13 Volunteers Needed to Re-Open Big Brothers Mentorship Program in Surrey

New registration on hold for four years while demand from youth continues to grow

April 1, 2026: SURREY, B.C. – Four years after Surrey children stopped being accepted into a community youth mentorship program due to an acute shortage of volunteers, Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver (BBGV) says just 13 more volunteers are needed so the organization can reopen its doors to families in the city.

The organization has reduced its wait pool from nearly 40 children, but to meet the remaining need, BBGV is hosting two in-person volunteer info sessions in Surrey at the Strawberry Hill Library on Apr. 14 at 6:00 PM and Newton Library on Apr. 23 at 4:30 PM for those looking to learn how to make an impact.

Additionally, the charity will host weekly online volunteer info sessions every Thursday at noon throughout April. All info sessions are open to the public with no commitment required.

"2026 marks four years since the Big Brothers Community program closed to new families in Surrey but, this year, the story is not about closure, it's about progress," Rose Higgins, Director of Programs and Operations at BBGV, said.

In April 2022, the organization was forced to pause Surrey intake for its signature Big Brothers Community program as its wait pool surged to 38 children due to a volunteer shortage. This resulted in a waitlist of more than 100 families unable to enrol their children while enrolled youth had to wait more than two years on average to meet their mentor.

"Over the past four years, we've worked hard to rebuild volunteer momentum and eliminate our waitlist in the city. Now, we're seeing the results. With 13 more volunteers in Surrey, we could open up so many opportunities for children and families who have been waiting so long to meet their Big Brother," Navkiran Brar, BBGV Community Program Manager, said.

The impact of mentorship programs goes far beyond weekly hang outs. In fact, 91% of youth in Big Brothers Big Sisters programs report a stronger sense of belonging with family and peers. Academically, mentored youth show a 28% increase in achieving A grades at school with 73% of alumni mentees saying their mentors introduced them to interesting careers. In the long-term, mentored youth earn an average of $200,000 more over their lifetimes than non-mentored peers.

Ultimately, mentees are far more likely to volunteer as adults and continue the cycle of mentorship.

While volunteer demand remains high in Surrey, it does not stop there. Across the organization's service region, 106 youth are currently waiting to meet their mentor throughout Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster, Richmond, Delta, White Rock, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, the City of North Vancouver, and the North Shore.

In 2025, the organization served 959 children through its programs, up 13 per cent from 2024.

The charity's vision is to empower children and youth to reach their full potential through mentorship by matching caring adults with children who could benefit from an additional positive adult presence in their life.

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Surrey In-person Volunteer Info Sessions – April 2026
April 14, 6 p.m. – Click to sign up for the Strawberry Hill Library info session in Surrey
April 23, 4:30 p.m. – Click to sign up for the Newton Library info session in Surrey

Online sessions every Thursday (Apr. 2 – Apr. 30) at 12pm
Sign up for free online at bigbrothersvancouver.com/volunteer-info-session/

General volunteer inquiries
Email volunteer@bbgvf.com or visit bigbrothersvancouver.com/inquire

Backgrounder

Interview contacts:

- Norman Galimski – Marketing & Communications Manager and BBGV volunteer ngalimski@bbgvf.com, mobile: 604 657 8572 – **call or text anytime**
- Navkiran Brar – Community Program Manager navkiran.brar@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca
- Rose Higgins – Director of Programs and Operations rose.higgins@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca

Interviews with Big Brother volunteers, Little Brothers and/or families *may* be available upon request. Contact Norman and we will do our best to meet your request. For the safety of our families, youth, and volunteers, we require that only first names (no last names) are published.
**Note: Norman is a current Big Brothers volunteer of three years and a former Little.*

2025 Meaningful Outcomes at Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver

We surveyed volunteers, parents, and guardians about the impact of mentorship on their mentee/child in the following areas and found:

- 100% of mentees rated their friendship with their mentor as positive.
- 97% saw positive impact on self-esteem.
- 93% saw a positive improvement in communication and social skills.
- 92% of mentees feel more confident at and enjoy school more.
- 88% saw improvements in overall mental health and wellness.

The organization:

Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver serves nearly 1,000 children per year of all genders and identities through six youth mentoring programs.

Today, there are 106 youth waiting to be matched with a Big Brother in the Community Mentoring Program wait pool throughout our service region which includes: Vancouver, Surrey, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Richmond, Burnaby, New Westminster, the North Shore, Delta and White Rock.

Big Brothers Community Program wait pool by community:

Burnaby - 7
Coquitlam - 12
New Westminster - 4
North Shore - 11
Port Coquitlam - 8
Port Moody - 3
Richmond- 11
Surrey - 13
Vancouver - 37
Total – 106

Data accurate as of March 13, 2026. Surrey stats include the communities of Delta and White Rock.