

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF WOOD BUFFALO IS OFFERING FREE VIRTUAL MENTORING SERVICES TO YOUTH FACING ADVERISITY IN OUR REGION.

Since temporarily closing doors to the public in an effort to respond to public health measures, BBBSWB staff have been working diligently and collectively to ensure there is as little interruption to services as possible. All current matches are being supported in maintaining contact through virtual platforms. Whether this is a long phone chat or a game on the popular House Party app. Experiences like these, although not as comforting as face to face interaction, are helping to ensure that youth in need of mentoring are not feeling alone during an otherwise isolating time for many.

In addition to our volunteer "Big Brothers" and "Big Sisters" contacting mentee's virtually, the agency has also taken several other mentoring programs online. The first in Canada to offer these group mentoring programs through Zoom, BBBSWB has adapted program plans for Game On and Go Girls "Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds" programs to serve groups of youth (ages 10-12) through the video meeting app. The groups meet weekly and are facilitated by volunteer mentors. BBBS continues to offer these groups and open registration to new youth according to demand in the community.

The made for Wood Buffalo program, Full Circle - an Indigenous based group mentoring program - is running online as well through to June to continue serving the many groups of elementary aged youth across our municipality who connect and learn from their wise Indigenous facilitators each week. Together the groups complete crafts, songs and stories.

While the agency continues to support their existing clients in these ways they also take great efforts to ensure that youth who are struggling now will also be served. New volunteers interested in a mentoring role are urged to apply and are being screened virtually for the time being. Families who believe their child would benefit from a mentoring relationship will also be accepted virtually during this time, with the possibility of an online start to their match.

For volunteer opportunities please find us on WBVolunteers.ca. Information on how to apply as a mentor as well as enrolling a youth can also be found at woodbuffalo.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca or on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/woodbuffalobigbrothersbigsisters). We are accepting volunteers for any of our programs. Male mentors are especially needed at this time.

“Neuroscience research demonstrates that stable, caring relationships are essential for shielding youth from the negative effects of toxic stress. Big Brothers Big Sisters mentors are there when kids need them most.”

#HEREFORYOU



**Big Brothers
Big Sisters**

OF WOOD BUFFALO

woodbuffalo.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca

780-791-2447