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Persuasive Campaign Plan  
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## Become a Big Brother or Big Sister



### SECTION 1:

#### **Topic**

The focus of my public service campaign is on becoming a Big Brother Big Sister and why Monmouth College students should become volunteers for the Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) program located on-campus. I believe volunteering, specifically for BBBS, is a vital aspect to society because it not only contributes to bettering the community, but also to the overall wellbeing of both the mentors and kids involved.

#### **Exigence**

Volunteering to become a Big Brother or Big Sister, or in general terms a “Big,” provides Monmouth College students the opportunity to make a life-changing difference in a young person’s life. Here are some statistics found on the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America’s website which demonstrate the significant impacts a BBBS mentor can have on a child’s life:

- 46% of Littles were less likely to begin using illegal drugs
- 27% of Littles were less likely to begin using alcohol
- 52% of Littles were less likely to skip school
- 37% of Littles were less likely to skip a class
- Littles were more confident of their performance in school work
- Littles were one-third less likely to hit someone
- Littles were found to get along better with their families
- Minority boys and girls were 70% less likely than their peers to initiate drug use
- Big Brothers Big Sisters volunteers had the greatest impact in the area of alcohol and substance abuse prevention

This information demonstrates the urgency to begin reaching out for Monmouth College students to join BBBS because they can contribute to these statistics by helping Littles.

Also, having students become a Big at the beginnings of each semester, starting now, is important because BBBS is relevantly new at Monmouth College campus, although it has been around for a long time elsewhere in the country and around the world; therefore, I feel it is imperative to spread the word that the program is now available for students.

## **Goals**

I intend for my service campaign to achieve four different goals dependent upon my audience's awareness and previous volunteering experience. Although I would prefer to automatically persuade people to decide to become a Big, I understand that I may need to use persuasion by degree. My four goals are: 1) to increase Monmouth College students' knowledge of what exactly the BBBS program is, 2) to increase their awareness of its availability on-campus, 3) to clear up any misconceptions by informing them of the basic procedures involved with becoming a Big. This includes how often they meet, how long, where, etcetera, and 4) to make Monmouth College students become a Big Brother or Big Sister. Overall, I intend to increase enrollment year by year with the bandwagon effect, but for the first year, I hope to increase enrollment by twenty to forty people. I understand it may take a variety of steps in order to persuade students, but by using the Rational Model Persuasion along the way, I feel I can convince Monmouth College students to become Big Brothers or Big Sisters.

## SECTION 2:

### Audience: Specific Segments

#### **1. Monmouth College campus service organizations**

Service organizations on-campus may be the easiest group to target for BBBS volunteers. These groups, such as Circle K and S.O.S, are already active in volunteer services; therefore, they show strong interest in volunteering and would more than likely be interested in participating in another volunteer program. They are aware of the benefits and positive impacts volunteering can have on people, the college, and the community. I would only need to present to them why becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister is a worthwhile volunteering experience.

#### **2. Fraternities and Sororities**

I intend to target members of fraternities and sororities to become Big Brothers or Big Sisters. Fraternities and sororities must participate and host philanthropy activities. They are continually searching for various services they can help with. Volunteering to mentor children through the BBBS program would be a great service opportunity for their organization and having their members become Bigs would look positively on their individual fraternity or sorority. This could be accomplished easier if the president of each fraternity or sorority was involved; thus, he or she could influence the other members to join as well.

#### **3. Education majors**

Education majors, specifically elementary education majors, already show interest of working with children. In some cases, they may already be familiar with the students if they have observed them for class requirement. Education majors are aware of the variation of children behavior and are knowledgeable on how to deal with children. However, one problem which may arise with this would be if Monmouth College education majors are student teaching and their time is already consumed, or if they feel as though they get enough of kids during their teaching observation. However, I feel as though education majors would consider becoming a Big a valuable experience for them to have prior to teaching.

#### **4. Freshmen**

Targeting freshmen is one key aspect to my campaign because it is imperative to have students join while they are still in their first years of school. This is due to the fact that this will allow them to be part of BBBS for all four years of college;

thus, they will maintain the same relationship with their Little which is an imperative part of BBBS. In addition, I discovered from my survey that freshmen, specifically freshmen males, make up a majority of the people who do not know what the BBBS program is. Thus, I need to provide them with the information of what BBBS is and make them aware of its availability on-campus. Besides that, I plan to target freshmen, particularly when they first arrive to campus because they are looking to join groups in order to get involved and meet new people. Joining BBBS would a great opportunity for them to do both, while also being part of a program which benefits children.

