



**Big Brothers  
Big Sisters**  
OF OXFORD COUNTY



# OUR MISSION

To enable life-changing mentoring relationships that **ignite** the **power** and **potential** of young people.





# HISTORY & CURRENT STATE

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Big Brothers Big Sisters has been providing mentoring services in Oxford County for over 50 years, shifting and creating programming to meet the needs of young people as they change.

Since our inception in Oxford County, we have provided meaningful mentoring programs to thousands of children and youth. The programs we offer, supported by professional caseworkers, provide measurable outcomes, not inspiring the potential in young people but positively benefiting the communities in which they live.

Despite being a social service agency that employs professional social service staff, we are a charity, who need to fundraise each dollar through grants, events and donations to be able to offer these programs at absolutely no cost to families.

Applications for service have increased over 200% in the last year, with many citing the pandemic causing additional mental health issues as well as social anxiety. We are currently on track to provide service to over 600 young people in 2023

# Our Mentees/Littles...

**They WANT a mentor!**

**They reflect  
the diversity of  
Oxford County**

*They are diverse in terms of ethnicity,  
sexual orientation, socio-economic group,  
religion, interests, challenges and strengths*

**They come from  
different living  
situations**

*They come from single or dual-parent  
families, schools as well as group/foster  
homes*

**They are different  
ages**

*They are between the ages of 6-18 years old  
(up to 21 in the PRISM program)*



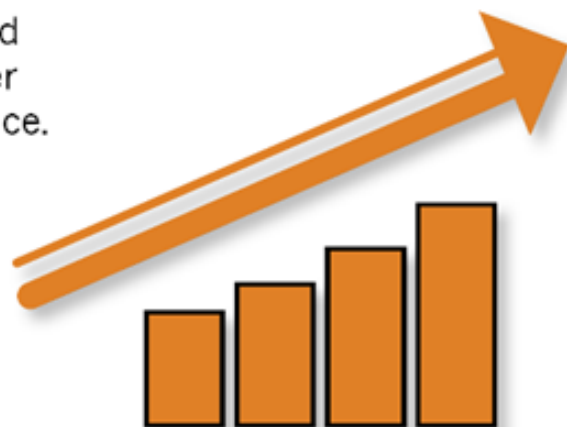
# WHO DO WE SERVE?

Young people who face adversity AND are in need of an additional consistent and supportive Developmental Relationship

# WHAT ARE ACES?

## AND HOW DO THEY RELATE TO TOXIC STRESS?

“ACEs” stands for “Adverse Childhood Experiences.” These experiences can include things like physical and emotional abuse, neglect, caregiver mental illness, and household violence.

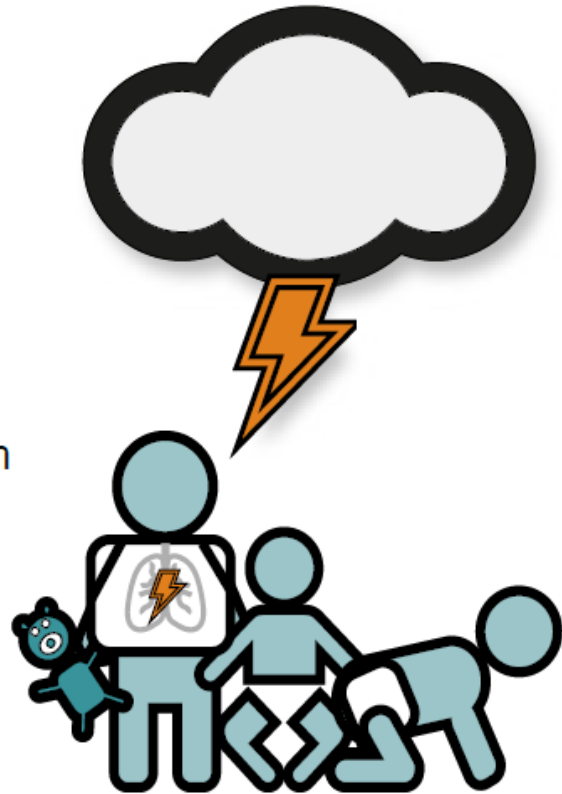


The more ACEs a child experiences, the more likely he or she is to suffer from things like heart disease and diabetes, poor academic achievement, and substance abuse later in life.



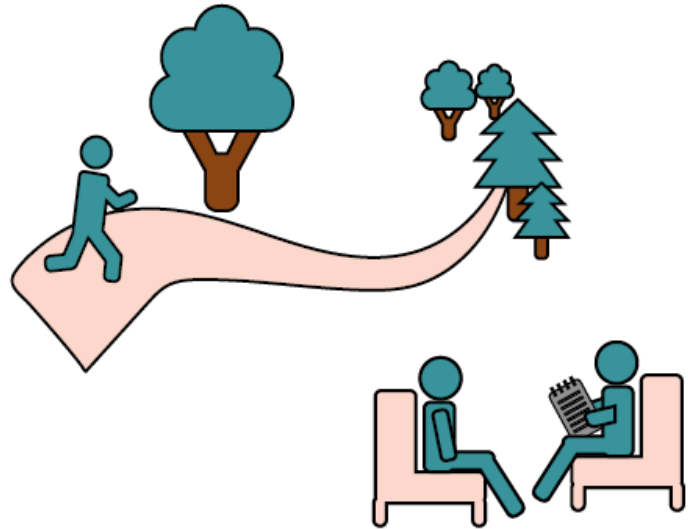
# TOXIC STRESS EXPLAINS HOW ACEs "GET UNDER THE SKIN."

