



Big Brothers
Big Sisters
OF VICTORIA CAPITAL REGION

2023-24 Annual Report



A Message from our Executive Leadership

2023-24 was a year of transformative growth and unwavering commitment to our mission. Over the past year, our programs served 735 youth across the Capital Regional District and the Comox Valley. Mentors and young people came together, building empowering and impactful relationships – igniting the potential of our community's youth. Through innovative programs and a relentless belief in community empowerment, we have made measurable strides towards lasting change. Our work in youth mentorship has reached new heights with support from community donors that further amplify our collective impact.

The voices of those we serve remain at the heart of our work.

Mentorship is a powerful connection: a relationship that nurtures potential and fosters growth. For mentors, the rewards add up to fulfillment – and for mentees, the benefits are exponential. We see a clear pattern that mentorship equals opportunity.

As we look ahead through 2024 and into 2025, we are more determined than ever to build on this momentum. With the support of our dedicated volunteers, donors, partners, staff, and board, we will continue to innovate, engage, and lead change. Together, we are shaping a future where youth can achieve their full potential.



Donna Hobbs, Board President
Amanda Hill, Executive Director

Our Vision

Our vision is that all young people realize their full potential. At BBBSV, we believe that each and every child has limitless potential – and that this potential is our society's most precious and cherished resource.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enable life-changing mentoring relationships to ignite the power and potential of young people. With these relationships, youth facing adversities can build the confidence and resilience they need to grow into whoever they dream of being. We work to serve those youth in our communities who are most in need of additional supportive relationships, connecting these young people with trusted mentorship.

Our Values



Welcoming



Learning



Mentoring



Sharing



Responding

A Year of Growth: 2023-24 in Numbers



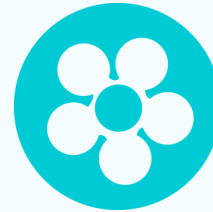
735 Youth Enrolled
in Mentoring
Programs



80 Youth Served
by Community
Mentoring Program



87 Elementary
Students Supported by
In-School Mentoring



313 Youth
Participated in B You
Group Mentoring



200% Growth in
Mentoring Program
Participation



393 New Youth
Applications to our
Programs



384 New Mentors
and Mentees
Matched



114 New
Volunteer Mentors
Screened & Trained



36,000 Volunteer
Hours Spent
Mentoring



12 Municipalities
Served Across the
CRD & Comox Valley



\$454,050 Invested
by Grants
& Project Funds



\$278,516 Raised
by Donations
& Fundraising



\$704,430
Generated by our
Social Enterprise



1,017,592 Pounds of
Clothing & Goods
Donated at our Drop-off



\$1.46 million in
Revenue Generated
for Programs

Lifetime Networks Employer of the Year

We are honoured to have been awarded **Lifetime Networks** Employer of the Year for 2023. Lifetime Networks seeks to enrich the lives of adults with developmental disabilities through genuine connection and friendship – a mission close to our own hearts. Thank you for this honour and we look forward to our shared future together!



*Employer of
the Year 2023*

One-on-One Community Mentoring

2023-24 marked another successful year of growth for Family Intake and the Community Mentoring Program! For our program to thrive, it not only requires involvement from staff and volunteers – but it also takes time, dedication, and most of all, love from families.

We are constantly in awe of the vulnerability and openness that caregivers express. The love, compassion and drive to seek a mentor for their child is inspiring. Without their belief in our program, we would not be able to conduct the work that we do. The impact that a mentor can have on a mentee's life is everlasting. Thank you to all those involved who believe in the power, potential, and gift of mentorship.



Alexis Gardner, Family Intake Coordinator

The Need for Mentoring

The support of mentorship can help children to build resilience and navigate adversity. When young people come to our program, they are often experiencing complex challenges in their day-to-day lives:



52% Have Been
Through Parental
Separation or Divorce



48% are
Experiencing
Mental Illness(es)



41% Have Been
the Target of
Bullying at School



36% are Exposed to
Financial Stress or
Living in Poverty



34% are
Experiencing Social
Isolation

"Witnessing the progress and joy of my mentee has been incredibly rewarding, but it's also shown me how essential it is to be present and invested in another person's journey. This experience has not only deepened my appreciation for the value of mentoring but has also profoundly enriched my own life, revealing how interconnected our growth can be when we commit to supporting one another." -2023-24 Mentor

80 youth served

27 new matches

10 municipalities

7 youth in care

20% identify as indigenous

Big Steps to Success: Mentoring for Youth in Care

In addition to serving youth facing a variety of adversities, the Community Mentoring Program has a specific area of support for children involved with the child welfare system, living in care, or participating in a kinship agreement. Volunteer mentors selected for Big Steps to Success often have lived experience with the child welfare system and always receive additional training on the specific needs of youth in care.

