

SERVING ELGIN FOR  
**50** YEARS



**2020**

**ANNUAL REPORT**



**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
OF ST. THOMAS-ELGIN

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Executive Address	Page 3
Executive Address Continued	Page 4
Our Mission and Vision	Page 5
Who We Serve	Page 6
Who We Serve Con't	Page 7
Our Featured Programs	Page 8
Our Funders and Donors	Page 9
Event Supporters	Page 10
Events	Page 11
Events Continued	Page 12
Our Board & Staff	Page 13
Staying Connected	Page 14
Treasurer's Report	Page 15-30

## Cover Photos

Featured on the front cover in the large picture is Big Brother Bill Piggins and his Little Brother Ryon Oud.

The smaller image is Bill and Ryon's son William, named after his life long friend and mentor Bill. The original match happened in 1986 and lasted for 35 years. Bill sadly passed away in August of 2020. Bill and Ryon stayed connected for the rest of Bill's life. Bill and Ryon's story is one that shapes and reflects our 50 years of service to this community.



# EXECUTIVE ADDRESS

With this being our 50th year of mentoring in Elgin, we started 2020 off with great intentions and goals to highlight this significant milestone. As well, we were excited to begin the implementation process of our new Theory of Change, with its new Mission and Vision that was endorsed by our Board of Directors toward the end of 2019. Our agency was excited about the work that lay ahead with using our new logo and branding colors to focus our efforts in support of the Power of 3... the family, the organization and the Big. Our staff and board were looking forward to supporting our community more intentionally but shortly after starting the year, the world had other plans... The agencies first Marketing and Fund Development Coordinator was hired in February and Carolyn Johnson began her role assisting with our annual Curl for Kids event in March. We were very fortunate to get the event in before life as we knew it changed. COVID-19 quickly impacted how we were going to continue serving our families. With staff working remotely and with the support of our Big Brothers Big Sisters network, we quickly started navigating with confidence and realized that we were an organization that could continue serving our matches and families virtually. "I am proud to say our agency persevered" stated Hank Zehr, President of the Board. Hank went on to state that this was only accomplished because of the excellent leadership of Executive Director Barb Matthews and the ability of our staff team to adapt to change and think outside of the box to find ways to stay engaged with our communities most vulnerable population. Our staff never wavered and never gave up as they increased supports with our families providing porch drops of food supplies, school supplies, and ongoing assistance to help them navigate the many changes within our community.

Throughout the year some fundraisers were missed like our annual golf tournament, BBQ's, Elvis and many other funding opportunities that were no longer available to us because of the pandemic. Virtual events were now the way to go and Carolyn took this in stride as she adapted to her new position.



# EXECUTIVE ADDRESS CONT'D

Our fashion show early in spring and a virtual walk for kids were not a part of our year's plan but both events were executed with great enthusiasm and support from our caring community to help raise funds for our programs. With October 15th looming our board was struggling to find a way to celebrate our agency's 50th year of mentoring in Elgin. As we began looking back through the year's many key people came to mind but the person who stood out the most for us was an original founder of our agency. Bob McCaig's work with our agency for a number of years became the focus of our celebration. With Carolyn's fundraising expertise, The Steelway Bob's Walk for Kids, celebrating 50 years of mentoring, was highlighted throughout the month of October. The Power of 3 created the celebration we were hoping for... matching funds from the Sweetgrass fund, Jeff Kohler as our honorary Chair and the key sponsorship of Steelway Building Systems.

Our community... Thank you to all of our sponsors who stepped up in amazing ways to continue supporting our agency. It truly warms our hearts to know that individuals and local businesses continued to support our agency even in these unprecedented financial times. This speaks volumes to the relationships that have been built over the last 50 years. To our Board of Directors, thank you for providing the guidance and direction needed to remain focused on our vision that all young people in Elgin realize their full potential. In a year filled with Zoom meetings, guidelines and safety protocols, Big Brothers Big Sisters remains strong and our future is bright.

Barb and Hank



**Barb Matthews,  
Executive Director**



**Hank Zehr,  
President**

# OUR MISSION AND VISION

Our mission is to enable life-changing mentoring relationships to ignite the power and potential of all young people so they can realize their full potential.