## SECTION 3: Promotion

### Identity:

#### 1. *Theme:*

- Volunteer to make a positive difference in a child's life
- This is the “mother turkey” effect because volunteering for BBBS is “for the children”

#### 2. *Symbol:*



- This symbol will be put on any message campaign that I use because it is one of the official BBBS symbols of a Big and a Little connecting hands. By using this symbol, the validity of the BBBS program will be emphasized.

#### 3. *Slogans:*

- “You don't have to change your life to save his”
  - This is the official slogan found on the BBBS website which demonstrates the immense impact being a Big can have on a Little—all it takes is a Big being themselves and making a commitment.
- “It takes little time in your life to make a big impact in their life”
  - This is a slogan I came up with specifically for MC students. From my survey results, I discovered that one of the principal reasons students have not joined BBBS is because they think they do not have enough time. I want to emphasize to them that they will not have to commit a lot of time, but rather only a couple of hours every other week.

#### 4. *Motives:*

- The key motivation for becoming a Big is to help children and make a positive influence in their lives.
- Another motivation tactic I will have is at the involvement fair, I will have free give-aways which will entice students to approach the booth. This will include t-shirts, pens, or suckers.

## **Credibility**

- *Establish trust with my audience:* Due to the fact that BBBS is already a reputable organization that many people have previously heard of, there is not an essential amount of earning students' trust for the prestige of the organization. Most students are already aware that BBBS is a program which is established throughout the United States and is extremely beneficial for students. However, I can gain the trust of those students who do not have knowledge of what BBBS does by informing them of the essential details of the program and by providing them with various examples of how Littles' lives have been positively impacted by their Bigs.
  
- *Establish confidence with my audience:* In order to gain confidence from my audience, I must present myself in as a professional. I will do this by dressing properly. This is crucial because first impressions are imperative to people's overall view of a person. If they believe I am unprofessional, then I will have difficulties reestablishing my credibility with my audience. In addition, I must speak with confidence and fully show that I understand what the BBBS program entails. In order to demonstrate my knowledge, I could wear a name tag or tell students that I was an intern for BBBS in Monmouth and therefore am knowledgeable in the details of the program.
  
- *Establish identification with my audience:* As previously stated, I will inform MC students that I have been involved with the BBBS program, not only as a Big, but also as an intern. This demonstrates the "practice what you preach"—I am not just trying to convince students to join a beneficial program, but I have seen firsthand the positive impact being a Big can have in a child's life.

## Case-Building

**Arguments**—These are the specific arguments I will present to my general Monmouth College audience and to my specific audience segments.

- *General Monmouth College Students*

- When it comes to addressing Monmouth College students as a whole, I will focus on arguing how great of an impact BBBS makes in a child's life. By providing statistics, like the ones given in the "exigence" section of my paper, and by emphasizing the positive reputation of the BBBS program, I hope to argue my point that Monmouth College students should become a big brother or big sister.
- This argument will be made with the following sample messages discussed later: involvement fair, PSA in *Courier* newspaper, flier, and at meeting following newspaper's PSA and flier

- *Campus Service Organizations*

- There will not be a huge need to argue to service organizations on campus to volunteer for a good cause, but rather, I will need to reemphasize to them at one or more of their meetings of how imperative it would be for them to also volunteer to be a Big.

- *Fraternities and Sororities*

- Due to the fact that fraternities and sororities are often seeking philanthropy activities, I would argue that becoming a Big for BBBS would be an superlative opportunity for members to not only help a child, but also the community in which they live.

- *Education Majors*

- By talking to various education classes about how participating in the BBBS program would be exceptional practice for them previous to teaching. I would argue that only would some of these children be ones they would see during student teaching, but I would also argue that becoming a Big would provide them with an opportunity to tutor and interact in a positive way with children—which is precisely what they want to do since they chose to become a teacher.

- *Freshmen*

- Freshmen, especially at the start of fall semester, are looking for camaraderie in a new environment. Often, freshmen are frightened or

struggle to find those students who share similar attitudes and hobbies. Becoming a Big would provide freshmen an excellent chance to meet other Monmouth College students who also believe that volunteering and helping children is important.

- This argument will be made at the involvement fair and at a convocation.

### **Tactics (from AP)**

#### 1. *Vividness*-- “Message that is (1) emotionally interesting, (2) concrete and imagery-provoking, and (3) immediate” (171)

- Vividness is important to use because BBBS is meant to spark emotion in its volunteers because they can see firsthand the positive impact they and other Bigs have on children. Testimonials from past and former Bigs retell “concrete” and “imagery-provoking” stories of their experiences helping a Little. Thus, vividness will aid in my persuasive campaign because vivid information “attracts attention” (compelling and true stories of Bigs and Littles), is “concrete and personal” (personal and touching stories from Bigs and/or Littles positively impacted from BBBS relationship), and “makes the material more memorable” (telling a story is easier for people to remember and is more persuasive) (173).
- These types of stories will be told at the convocation by Bigs and Littles and these stories will be put into the *Courier*.