In-School Mentoring for Elementary Students

The In-School Mentoring program is designed to help increase students' self-esteem, resilience, and healthy attitudes toward school. Every school year, we see students grow in positive ways from the connections and fun they have with our mentors. It's mentoring magic!

Our program saw some challenges last year with staff recruitment and retention – however, despite those difficulties, our team were successfully able to create new matches. We would like to thank all those mentors, adults and teens alike, and school coordinators who stepped up to make a difference in childrens' lives.



Candace Johnson, In-School Mentoring Lead

Program Outcomes: Supporting Growth

Our survey data consistently tells us that children in need of support benefit throughout the school year and beyond from having a mentor at school. In 2023-24, mentors reported seeing their mentees grow:



89% Became
Motivated to Learn
& Try New Things



72% Opened Up
About What Was
Bothering Them



72% Built Trust
With Their
Mentors



61% Increased
Their Confidence
& Self-Esteem



55% Improved
Their Attitudes
Towards School

"The most rewarding part of being a mentor is seeing your mentee achieve success with or without support. If we have been working on a skill for awhile, and I watch my mentee succeed, it feels amazing! I love being able to help effect youth grow and work towards their goals." - 2023-24 In-School Mentor

87 youth served **63** new matches **40** teen mentors **15** youth graduated **13** participating schools

2023-24 Partner Schools

- | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| Braefoot Elementary | Craigflower Elementary | Victoria West Elementary |
| Brentwood Elementary | École Élémentaire George Jay Elementary | Queneesh Elementary |
| Brooklyn Elementary | École Élémentaire Marigold Elementary | Salt Spring Elementary School |
| École Élémentaire Campus View Elementary | École Élémentaire Quadra Elementary | Saseenos Elementary |
| | Valley View Elementary | |

B You: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds

This year was a success for B You: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds. We welcomed Becca Bosworth as a Mentoring Coordinator, allowing us to grow our program and support more youth than ever before. We want to express our deepest gratitude to our incredible volunteers and practicum students, many of whom mentored in multiple groups throughout the year. We also want to thank our school liaisons and our program families for trusting us with their children. Our program thrives because of you!



Kait Burns, B You Program Lead

Group Outcomes: A Safe Space for Youth

B You focuses on supporting youth through taking care of their bodies and minds. Female-identifying and gender-diverse youth, ages 9 to 15, meet at school once per week. After participating, youth felt more confident:



83% Feel More
Comfortable Talking
About Mental Health



84% Feel Better
About Themselves
Than Before



92% Felt Safe to
Open up Only in
B You



98% Could Better
Identify Their
Strengths & Skills



98% Found B You
Leaders Easy to
Talk to

"I love being part of a program that allows the mentees to feel safe and gives them space to be themselves, I also love seeing them grow and learn about who they want to be as a person in the world!" - 2023-24 B You Mentor

B You: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds Summer Camp

In July 2023, we hosted our first-ever B You: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds Summer Camp. Youth and mentors came together to make friendship bracelets, play yoga tag, and create a safe space during the summer. Thank you to **St. Barnabas Church** for having us! We look forward to expanding our summer camp to meet community demand in future years as we continue to grow the B You program.

313 youth served **36** volunteer facilitators **44%** program growth **27** group sessions **8** participating schools

2023-24 Partner Schools

Cloverdale Traditional School	Rockheights Middle School
Glanford Middle School	Spencer Middle School
Gordon Head Middle School	Savory Elementary School
École Intermédiaire Lansdowne Middle School	Victoria West Elementary School