## THEORY OF CHANGE

In 2019, Big Brothers Big Sisters across Canada adopted a new look and launched a national Theory of Change that provided a clearer picture of our path to supporting young people and making change. We have been excited to move this work forward through our work in the community.

## HOW DO WE IGNITE POTENTIAL?

- By intentionally recruiting based on the needs of our community's young people
- By matching young people with a professionally screened volunteer mentor
- By mentoring and supporting that match with a professional caseworker
- By training and supporting the mentor, the mentee and the family
- By building a Developmental Relationship between the mentor and the mentee that: Expresses Care; Challenges Growth; Provides Support; Shares Power; and Expands Possibilities
- By graduating the match relationship towards natural support

## WHAT IS THE IMPACT?

Young people graduate our programs with measureable outcomes:

- Social Emotional Competence; relationship skills, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management and self-awareness
- Mental Health & Wellbeing; positive identity, mental wellness, and social inclusion & empowerment
- Educational Engagement & Employment Readiness: school connectedness, commitment to learning, and enhanced constructive use of time



# WHO WE ARE

## 50 YEARS STRONG AND GROWING STRONGER

It all started in 1970! It began with an idea to support fatherless boys through mentoring. We are proud to have grown over the past 50 years to a more inclusive organization.

Much has changed over time, our commitment to mentoring has not. Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Thomas Elgin has continued to providing our life-changing mentorship programs FREE of charge to the young people of Elgin County and their families. We are facilitating and building a relationship. between the mentor and young person that expresses care, challenges growth, provides support, shares power, and expands possibilities. Mentors teach by example and make an invaluable difference to young people. With the support of a caring mentor, these risks can be reduced, or even avoided, and youth can reach their full potential.

The goal is for young people to grow into amazing adults, ready to lead our future generations. Witnessing the transformation of a young person into a confident, concerned and motivated adult is truly remarkable. Ushering them into adulthood, seeing them grow into successful, responsible members of the community and society at large is even more satisfying. Proudly, it's something our staff, volunteers, and partners, help make happen every day.

## CARING RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER



# WHO WE SERVE

---



Throughout the year

# 459

young people were supported by our agency

## 67 Volunteers

mentored our youth in 1:1 programs as well as group programs

## 142 Youth

were served in 1:1 mentoring programs as well as school based and agency group programs

## 250 Families

were directly assisted through our porch drop outreach program



2020 truly reflected a year of navigation and ongoing advocacy and support for our families. Many thanks to our volunteers who remained connected with our youth throughout a year of Covid-19 challenges.

# OUR FEATURED PROGRAMS



The Traditional Big Brothers and Big Sisters mentoring programs provide youth between ages 6-18, with a role model to talk to and share the experiences of growing up with. Through regular outings, a relationship is developed between the mentor and the mentee built on trust and common interests, and is supported by our experienced case-workers. The Big Sisters mentoring program usually requires a regularly scheduled outing once a week for 1-3 hours each and a minimum of a one year commitment.



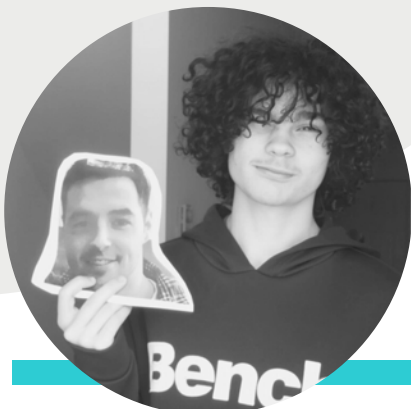
The In-School mentoring program provides youth from grades 1-8 with a role model and a friend to talk to and share the experiences of growing up within school grounds. For one hour a week, mentors meet with their mentee and engage in activities such as board games, crafts or just hang out on school grounds.



Go Girls! Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds is a mentor-lead, seven session program for girls between ages 10-14 that incorporates fun, educational games and activities designed to stimulate self-reflection and group discussion. Each session addresses the topics of active living, balanced eating, and feeling good.



Game On! Eat Smart, Play Smart, Live Smart is a 7-week group mentoring program for boys between ages 10-14. Through non-traditional physical activities, complemented with healthy eating support, participants are engaged in life skills, communication, and emotional health discussions designed to engage participants in the pursuit of life-long healthy lifestyles.