#### 2. *Practice What You Preach*

- According to the survey I gave to a representative sample of MC students, I discovered that a vast majority of them wanted to help children and would like to become a Big. However, there are fewer than hundred students who actively participate in the BBBS program. Therefore, this issue could be addressed at such events as the convocation, at the involvement fair, and by providing the survey results in the *Courier*. For instance, at the convocation, the speaker could start by asking a series of yes/no questions such as “how many of you believe it is important to help children?” and continue on with questions such as this which perfectly describe the implications needed to be a Big. The speaker would then end by asking how many people in the audience are actually part of the BBBS program. This would indicate just how many of them are not practicing what they preach is just. Students need to become aware that they are not practicing what they preach to be the moral and helpful thing to do for children. By addressing to students that they are not practicing what they are preaching and could by becoming a Big, they “are made fully aware of their hypocrisy and are handed a perfectly sensible way to allow them to polish their tarnished integrity” (249).



## Theories

### 1. *Social Judgment Theory*

- Force MC students to ask themselves: “is this idea close to what I think?”—with the idea being that to help a child
- According to my audience analysis, if making a positive influence and giving a future full of opportunities to a child is within MC students’ “latitude of acceptance,” beliefs, and attitudes then they will consider becoming a Big.
- Messages Demonstrating Social Judgment Theory:
  - First paragraph of PSA in the *Courier*
  - Convocation to Freshmen
  - Involvement fair

### 2. *Central Route Theory*

- MC students think and care about the topic of influencing a child’s life.
- MC students have to weigh the evidence as to why being a Big to a Little has a positive effect and why they should consider becoming a Big.
- If the facts provided, such as a Big can positively impact a child, are consistent with students’ values and motives, then they may consider volunteering to become a Big.
- Messages Demonstrating Central Route Theory
  - Second and third paragraphs of PSA
  - Follow-up flier to the PSA
  - Information found at involvement fair and in follow-up email from involvement fair
  - Convocation

### 3. *Rational Model*

- Students must hold the **belief** that BBBS has a positive effect on children and is an imperative issue because children need a positive mentor.
- I intend to address that students **value** volunteering, especially to benefit children, as good activity to participate in.
- I hope to convince MC students to become a Big because I hope that by reading the PSA, seeing information from the involvement fair, or by hearing

testimonials from Bigs and Littles that they will be **motivated** to volunteer since they will see that volunteering as a Big makes Bigs and Littles feel good.

- Finally, I know from my audience analysis that MC students have a favorable attitude about BBBS; therefore, I hope the stories (from convocation and PSA) will emotionally touch them causing them to change their current behavior by becoming a Big rather than simply saying they want “to get around to it.”

#### 4. *Cognitive Dissonance-Case 1*

- Many students may believe that becoming a Big will take an extensive amount of time; however, I wanted to reduce this dissonance by explaining that it will only take fifteen minutes to sign up.
- Reducing dissonance is important in persuading students because otherwise they may have misconceptions which will hinder them from becoming a Big.
- Messages Demonstrating Cognitive Dissonance-Case 1:
  - Final paragraph of PSA
  - Follow-up to PSA—flier
  - Involvement fair
  - Follow-up email after involvement fair
  - Convocation

## SECTION 4: Activation

### Events:

#### 1. *Involvement Fair:*

- **Date:** First week back at school.
- **Audience Segment:** All MC students, but particularly freshmen
- **Event:** This event will allow students to sign up to become a Big or pick up information regarding BBBS. At the fair there will also be free prizes, such as pens and t-shirts which will entice students to come up to the table. The BBBS table will also allow for students to ask any questions they may have regarding the program to a current Big or BBBS Director. In addition, on the front of the table will be the BBBS logo, plus statistics and/or information indicating that BBBS is a volunteer organization dealing focusing on children. This will be so that students, particularly freshmen, who are unfamiliar with the program will be able to grasp an understanding of what BBBS stands for while they are glancing around at all the various tables. A follow-up email will be sent reminding them of particularly BBBS information and their status of becoming a Big (they write their name, email, and other information down at the table)
- **Goals:**
  1. To have people sign up to become a Big on the spot (although they would still have to go through the reference and interview process).
  2. To increase awareness of the BBBS program on MC's campus.
  3. Have those students who did not know what BBBS was, learn what the program entails
- **Medium:** Table with fliers of information regarding BBBS and sign-up forms

#### 2. *Convocation*

- **Date:** Second convocation held in Dahl Chapel
- **Audience Segments:** Freshmen, Education Majors
- **Event:** I picked for this event to occur at the second convocation in order that it will be at the beginning of the fall semester. This will allow people to sign up early and the matching process going quicker. Also, speaking at a convocation is imperative because this event is required for freshmen to attend; therefore, I would be able to reach the entire freshmen class. Also, I would inquire with the education department if they could make it a requirement for their class to attend the session. (I would explain to the education department the benefits and

lessons their students would receive from being a Big which would aid in their teaching experience. At the convocation, students would briefly be told what BBBS is explained of the basics that would go into being a Big (procedures, time, dates, etc.). Also, at the end of the convocation, if interested, they can pick up information and/or sign up.

