

**Volunteer, Child, and Parent
Match and Safety Guidelines
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Great Falls**

Safety:

1. No alcoholic beverages, drugs, or tobacco products may be used prior to or during a visit with the child. Note: This rule applies to all match activities.
2. Volunteers must ensure the safe storage of firearms. This includes taking the following precautions: not informing the child of the whereabouts of the firearm, safe storage of ammunition in a separate location, trigger locks, locked storage of the weapon, and use of the firearm safety programs and procedures. Gun related match activities are prohibited without prior written authorization from the parent, volunteer, as well as BBBS staff. Learn more about hunter safety by visiting <http://www.hunter-ed.com/mt/>.
3. High risk match activities are also prohibited including boating, tubing, riding motorcycles/ATV's without parent and BBBS staff approval. The use of appropriate safety gear is always required.
4. Volunteer is required to notify their Program Specialist with any concerns in their match, including suspicions of abuse or neglect.
5. Overnight activities are not permitted during the first 12 months of a match. Following the first twelve months, all overnight visits **must** be pre-approved by the Program Specialist prior to each overnight outing.
6. Volunteer agrees to never leave the child unattended or with anyone other than themselves.
7. Volunteers agree not to have physical contact that immobilizes or compromises the child's movements (e.g., tickling, wrestling, punching, etc.); nor to have contact with the child's private areas; or to engage in any other action that could be construed to be sexual (e.g., massage, etc.) or physical abuse.
8. Observe all Local, State, and Federal laws.
9. Montana State Law requires that all children be in a car seat until they are 6 years of age **and** 60 pounds. Big Brothers Big Sisters wants to remind you that it is recommended all children under the age of 12 are safest buckled in the backseat.
10. Adhere to age recommendations for all activities. This could be age guidelines for movies, video-games, board games, toys, etc. Do not expose your Little to inappropriate material including adult content materials, adult content conversation, inappropriate content on MySpace or Facebook, inappropriate internet sites, or unnecessary violence. (Football games usually okay, rated R movies not). If ever in doubt ask your Program Specialist and your Little's parent.
11. Access to a first-aid kit is recommended.
12. Be aware of your Little's allergies and relevant medical history. Should your little require immediate medical attention take appropriate action. If necessary, call 911 then notify the parent and BBBS staff. If your Little has a special need or condition that you are not familiar with, contact your program specialist for information and/or training.

Communication:

1. For communication and safety purposes, the volunteer must clear all outings with the Parent/guardian. When picking up the child, the volunteer must inform the Parent/guardian where they are going and when they will get back. The volunteer will notify the Parent/guardian if the plans change.
2. The relationship between the volunteer and child is one-to-one. Neither the volunteer nor the child is permitted to include other individuals in the majority of their match activities. Occasionally, this practice is permissible if agreeable to all parties.
3. The volunteer is a friend to the child, not a therapist. If a problem arises, the volunteer or parent should contact the Program Specialist for assistance. The Parent/guardian is discouraged from discussing problems with their child to the volunteer.
4. The volunteer does not become involved in the discipline of the child. The custodian is the parent/guardian; the volunteer is the friend. Therefore, the parent/guardian will not lean on the volunteer for discipline when the child misbehaves during the week. However, the volunteer is expected to respond appropriately to the child's misbehavior when they are together, while away from the child's home and/or Parent/guardian.
5. Parent/guardian and Volunteer agree to maintain contact with Program Specialist on a monthly basis. All parties agree to keep Program Specialist updated on any personal changes (i.e. vacations, address, and phone number changes, etc.)
6. Be okay with ending the activity early if your Little is having difficulty. Know your Little's abilities and encourage their open communication with you.

General Program Expectations:

1. The Parent/guardian will have the child clean and appropriately dressed for the outing.
2. In order to foster one-to-one time between the child and volunteer, time spent at the child's home should be limited. This will help limit the volunteer's involvement with other family members.
3. The match is required to meet for a minimum of 2-4 contacts per month. Contact time should total at least 8 hours.
4. The Parent/guardian is not allowed to ask the volunteer for household assistance, transportation, or baby-sitting.
5. The Parent/guardian is not permitted to deprive the child of volunteer visit as a means of discipline.
6. The volunteer is not permitted to give money to the child and/or the Parent/guardian. However, the child maybe paid for odd jobs provided by the volunteer. Note: Gifts on birthdays and holidays are appropriate.
7. Personal information learned about the parties of the match (Little, Parent, and Volunteer) is considered to be confidential and should be handled in an appropriate manner. However, secrets should not be kept by the Volunteer, nor should the Volunteer ask the Little to keep secrets.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Staff: _____