2020 moved our volunteers and our youth into the virtual world. Staff worked diligently with families and Bigs to provide safe platforms to connect and create fun online activities.



# OUR FUNDERS & DONORS

We are very thankful for the continued support of our major donors and community partners. It is only through the generosity of our caring community that we are able to serve so many at-risk children and youth in St. Thomas and Elgin County, with life-changing mentoring programs.

## COMMUNITY DONORS



Ontario

Ministry of Education



United Way  
Elgin Middlesex



Roy Inch & Sons  
HEATING, AIR CONDITIONING &  
PLUMBING | A Service Experts Company



PROPANE • FUELS • LUBRICANTS

# PARTNERS & DONORS

## EVENT SUPPORTERS

St. Thomas Kinsmen  
Mugford Shoes & Clothing  
Salt & Pepper Meals  
Harris Flower Farm  
Establish Media  
Yarmouth Group  
Pleasant Valley Trout Farm  
Ansell's Awards and Specialties  
Century Sound  
Dowler Karn  
Queen's Line Automotive  
Reith & Associates  
The Auto Guys  
Manulife Securities  
The Ice Box  
Crown of Jewels  
Stay True Tattoo  
St. Thomas Hearing Clinic  
St. Thomas Denture Clinic  
St. Thomas Optimist Club  
Don & Hazel Williams Charitable Fnd  
St. Thomas Anglican Church

Simply Pure Water  
Railway City Health Hut  
Brad Knight OMAC Mortgage Team  
Jeff Kohler Mortgages  
Smart Panda  
Matchco Inc  
Gorman-Rupp  
Amino North American Corp  
Takumi  
Disbrowe Motors  
Geerlinks  
Doug Tarry Homes  
St. Thomas City Council  
Hayhoe Homes  
Aylmer & East Elgin Agricultural Society  
RONA Heroes Campaign  
Heritage Lanes Youth 10 Pin Bowling  
CUPE 4222  
Petsmart  
Talbot Trail Optimist Club  
Aylmer Curling Business Ladies  
Yarmouth Mutual Insurance

Mentoring Matters to the people of Elgin County. Support of Big Brothers Big Sisters has allowed programs to continue to grow, evolve and expand to meet the needs of our community. While we are not able to recognize all donors, sponsors, and supporters here, we are incredibly thankful for each and every one of you. You continue to provide a foundation that allows our agency to be able to focus on our mission and vision.

# 2020 EVENTS

## CURL FOR KIDS 2020

MARCH 2020

We were lucky to sneak in this last live fundraiser just before Covid 19 changed everything. We had a full house and John Beekman was the top fundraiser again this year, raising \$5,000. The Port Stanley Volunteer Firefighters, pictured here, won most spirited team and made a generous donation.



## BIG NIGHT IN

MAY 2020

Our very first fully virtual event happened in April on Facebook Live. We teamed up with Mugford Shoes to put on a Fashion Show hosted by our own Warren Allen and a team of supporters. Grayden Laing produced the show and Sam from MyFM and Patti from Mugfords were co-hosts. The event also invited a few local businesses (Salt and Pepper Meals and Harris Flower Farm) to participate and donate a portion of their proceeds to the event. The total raised was minimal but we did get a lot of exposure for our agency and a few local businesses during this challenging year.



## GRADUATION 2020

JUNE 2020

As Covid cancelled graduation ceremonies, the staff at BBBS rallied to give our kids a grad to remember. The theme "The year the 💩 got real" had each graduate receive a parade past their home, a sign for their lawn, balloons, and cupcakes for the family.



# GRAD 2020



# 2020 EVENTS CONT'D

## BIG BALL DROP

SEPTEMBER 2020

16 Host Businesses sold almost 2500 tickets to help support our annual Big Ball Drop at Pleasant Valley Trout Farm. The event was completely virtual and was broadcast on Facebook Live from the 94.1 MyFM facebook page. A special thank you to Bob Bishop, from Yarmouth Group and the Pleasant Valley Trout Farm for his continued support.