- **Goals:**

1. To increase Monmouth College students' knowledge of what exactly the BBBS program is
2. To increase their awareness of its availability on-campus
3. To clear up any misconceptions of BBBS (commitment time, procedures, etc.)
4. To make Monmouth College students become a Big Brother or Big Sister

- **Medium:** Informational brochures/fliers handed to audience and speakers (Director of BBBS, Bigs, and Littles)

### 3. *PSA in Courier/ Follow-up Flier*

- **Date:** Every issue of Courier

- **Audience Segment:** All MC students

- **Event:** The PSAs in the *Courier* will tell various compelling stories of a how a Big positively impacted a Little's life. At the end of each PSA will be information regarding how, when, and where students can sign up. Then following each article in the newspaper will be an updated flier, which will reiterate the information of how students can become a Big and the flier in the case that students did not read the *Courier*.

- **Goals:**

1. To increase Monmouth College students' knowledge of what exactly the BBBS program is
2. To increase their awareness of its availability on-campus
3. To clear up any misconceptions of BBBS (commitment time, procedures, etc.)
4. To make Monmouth College students become a Big Brother or Big Sister

- **Medium:** Newspaper and Flier

# APPENDIX- SAMPLE MESSAGES:

## PSA in Courier newspaper:



## **Changing a Child's Life**

Chloe Sullivan now has hope. Thanks to Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS), Chloe has a new profound trust for a positive future full of opportunities. Chloe's parents, Steven and Joanna, decided it would be beneficial for Chloe to join BBBS when she was twelve. They both worked late shifts to make ends meet; thus, leaving Chloe alone unmonitored late in the evening. According to Joanna Sullivan, "I noticed that during the time when Steven and I were at work, kids were getting together smoking, drinking, or doing drugs. I did not want my little girl to get involved in this. This was when my husband and I turned to Big Brothers Big Sisters."

Immediately after becoming part of the BBBS family, Chloe was matched with her "Big," Jennifer Green. Everyday after school, until Chloe's parents were off work, Jennifer made certain to spend her time with Chloe, assuring that Chloe avoided situations that could be detrimental to her well-being. Instead of hanging out with the other children who were participating in unhealthy activities, such as smoking, Chloe hung out with Jennifer. Besides the weekly activities for Bigs and Littles planned by BBBS, Jennifer also helped Chloe with her homework, went to the movies with her, took her to the local ice cream shop, enrolled them both in a scrapbooking class once a week, and Jennifer also encouraged Chloe to join her school's basketball team.

This consistent, positive, and caring relationship greatly impacted Chloe. “Before BBBS, I felt pressured to be part of what a lot of the other kids were doing. However, now I know that I can have fun without drinking. I felt so alone before, but now Jennifer is my best friend. I can trust her with anything. She has shown me that I should believe in myself and that I can do anything I put my mind to.” Building hope, that is what BBBS strives for with every participant.

Chloe Sullivan is just one example of how BBBS has positively influenced a child’s life. The quality one-to-one mentoring service of BBBS enables participants to realize their full potential, build self-esteem, and facilitate decision making that will maximize personal developmental growth. Jennifer, like all BBBS volunteers, helps each young person make important decisions. The BBBS program impacts positively on children’s school attendance and performance, diminishes violent behavior, and delays the use of drugs and alcohol.

Chloe and Jennifer’s story is just one example of how a mentoring relationship set up by BBBS has empowered a young person, as well as the adult working with them, to be more active in their community, while also building a more positive outlook of their future. If you are interested in learning more information and to sign up, please come to short 15 minute meeting on Tuesday, September 12 in Mellinger Learning Center’s formal lounge at 8:00 p.m.

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Flier:

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# Help a Child!

Want to make a difference in a child's life?  
Become a Big Brother or Big Sister

Come learn how you can **sign up** to become a Big Brother or Big Sister and positively impact a child's life at a short **15 minute informational meeting**

When: Tuesday, September 12  
Where: Mellinger Center's Formal Lounge  
(main level)  
Time: 8:00 p.m.

“You don't have to change your life to change theirs”



Big Brothers Big Sisters  
*Little Moments. Big Magic.*

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