopes and dreams. It has not been easy, but with YOUR HELP we have matched thousands of kids with mentors. And we want to do this for another 50 years and then some.

However, we are now facing the most difficult financial situation since I’ve been President, and likely the toughest time this organization has ever seen. Funding for BBBS from the state and federal governments has been substantially reduced and in some cases completely eliminated. This has already forced us to cut one staff position, severely reducing our capacity for school-based matches, and our support for peer mentoring programs between Capital High School and Kessler and Rossiter Elementary Schools. It is also forcing us to look at other programs we may need to drastically decrease. This means that the 50+ children on our waiting list are going to wait longer for their Bigs. Without funding they may never experience the benefits of one-to-one mentoring!

We need your help. Our organization has had a huge impact on this community and its youth for 50 years and we don’t want to see that interrupted. In all likelihood, past government funding will not be restored, so we need your help now!

So, how can YOU HELP? Please:

• Return the enclosed envelope with your tax-deductible donation so we can continue the vision we all believe in so strongly that children achieve success in life.
• JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST! September 21st @8am at Carroll College Campus Center. We are celebrating the 1,000s of kids we have helped over the past 50 years, as well as our business champions and partners, and our wonderful volunteer BIGS who make it all possible.
• Please RSVP: 442-7479 or bbbs@bbbs-helena.org.

Thank you on behalf of the children, volunteers, board, and staff of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Helena for your past and continued support,

Colleen K. Brady
A Match Story: Emily and Jessica

Big Sister Jessica and Little Sister Emily met over five years ago. Jessica felt that she had a little time to mentor a youth and Emily needed a friend. Their friendship came easily compared to many others because their expectations were simple.

Recently, the match closed following Emily’s graduation from high school. Their relationship, however, will continue beyond our program. A few years back, Jessica asked Emily and her aunt to attend her wedding. When meeting with these two to close out their match, this is only one of the great memories they shared. Jessica said that the match wasn’t always easy. No relationship is. When asked what motivated her and Emily, Jessica said that they could always reschedule or pick a different activity. All enduring friendships form from the ability to communicate well and respect boundaries. Emily and Jessica were successful at both and we are grateful to have supported their match.

Our annual float trip on the Missouri River was another success this year. On July 15, 20 Bigs, Littles, and parents joined us and our guides from Adventures Unlimited for a float from Wolf Creek Bridge to Craig. The float trip is sponsored through our Outdoor Explorers Mentoring Program, a partnership between us, the Montana Discovery Foundation, and the U.S. Forest Service. Funding from this partnership allows our Bigs and Littles to experience outdoor adventures and service learning projects together. Other recent outdoor events include a wildflower hike on Mount Helena, guided bird watching, and a trip to Strawberry Lookout.

THANK YOU to all the sponsors, wineries, vendors, auction donors and attendees for another successful Annual Wine Crush and a Taste of Helena!

Our sincere sympathies go out to the friends and families of former Bigs and longtime supporters, Steve Frankino & Dave Parker. The deaths of these two gentlemen is a great loss to our community!

A Very Special THANK YOU to Our Dream Maker Sponsors!

A "Big" Thank you to the Helena Community Foundation for the generous $500 Check!