

SUMMER CONNECTIONS

Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Alabama



2017

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SUMMER CONNECTIONS WITH YOUR LITTLE

Remember how long summer vacation felt when you were a kid? When it's finally time to go back to school, everything seems brand new and you had to get use to it all over again.

But with a little effort now you won't have to go back to square one with your Little. By committing to contacting your Little at least **three times** over the summer, you won't have to. And your Little will know that you haven't forgotten your friendship simply because school is out. By contacting your Little, you show that you still care.

The materials in this packet will help you to keep in touch with your Little in whatever way you feel most comfortable.

Because it can be hard to complete unscheduled, "open" tasks, it might help you to complete the following pledge and tape it somewhere you will see it over the course of the summer (next to your computer, on the fridge, etc.):

SUMMER CONNECTIONS PLEDGE

I, _____, will contact _____
Your Name Little's Name

at least **three** times over the summer, regardless of whether s/he writes back to me.

Signature: _____



The time is drawing near for your last Spring, 2017 Meeting...

If you haven't already had your last school-year meeting, here are a few things you might consider doing during this meeting to make a **summer communication plan** and explore your **Summer Connections** packets:

- Go through the packets together with your Little to choose ways to keep in touch.
- Look through the variety of activities in your packet and choose the ones that appeal to you and your Little (or seem appropriate for your Little's age).
- Determine your communication plan or activities on the form provided—you each have one.
 - Go through them together
 - Perhaps you want to choose days when you plan to mail the cards
 - Choose an activity each month to work on
 - Keep in mind the "dates to remember"
- For activities you choose, look at the supplies needed and let us know if we can help provide those items. We want to make sure that you both have what you need so staying in touch is easy.
- Last, make your own commitment to stay connected this summer even if you do not receive communication back. It's important for you to know you did your part and the circumstances might be out of your Littles control. And follow through with the plan no matter what.

Keeping in Touch

Big and Little ways to Communicate

Writing:

- MAIL is slow, but your Little receives something real to read. There are 3 cards/envelopes for each of you to send to each other during the summer.

*Pre-address and stamp the cards you give to your Little with your work address. If you are a college student, please have the cards sent to you @ **BBBS of South Alabama, 9 Dauphin St Ste 101, Mobile, AL 36602** and we will forward them to your personal address as soon as possible. You might need to include a pen or pencil.

*BBBS of South Alabama will provide you with your Littles address if they are unable to give you that information. Please email your Littles name to kelly@bbbssa.org.

- JOURNALING is a way to record your thoughts and ideas. You can keep your journal private or share it with your Little:
 - a. through letters,
 - b. by writing your thoughts down and sharing them in the Fall

Communicating without words:

Art communicates! Draw, color, doodle or paste pictures on your cards and mail it to your Little. Words don't have to be part of your message.

Other Activities:

Included in your packet are activities that you might want to try with your Little (depending on his/her age)—they can be done separately and sent through the mail. Copies of instructions are in your packet.

Twelve Questions Activity

Ask your Little to write the answer to any or all questions in whatever order he/she wishes. When your Little has finished, ask him/her to discuss his/her answers. Make "I learned..." statements, or discuss how the assignment made him/her feel. Your Little may want to record his/her responses in a journal.

1. What do you wish would happen?
2. What would you like to do better?
3. What do you wish you had more time for?
4. What do you wish you had more money for?
5. What more would you like to get out of life?
6. What are things you'd like to do, but haven't done yet?
7. What angered you recently?
8. What made you happy recently?
9. What have you complained about?
10. Who have you complimented lately?
11. With whom would you like to get along better?
12. What would you like to get others to do?
13. What takes too long?
14. What would you like to organize better?

This is also a good time to introduce goal setting to your match as a technique for gaining control over his/her life and achieving at least one of the things mentioned on the above.

Adapted from: 100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom, a Handbook for Teachers and Parents by Jack Canfield & Harold C. Wells (Allyn and Bacon, A division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1976) P.173

“Who Am I?” Activity

To get to know your Little better, ask him/her to complete these sentences—in letters. Discuss the ones that interest you the most and feel free to add new ones.

1. In general, school is....
2. My best friend is...
3. Something I'd like to tell my teacher is...
4. I don't like people who...
5. I'm at my best when I...
6. People I trust...
7. The best thing that could happen to me is...
8. When I don't like something I've done, I...
9. When I like something I've done, I...
10. I'm very happy that...
11. I wish my parents knew...
12. Someday I hope...
13. Five adjectives that describe me are...

Adapted from *100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom, a Handbook for Teachers and Parents* by Jack Canfield & Harold C. Wells (Allyn and Bacon, a Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1976) Page 117.