## STEELWAY BOB'S WALK FOR KIDS

OCTOBER 2020

A BIG part of our 50th Anniversary celebration was the virtual Steelway Bob's Walk for Kids. The traditional walkathon was one of the largest fundraisers for this agency in the 70's & 80's. Bob McCaig was a founding member of this agency and his role as Honorary Chairman of the walkathon over the years surely persuaded many businesses to give generously to our kids. Bob believed strongly in the life changing potential of mentoring programs. It's why he quietly continued his support of this agency over the last 50 years. We honoured Bob by naming the event after him and asked a dear friend of his to be our Honourary Chairman for the event. Jeff Kohler was an excellent champion, along with our title sponsor, Steelway Building Systems, and our matching sponsor, Sweetgrass Fund, for BBBS and helped raise much needed funds in support of our kids.



# OUR BOARD AND STAFF

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*We couldn't do it without our BIGGEST champions!*

### **Hank Zehr**

Board President

### **Warren Melhuish**

Past President

### **Mike Butler**

Director

### **Nikki Johnson**

Director

### **Brady Ideson**

Vice President

### **Vanessa Holmes-Bell**

Treasurer

### **Lisa Matchim**

Outgoing Director



We said goodbye to Lisa Matchim after 8 years of dedicated service to our Board of Directors. Lisa brought enthusiasm and passion for mentoring to her role as president and past president of our agency. Lisa lead our board through some challenging times and was always focused on our families and the youth we serve. Thank you Lisa, you are a BIG deal!

## STAFF

### **Barb Matthews**

Executive Director

### **Kara Lynds**

In-School  
Mentoring Co-ordinator

### **Carly Enns**

Community Based  
Mentoring Co-ordinator

### **Carolyn Johnson**

Marketing and Fund Development



# STAYING CONNECTED

## Covid didn't slow these girls down!!

Big Sister Lindsay and her Little Sister Ally have been matched for almost 3 years. The past year was a little more challenging than most to get together but these two special ladies made it a priority to stay connected. They spent a lot of time "face-timing" each other because phone calls felt like they were interviewing each other. Lindsay says her favourite face-time moment was when Ally's family dog had puppies and she was able to be there virtually with Ally's whole family. When the girls finally got to be together again in person, they met outdoors at a local park with workout equipment at Little Sister Ally's request. Big Sister, Lindsay says it was "amazing just hearing her laugh and be active again".



## Staying connected with weekly phone calls

Big Brother Grant and his Little Brother Noah stayed connected with Friday night phone calls. Grant knew Noah was missing him and that the weekly call was important to his Little. Noah loves playing farming video games and tinkering in the garage so Grant guided him through downloading games and starting a tool collection. It started at Christmas and Grant has been adding to the tool box with random porch drops. When they were able to get together during lightened restrictions they spent time assembling a patio furniture set and tinkering in the garage.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Thomas-Elgin**  
146 Centre Street, St. Thomas 519-633-3830

