



IGNITING THE POWER AND POTENTIAL OF YOUNG PEOPLE!



Unification Backgrounder

June 2021

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel (BBBSP) and **Big Brothers Big Sisters of York (BBBSY)** provide mentoring services for the children and youth of Peel and York Regions. Over the last 18 months, the Board of Directors of both agencies the leadership began discussing opportunities for our agencies to explore a more formal partnership. There is no doubt that we are stronger together.

Our movement continues to see transformation and unifications across the country and as we focus on continuing to innovate, and develop sustainable models that allow us to reach more vulnerable youth than ever before, we have made the decision to proceed to a full unification and bring our two agencies together.

It has become profoundly clear, especially with the impact of Covid-19, that this unification will enable a heightened responsiveness to the needs of vulnerable children and youth, promote the sharing of best practices, increase innovation, and ensure sustainable growth and impact for the long term.

To better understand the decision-making process, and strategic direction of our unification, please read further to understand how this unification allows each agency to be more effective and efficient in ensuring children and youth have the essential mentoring impact to affect their trajectory of success.



PEEL	YORK
Population - 1.4M, 3 Municipalities, 1870 children served \$1,934,000 revenue	Population – 1.2M, 10 Municipalities, 515 children served \$443,000 revenue
PROGRAMS: Serving Community Youth – 28% Programs for Black Youth – 8% Serving School-Based Youth – 21% Programs for Newcomer Youth – 15% Go Girls/Game On – 28%	PROGRAMS: Serving Community Youth – 17.4% In-School Mentoring – 8.5% Go Girls! – 41.8% Game On! Eat Smart, Play Smart, Live Smart – 24.8% Newcomer Conversation Circle – 7.5%
Major Funders (2021) \$20,000+ UWGT Ministry of Education Regional Municipality of Peel OTF Johnston Equipment IRCC MCCSS Weston Amgen Canada Inc. Roche Cummins Tim Hortons Advertising and Promotional Fund	Major Funders (2021) \$20,000+ UWGT Ministry of Education Regional Municipality of York OTF Monat Global Canada Richmond Hill Hall Charities Association

**Each of our agencies relies on funding from a variety of sources. Government funding is limited to specific capital and operating grants and time-limited initiatives and is not meant to cover ongoing costs. Private sector-funded programs can't provide all the resources and the voluntary sector is often under resourced.*

The Benefits of Unification



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel and **Big Brothers Big Sisters of York** have undertaken a thorough and strategic approach to examining the feasibility of unifying operations in an effort to strengthen our ability to deliver quality mentoring programs to children and youth in our regions. Here are the five prominent indicators that we have identified that will demonstrate the highest potential.

Five Key Benefits:

1. **Improved Sustainability.** Both agencies agree that a unification will offer a stronger base that will lead to the greater capacity to expand and enhance programs and services. Collaboration of our resources will allow for programming flexibility and expansion of our reach.
2. **Financial Prudence.** Shared administration costs is a practical step which will redirect maintenance resources directly to programming for a leaner organizational model.
3. **Increased Collaborative Resources.** As staff have been introduced and started working together it is apparent that working together, sharing concepts, and leveraging impactful practices is already enhancing our collective mentoring supports and interventions.
4. **Higher Profile.** Increased visibility will enhance marketing and communications.
5. **Stronger Philanthropic Bonds.** Greater potential for expansion of the fundraising base.

Implementing the Plan

The Unification Plan will proceed with the two agencies coming together to operate as one **Big Brothers Big Sisters** agency covering the regions of Peel and York. The unification model that is being considered is a windup of BBBS of York, a transfer of assets to BBBS of Peel, and a name change to include both York and Peel.

Physical locations will be maintained in both Peel and York.

A Board of Directors will be formed that has representatives from both regions and the staff from BBBS of York will be included in the HR complement required to operationalize the outcomes listed above.

The Leadership Team for the unified organization will be **Shari Lynn Ladanchuk** as President & CEO (currently CEO of BBBS of Peel) with **Sarah Dame** (currently CEO of BBBS of York) contracted for the immediate future as the Unification Director.

In order to ensure due diligence, representatives from both Boards of Directors and senior staff from both agencies have worked closely and diligently over the past 18 months. The Boards of both agencies have listened carefully to the prudent advice of the Unification Working Committee, a consultant from **Price Waterhouse Cooper**, various legal and accounting specialists, and the experience of other agencies that have gone through similar processes.

Throughout this lengthy and constructive process, the main objective was always the dedication to the mission of meeting the mentoring needs of the children and youth of our respective communities. The recommendation to unify the agencies best meets this objective.



To Summarize the Findings



The Boards of Directors of both agencies feel strongly that this unification will benefit the many stakeholders of the agencies, the communities we contribute to, and most importantly, the children and youth that we serve.

Unification allows each agency to be more effective and efficient in ensuring children and youth have the essential mentoring impact to support their trajectory to success.