Program Partners, Sponsors, & Funders

Operations & Human Resources



ventureforcanada



VICTORIA FOUNDATION



Western
FINANCIAL GROUP
Communities Foundation



Canadian
Red Cross



Employment and
Social Development Canada

Canada

Community Mentoring Program & Big Steps to Success



United Way
Southern
Vancouver Island



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA



CHILDREN'S
AID FOUNDATION
OF CANADA

Canada

Township of
ESQUIMALT

Langford

Equality
fund



VICTORIA FOUNDATION



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Colwood

In-School Mentoring Program


BRITISH
COLUMBIA


PECSF



Unifor
Social
Justice
Fund

Unifor
Fonds
de justice
sociale

The
McLean
Foundation

Langford
Township of
ESQUIMALT

B You: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds



VICTORIA FOUNDATION

Colwood

Langford

Township of
ESQUIMALT



BRITISH
COLUMBIA



United Way
Southern
Vancouver Island

Development, Grants, & Fundraising

As we conclude this fiscal year, the Development team initiated several projects to boost revenue. While grant revenue decreased by **17%**, individual donations surged by **52%**. For the first time, fundraising revenue surpassed Social Enterprise revenue. Our social return on investment is **\$23** for every **\$1** invested, reflecting the value of our work. On average, BBBSV generates **\$23,317** in benefits per family, totaling over **\$18 million** this year. Your support is invaluable to us and the children and youth in our programs!



Emma Kirkland, Director of Development

Revenue & Treasurer's Report

Revenue Breakdown	2023-24	2022-23
Other Donations & Grants, Misc.	\$37,311	\$35,197
Fundraising & Donations	\$278,516	\$144,511
Grants & Subsidies	\$426,935	\$520,789
Social Enterprise	\$713,670	\$815,482



For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, BBBSV generated **\$1.46 million** in revenue, mainly from social enterprise, grants, and donations. Despite increased fundraising, total expenses rose, leading to a **\$258,038** deficit. The organization aims to enhance cost control and revenue strategies for sustainable program growth.

Agnes Piotrowski, Board of Directors Treasurer

"The Big Brothers Big Sisters Program is second to none and deserves every bit of funding available to dig deep into the lives of children and families offering them a leg up when life is challenging." - **2023-24 Mentor**

Investing in Potential

Our various streams of revenue: social enterprise, fundraising, events, donations, sponsorships, grants, and more all come together to support the potential of youth in our community. Investing in BBBSV supports:



Recruitment & Screening of Volunteers to Ensure Child Safety



Affiliation with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada Network



Professional Caseworkers Supporting Matches



Ongoing Training & Support for Mentors, Families, & Staff



Administrative Expenses for Daily Operations

Development: New Projects & Initiatives

Inclusive Meeting Space

The **Victoria Foundation Community Grants Program** funded the renovation of our Inclusive Meeting Space, equipped for in-person and digital meetings. This safe and accessible room supports mentorship, training, and collaboration. We also offer the space for reservation at no cost to other local organizations, fostering closer relationships among non-profits, families, and communities in the region. Thank you to the **Victoria Foundation** for making these renovations and technological upgrades possible.



Human Resources Framework

Supported by the **Community Services Recovery Fund**, the project identified areas for improvement in human resources policies and compensation to align with organizational values. The project adapted to post-COVID challenges by creating an inclusive human resources framework. BBBSV revised its human resources manual, developed a new employee handbook, and updated the compensation model with leadership support. The Community Services Recovery Fund is a collaboration between the **Government of Canada**, the **Canadian Red Cross**, **Community Foundations of Canada**, and **United Way of Canada**.

Gender-Diverse Mentoring

BBBSV is enhancing gender-diverse mentoring by training staff and volunteers to support children with varying gender identities. Support from the **Community Foundations of Canada Equality Fund** enables better support, training, and attraction of role models for gender-diverse and 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. This project works to connect these youth with adult mentors who have lived experience or identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ themselves, helping young people to navigate their identities.

Youth Volunteering Study

Youth Volunteering: Looking Forward was a study of youth volunteering in the Victoria Capital Region. Initiated by **Volunteer Victoria**, the goal of the research project was to develop youth engagement models reflecting post-COVID realities. BBBSV conducted 75 youth interviews, established programming standards, and contributed to the project advisory committee. With this data, Volunteer Victoria can further develop programs and share insights to enhance volunteer opportunities for young people across the region.

Smart Lighting: Illuminating Potential

The **Western Financial Group Communities Foundation** funded our Smart Lighting project, which transformed our work and meeting spaces. New LED lighting lasts up to 20 times longer and uses significantly less energy than fluorescent lighting. In addition to using less energy and lowering costs, the new lights are sensory-friendly to improve accessibility for all staff, volunteers, and community members.

Summer Contracts for Youth

The **Canada Summer Jobs** wage subsidy program enables BBBSV to create quality summer work experiences for young people. Our youth contract position this year was a Business Development Associate, who worked with our organization to put together BBBS Month celebrations and develop our Open House event.