Create a TIME CAPSULE for the summer

Materials needed:

- Shoe box, large manila envelope or other container
- "Time Capsule Entry Journal" Pages
- Items collected over the summer to share with your Big/Little

How to create and keep a time capsule:

- Match will make a commitment to create a time capsule for the summer. You will have a chance to share your time capsules with each other at the first match meeting when school begins in the fall.
- Each week, this summer, both you and your Little will collect an item to add to your time capsule and write a time capsule entry explaining why you've included the item in your time capsule and what about the item you want to share with your match partner.
 - Examples of possible time capsule items:
 - Small rock from a beach that you visited this summer.
 - Ticket stub from the local fair or other festival you attended.
 - A drawing of a special moment you experienced--a friend's birthday party, a day at the swimming pool, or watching fireworks.
- You should remind each other of your commitment when you correspond throughout the summer.

Create a CIRCLE JOURNAL for the summer

Materials needed:

- Journal, which can be as simple as paper fastened together, the prepared note cards, or a decorated spiral notebook

How to create and keep a circle journal:

- Match will make a commitment to create a circle journal for the summer.
- The journal will be passed back and forth, between Big and Little, throughout the summer, through the mail.
- Every time a Big or Little has the journal he/she will create an entry before passing the journal back to his/her match partner. The entry can include writing, pictures, drawing, and items glued into the journal.
- The match should remind each other of their commitment when they correspond throughout the summer.

Although a circle journal doesn't have to have a theme, here are a few ideas of themes that might be fun:

- Questions—Every time a match partner has a journal they end their entry by writing a question for their Little or Big to answer.
- Themes—Pick a common interest and focus journal entries around sharing about this interest. For example, fishing, arts, popular culture, music, magic, sports, recipes, exercise, or charting the stars.
- Years—Envision where you will be 1, 3, 5, 10 and 20 years from now. Each time you have the journal write about where you want to be at this time, or where you hope your match partner will be and tips on how to get there.
- Circle Story—Either match partner begins a story and writes a few paragraphs, and then hands the story off to their match partner to create the next few paragraphs. Keep the story going in a circular pattern throughout the summer.

If you're going to go with more of a free flowing journal here are some topics you may want to write about:

- Describe your dream job or dream vacation.
- Write about your biggest fear, your proudest moment, or what you hope to achieve this coming year.

PLANT A SEED to remember

Materials needed:

- 2 seed packets, one for the Little and one for the Big
- A place to plant the seeds (talk about where you will each plant them at your home)
- A library card and access to a library, if you decide to take on the reading challenge.

Activities:

- Bigs and Littles plant their seeds during the same time period.
- Throughout the summer matches can check in to compare how their plants are doing. Through correspondence, the match can describe how their plants are doing and see if their development is similar. Matches can also take pictures or sketch images of their plants week by week. And if it's a vegetable plant, matches can share ideas of things to create with the vegetables that their plants are producing.
- Matches can independently go to the library and check out any of the following books about seeds. These are children's books, although even teens and adults can learn from them.
 - Glenna's Seeds by Nancy Edwards
 - Corn is Maze, A Weed is Flower by Alike
 - Bean and Plant by Christine Back
 - The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle
 - You Can't Smell a Flower with Your Ear by Joanna Cole
 - The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss
 - The Great Big Enormous Turnip by Helen Oxenburgh
 - The Magic School Bus Plants Seeds by Patricia Reif

Create PUZZLES to send to your Little

Visit <http://www.puzzles.ca/freerun.html> for free puzzles you can print and mail to your Little.

Web Links

This section lists some links to websites that can help you find new topics you and your Little can communicate about this summer. The trick is to find subjects you both enjoy and that keep the lines of communication open. You could find a website related to one of your Little's goals or interests (e.g. if she's working on pre-algebra, find a website with math problems). Use these sites as an option for conversation starters.

Sports

- Sports reporting and web pages by fans: www.Allsports.com
- ESPN SportsZone: www.espn.go.com
- CBS SportsLine: www.sportsline.com
- Fox Sports: www.foxsports.com

Newspapers/Magazines

- The New York Times www.nyt.com
- LA Times: www.latimes.com
- NY Daily News: www.nydailynews.com
- The Washington Post: www.washingtonpost.com

Encyclopedia/Information

- HighBeam Library Research: www.highbeam.com
- Biography: www.biography.com

Educational

- Google Scholar <http://scholar.google.com/>
- National Geographic www.nationalgeographic.com/kids
- PBS www.pbs.org
- Federal Government/FirstGov For Kids <http://www.kids.gov/> (links on arts, fun stuff, geography, global village, government, health, history, homework, money, science and math, careers, fighting crime, space, U.S., and transportation)

Movies/Music/General Interest

- Mr. Movie Phone: www.moviephone.com
- Movie Reviews, News and Trailers: www.film.com
- Rolling Stone: www.rollingstone.com

Astronauts/Space Exploration

- Space Exploration: www.NASA.gov

Fashion

- Fashion Icon: www.fashion-icon.com

Resumes/Internships

- Resume and Interviewing Information for Teens: www.byggpub.com
- Intern-NET: www.InternshipPrograms.com
- National Internships: www.internships.com

College

- Scholarships: www.fastweb.com
- College Scholarships/On-Line courses: www.college-scholarships.com
- Scholarly Stuff: www.scholarstuff.com
- Test Preparation & Educational Services: www.kaplan.com