Experiencing many ACEs, as well as things like racism and community violence, without supportive adults, can cause what's known as **toxic stress**. This excessive activation of the stress-response system can lead to long-lasting wear-and-tear on the body and brain.



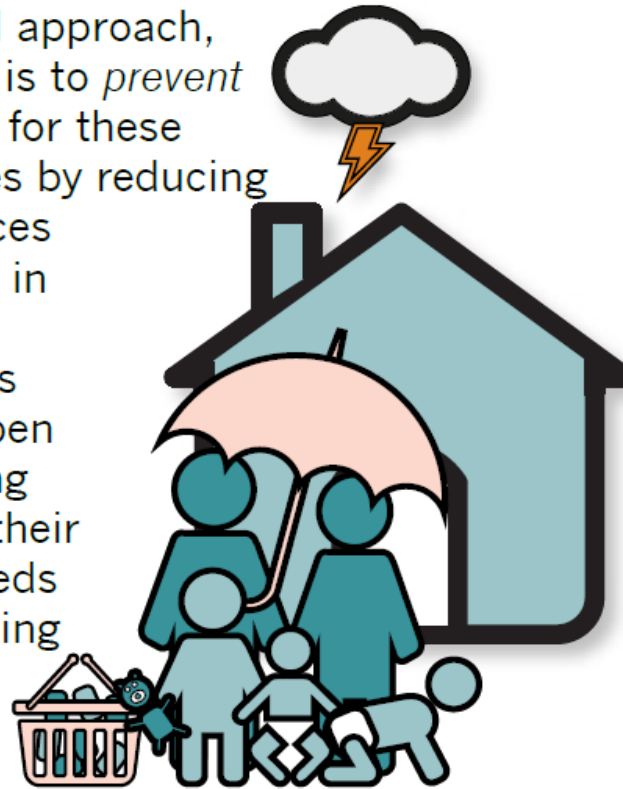
The effect would be similar to revving a car engine for days or weeks at a time.

# WE CAN REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF ACEs AND TOXIC STRESS.



For those who have experienced ACEs, there are a range of possible responses that can help, including therapeutic sessions with mental health professionals, meditation, physical exercise, spending time in nature, and many others.

The ideal approach, however, is to *prevent* the need for these responses by reducing the sources of stress in people's lives. This can happen by helping to meet their basic needs or providing other services.



Likewise, fostering strong, [responsive relationships](#) between children and their caregivers, and helping children and adults build [core life skills](#), can help to buffer a child from the effects of [toxic stress](#).



## 13 ADVERSITIES OF THE BBBS NEED REGISTRY

1. Child is experiencing social isolation
2. Parental separation or divorce
3. Child has been involved or removed by Child Welfare Services
4. A household member has had a substance abuse problem
5. A household member has experienced mental illness
6. A household member has experienced incarceration or has been involved with police
7. Child has experienced bullying
8. Child has often seen or heard violence in the home, neighborhood or their school
9. Child has experienced the death of someone close to them
10. Child arrived in Canada with refugee status
11. Exposure to financial stress or financial abuse
12. Child is exposed to a vulnerable employment standard
13. Child is coping or recovering from a mental health illness

“ACEs affect people at all income and social levels, and can have serious, costly impacts across the lifespan. No one who’s experienced significant diversity (or many ACEs) is irreparably damaged, through we need to acknowledge trauma’s effects on their lives. By reducing families’ sources of stress, providing children and adults with responsive relationships, and strengthening the core life skills we all need to adapt and thrive, we can provide and counteract lasting harm.” Center on the Developing Child – Harvard University

On average, adults have experienced 1 adverse childhood experience, according a study from the CDC out of the United States.

Currently 80% of young people enrolled in our program have experienced 4 or more, and over half have experienced 6 or more!

The ACEs study has had a profound impact on youth services as it scientifically proves the need for intervention and buffering between children and their adverse childhood experiences in order to increase the likelihood of positive youth development. We know that responsive relationships help build resilience across childhood and into adulthood.

# WHAT IS A DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIP?

Close connections through which young people **discover who they are**, gain abilities to **shape their own lives**, and learn how to interact with and **contribute to the world** around them.



**Express Care**  
Show me that I matter to you.



**Challenge Growth**  
Push me to keep getting better.



**Provide Support**  
Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.



**Share Power**  
Treat me with respect and give me a say.



**Expand Possibilities**  
Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.



## CHALLENGES GROWTH

**93%** of young people feel their mentor pushes them to be better



## EXPANDS POSSIBILITY

**85%** of young people feel their mentor helps them make new connections and expands perspectives



## EXPRESSES CARE

**94%** of young people feel their mentor shows them that they matter



## PROVIDE SUPPORT

**94%** of young people feel their mentor helps them set and complete tasks and goals



## SHARE POWER

**92%** of young people feel their mentor treats them with respect and listens to their ideas.

# THE

Young people graduate our programs with **measurable outcomes**:



## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

- » Relationship skills
- » Social awareness
- » Responsible decision-making
- » Self-management
- » Self-awareness

## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

- » Positive identity
- » Mental wellness
- » Social inclusion & empowerment

## EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT & EMPLOYMENT READINESS

- » School connectedness
- » Commitment to learning
- » Enhanced constructive use of time



# OUR PROGRAMS



Pride | Respect | Identity  
Safety | Mentoring





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QUESTI  
ONS?

EVERY CHILD HAS  
THE RIGHT TO  
REACH THEIR FULL  
POTENTIAL, RIGHT  
TO A BRIGHT  
FUTURE AND THE  
RIGHT TO THRIVE.

THROUGH  
MENTORSHIP,  
THEY WILL HAVE  
THE CONFIDENCE  
TO ACHIEVE MORE.



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