Development: Fundraisers & Events

Our House of Distinction gala event was hosted on September 30, 2023. Over 200 guests gathered at the stunning home of Sissy Sapphire, a friend of BBBSV. We are so grateful to Sissy for opening her home to us and hosting our event. It was a spectacular evening of storytelling, food, and fun – not to mention live music and fine wine! A special thank you to our title sponsor, **Island Savings**, for over 10 years of support. House of Distinction raised over **\$80,000** through ticket sales, donations, and a live auction. Thank you to **Brink Events** for partnering with us!



MOVE FOR MENTORING



From April 1-21, 2024, our annual Move for Mentoring fundraiser encouraged participants to move towards a personal goal of their choosing while raising funds to support local youth. Our participants, teams, and sponsors came together to raise over **\$50,000** for youth mentoring programs. This year, we were excited to have Adam Kreek, Olympic Gold Medalist, and Mandy Marchak, Rugby Canada Hall of Fame Player, join us in Move for Mentoring. Thank you to our title sponsor **Pensinsula Co-op**, participants, teams, sponsors, speakers, donors, and community members for making Move for Mentoring a success!

Mother's Day Tea

Our first-ever fundraising tea was held on May 11, 2023 at the **Oaks Restaurant & Tea Room** in Oak Bay. Our fundraiser was a celebration of mothers and mentorship, raising **\$15,000** for BBBSV programs. Supporters had the option of purchasing tickets either for themselves or for a mentor and mentee to attend. At this family-friendly event, mentors, mentees, families, donors, sponsors, and community members came together for an afternoon filled with lovely tea, tasty treats, and quality time. Thank you to the Oaks for hosting us and to **Island Parent** for sponsoring our tea!



Development Partners, Sponsors, & Funders

2023-24 Project Partners & Granters



United Way



Canadian Red Cross



COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA



VOLUNTEER VICTORIA



VICTORIA FOUNDATION



Western FINANCIAL GROUP
Communities Foundation

vancouver foundation

Canada

House of Distinction Sponsors

IslandSavings

A DIVISION OF FIRST WEST CREDIT UNION

brink **events**



BEAR & JOEY



Coca-Cola Canada Bottling Limited

Victoria's local bottler



AUTONOMOUS FURNITURE



LIGHTHOUSE BREWING CO



Move for Mentoring Sponsors



PENINSULA CO-OP



ABSTRACT developments



CANADIAN TIRE
View Royal

CPCM & Co
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

Mother's Day Tea Sponsors

islandparent



Social Enterprise Clothing Donation Centre

The Social Enterprise provides about 40% of Victoria Value Village's inventory through direct donations and daily deliveries via three trucks.

This year, the department adapted to meet revenue needs by participating in Scale Collaborative's Thriving Non-Profit cohort, exploring revenue diversification and strategic planning. In April 2024, we closed the makeshift marketplace from COVID-19, returning two rooms to our landlords and renovating our boardroom. Staff from the Marketplace shifted to our call center, leading to increased household donations.



Annie Taal, Social Enterprise Manager

Donations Make a Difference

Our social enterprise has consistently created revenue to support our programs for over 20 years. Community members donate clothing, household goods, and small furniture that they no longer need, resulting in:



1,017,592 Pounds of
Clothing & Goods
Donated at our Drop-off



19,569 Pounds Per
Week Delivered to
Value Village



\$713,670 Generated
to be Invested in
Programs



47% of Overall
Revenue for the
Organization



4,090,984
Pounds Collected
by Value Village

Social Enterprise Partners

Value Village
Lifetime Networks
Beacon Community Services

St. Vincent De Paul Society
Sooke Family Resource Society
Mission Thrift Store

James Bay United Church
Mayfair Shopping Centre
Bay Centre

Harry deSwager Bursary



In 1991, longtime BBBSV volunteer mentor Harry deSwager established the **Harry deSwager Big Brothers Big Sisters of Victoria Bursary Fund**, an endowment fund at the **Vancouver Foundation**. Each year, the bursary is awarded to a young person who was previously involved in BBBSV programs, supporting them to continue their education.

Congratulations to Madeline Dorris who is the 2024 bursary recipient. Best of luck in your studies and beyond! If you are interested in supporting the legacy of learning, please visit the Vancouver Foundation website and select the Harry deSwager Big Brothers Big Sisters of Victoria Bursary Fund to make a donation.