As we headed into 2020, Big Brothers Big Sisters of York was excited to celebrate our 50th Anniversary and focused on celebrating this milestone. As we continued our commitment to service delivery, we utilized the new Theory of Change to guide us as we deepened the impact for those children and youth we serve in York and South Simcoe.

BBBSY was and has continued to be committed to exploring a more impactful and efficient model that innovates and supports a strategic vision of a more sustainable future while ensuring our mentoring programs continue to thrive as we navigate through recovery and transition our two agencies into our unified model. Our number one priority has always focused on ensuring that the children and youth we serve have continued access to our impactful mentoring programs across the Regions!

WHY NOW?

Proven Impact

When the pandemic hit in 2020, BBBSY and BBBSY saw an opportunity to partner and ventured out on our first collaborative virtual fundraising event. We celebrated our first success, exceeding our stretch goal of \$25,000 in just a few months! As our collaborative work continued, we shared resources and assets, mobilized the knowledge at the table for other virtual events and began working together support virtual

programs that were shared across the province and country. After conversations between the CEO of BBBS Peel, Shari Lynn and the CEO of York, Sarah Dame, indicators pointed us towards building an agency together #strongertogether!

It Addresses Funding Trends...

Big Brothers Big Sisters of York is proud of the work we do, the achievements of our children and youth, and the outstanding dedication shown by our volunteer mentors. We could not continue to do the work we do without all of your support and the generous support of so many special funders, particularly UWGT, our Regional Municipalities, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ministry of Education, all who fund both York and Peel agencies and have done so for so many years. With the merger of Peel, York and Toronto United Ways coming together, this unification speaks to some of the anticipated expectations from funders like UWGT in the months and years ahead. Key indicators like this setting the stage for others to consider building models that truly demonstrate the importance of collaboration, and resource efficiencies. A level of expectation from all levels of government that BBBS is a movement and should be working more closely together to drive impact outcomes. And finally, our corporate and community partners – looking to agencies like ours to lead the way in igniting the future for our children and youth for another 100 years.

It Sustains our Work...

We know that building long-term sustainability to ensure programs continue to grow and thrive in York means embracing transformation as we move forward in our strategic planning efforts. Strengthening communities and empowering children and youth in York and beyond through our mentoring programs has never been more important and this partnership accomplishes that!

I hope you will join us in supporting the unification of two incredibly strong agencies who together will serve the growing needs in both Peel and York Regions.



FAQ



Q. Will the wait time for my child increase because there are more children on the waiting list?

A. We are not anticipating an increase in waiting times in either region. We will be continuing to recruit new volunteers in both Peel and York and are not anticipating any increase in waiting time. In fact, we hope to reach more potential volunteers in both regions through our collaborative efforts.

Q. Will the service my child and I receive be different after the unification?

A. We are planning a very smooth transition for all of our volunteers, families and staff. You will continue to receive the responsive and accessible service that we are committed to offering to families and volunteers in both regions.

Q. Will my caseworker change with the unification?

A. Our staff in both York and Peel will continue to work with their existing volunteers and families and our caseworkers and program coordinators will not change as a result of the unification.

Q. Will there be fewer opportunities and supports available in a larger agency? (camp, holiday giving)

A. We will continue to work with our partners in both Peel and York to offer camp opportunities and holiday giving support in both communities.

Q. Volunteer - Will I be asked to be travel to another region to be matched with a child?

A. We will continue to be match volunteers considering volunteer's preferences regarding the location of a potential mentee.

Q. If I'm required to attend a meeting at the office, can I choose which location is more convenient for me or will I be required to go to the office in my region? Will there still be events held locally for my family/match to attend?

A. We will continue to support families, volunteers and stakeholders in the communities closest to where they live as we move to a more streamlined community based focus.

Q. Will all programs be available in both regions?

A. Staff in Peel and York are very excited to work together and expand the services we offer in both regions. We also recognize that every community has unique needs and strengths. We will continue to work closely with local community members and stakeholders to make sure we offer the most valuable and relevant programs in each municipality.

Q. I live on the border of York and Peel. Will teams in both regions look for a potential match for me?

A. Yes

Q. Will there be policy changes that affect my match? For example, will we need to meet more/less or speak with our Program Coordinator more/less than we did before?

A. All BBBS matches adhere to national standards and expectations. Your match relationship and the relationship you have with your Program Coordinator will remain the same.

Q. If I make a donation now will my dollars stay local to the region I live in?

A. Absolutely, we will continue to be donor-centered so those donors who wish their support to stay local will; however, we will be focused on building an integrated model that supports all children and youth we serve. Our current practice, in both York and Peel, is to work in collaboration with all funding partners to ensure all deliverables are met and service delivery is optimised. Our mentoring programs will continue seamlessly and focus on the greatest areas of community needs.

Q. If I am interested in running a Third Party Event – would the dollars raised stay local?

A. Yes, where particular events are run in the region dollars would stay focused on programs in that region.