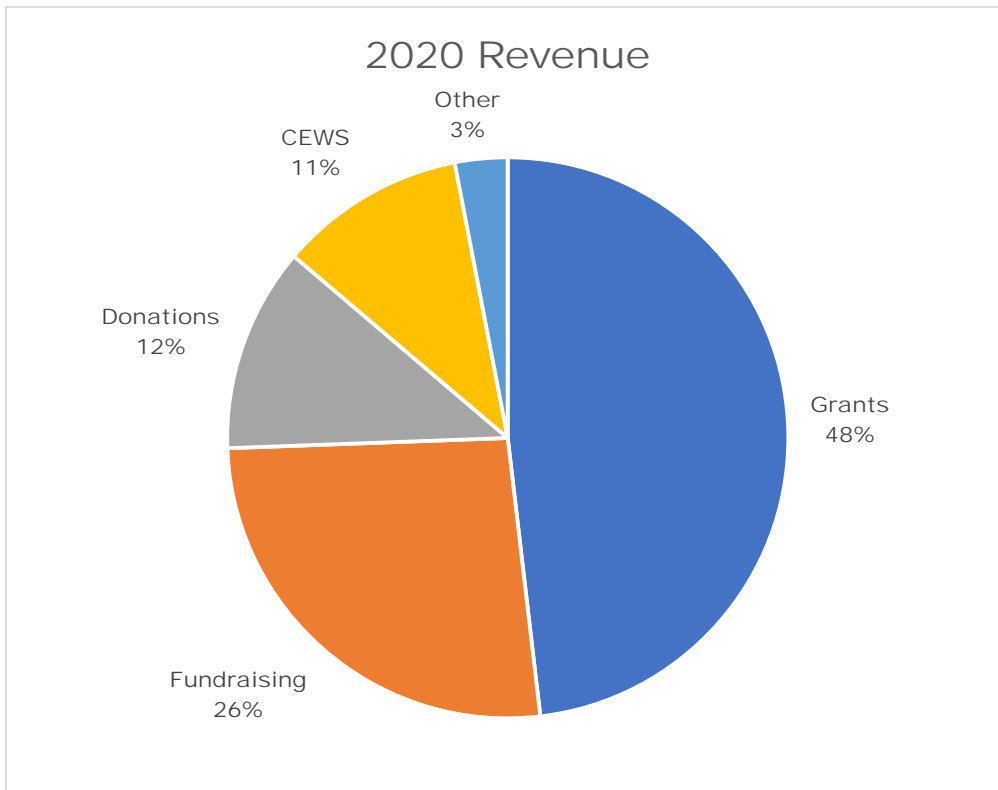
# **TREASURER'S REPORT**

---

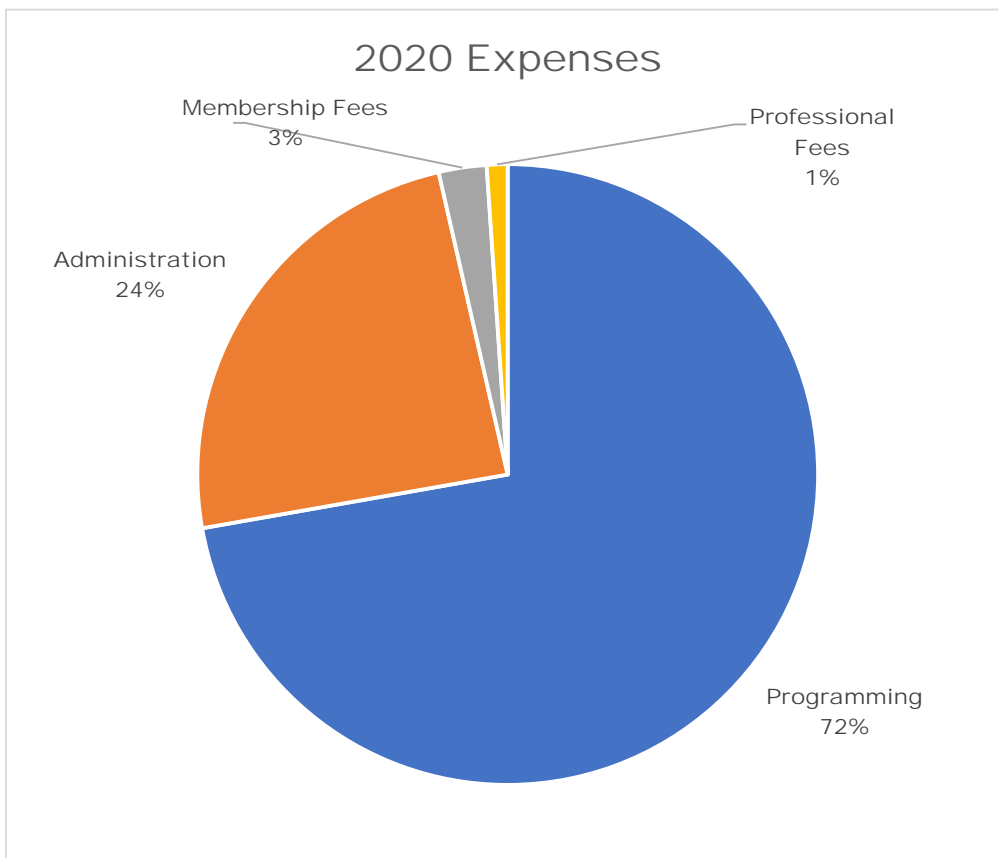
**BIG BROTHERS/BIG SISTERS  
OF ST. THOMAS ELGIN  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
DECEMBER 31, 2020**

**See Attached**

# FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE



2020  
Revenue  
↓  
1%



2020  
Expenses  
↓  
1%