Social Enterprise: The Cycle of Donations



So what happens when you donate your used clothes? Donations of clothing, household goods, and small furniture items are dropped off at either our 230 Bay St. drop-off or at the **Value Village** Victoria location. Our partners, primarily Value Village, purchase these goods from us for resale. The revenue generated by this process is then invested into BBBSV mentoring programs, making up **49%** of all funding in 2023-24.

Ways to Help: How You Can Get Involved

Make a Donation in Support of Mentorship

Your donation makes a big difference in the lives of local children. Each dollar invested in our programs is returned as up to \$23 to society. Help us help youth by making a donation online, over the phone, or by mail.

victoria.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/invest-in-potential/

Drop off Clothing & Household Items

Drop off donations at our 230 Bay St. office or Value Village. Please visit our website for current drop-off hours and accepted items. All funds raised are invested into our youth mentoring programs.

victoria.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/donation-centre/

Volunteer as a Mentor

Our programs are always in need of volunteers. We have opportunities available during the day or on evenings and weekends, in schools or the community, and one-on-one or group. Learn more and apply today!

victoria.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/volunteer-3/

Plan a Gift for the Future

Invest in the future of potential with a planned gift in your will. You can give back while supporting your family – you don't have to choose! Visit the Will Power website and try out their gift calculator.

victoria.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/invest-in-potential/

Support a Fundraising Event

Move for Mentoring takes place each April – sign up, join a team, or become a corporate sponsor. We also host several fundraisers throughout the year including Afternoon Tea. Have fun and get involved!

<https://victoria.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/move-for-mentoring/>

(250) 475-1117

main.victoria@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca

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@bbbsvictoria



2023-24 Staff Members & Co-op Students

Alexis Gardner, Family Intake Lead & Community Mentoring Program Lead	Grey Carson, Co-op Student
Allie McFarlane, Marketing & Communications Specialist	Jacqueline Sookermany, Big Steps to Success Coordinator
Alison Batallas, Marketing Coordinator	Jenny Felix, Manager of Finance
Alysha Vivian, Community Mentoring Coordinator	Johnny Pranic, Social Enterprise Associate
Amanda Hill, Executive Director	Julia Bargery, In-School Mentoring Coordinator
Andrea Pearson, Development Associate	Julia Ross, Community Mentoring Coordinator
Annie Taal, Social Enterprise Manager	Kait Burns, Manager of Programs & B You Program Lead
Becca Bosworth, B You Mentoring Coordinator	Kai Shave, Development & Social Enterprise Associate
Ben Taal, Driver	Keltan Roth, Social Enterprise Support
Brooke MacDonald, Salt Spring Island Coordinator	Lilaine Galway, Manager of Programs
Candace Johnson, In-School Mentoring Program Lead & Comox Valley Coordinator	Lynda Miller, Social Enterprise Associate
Darcy Lapushinsky, Social Enterprise Associate	Mariana Carreiro, Finance Assistant
Duncan Jonson, Co-op Student	Maxime Dupont, Social Enterprise Associate
Eden Thom, Social Enterprise Associate	Reece Lebeau, In-School Mentoring Coordinator
Elyse Karas, Business Development Associate	Rose Gora, Community Mentoring Coordinator
Emma Kirkland, Director of Development	Russ Allert, Driver
Ezra Loggin, Social Enterprise Assistant Manager	Sam Clelland, Social Enterprise Support
Fiona Hawes, In-School Mentoring Coordinator	Sultan Sadaka, In-School Mentoring Coordinator
Fiona Kelly, In-School Mentoring Coordinator	Talia Papa, Volunteer Intake Coordinator
	Trevor Shaw, Social Enterprise Associate

2023-24 Board of Directors

Agnes Piotrowski	Frumsa Ibrahim
Barbara Fabian	Karen Mark
Barry Hobbis	Mark Fisher
Basil Onyia	Melissa Hyland
Donna Hobbs	Renata Troc
Dr. Curtis Clarke	Samuel Raphael
	Scott Treble

Land Acknowledgement

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Victoria Capital Region recognizes and respects the lands of the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Esquimalt and Songhees), Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke, WSÁNEĆ (Malahat, Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout, Tseycum), K'ómoks, Hul'qumi'num and SENĆOŦEN peoples, where we live, work and play.

"Kids especially 2SLGBTQIA+ kids, who are currently targets of hate and political pawns - on a global scale, need community need to feel acceptance, dignity and love from the world around them. Thank you for supporting them. It means everything."

- Program Parent

