



## **Big Brothers Big Sisters** of Northeastern Wisconsin

### **Guideline: Online Social Networking**

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#### **Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Northeastern Wisconsin**

**Effective Date: January 1, 2010**

**Rationale:** Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeastern Wisconsin recognizes that online social networking (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blogs, etc.) has become a very popular communication tool and that many of our mentors and youth use these websites. In general, personal use of social networking sites is typically for communications between peers, including friends and family. Big Brothers Big Sisters wants to reiterate that your relationship with your youth is that of a mentor in addition to a friend. Not all social networking sites are designed to support mentoring relationships.

Please proceed thoughtfully when inviting or accepting an invitation from your youth to a social networking site. If you have any doubts, please contact your Match Support Specialist and/or postpone your invitation or acceptance. If you do choose to participate in a social networking site with your youth, you must adhere to the following guidelines regarding any postings related to your match or affiliation with Big Brothers Big Sisters:

- 1 Do not participate in any online communication with and/or about your youth unless you have discussed this with the parent/guardian and Match Support Specialist and have received their approval.
- 2 Give the parent/guardian and Big Brothers Big Sisters your website address, and when possible, link your page to the Big Brothers Big Sisters page on that site so that we can follow along with your postings. We are active on Facebook.
- 3 Never post any pictures of your youth online unless you have the written consent of the child's parent/guardian. That consent form should be filed with Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- 4 Never post the last name of your youth, his/her parent/guardian or Big Brothers Big Sisters staff.
- 5 Never post any contact information for your youth.
- 6 Never post any identifying information about your youth (i.e.: child's home address, school the child attends, where the parent works, etc).
- 7 Never post anything that could be perceived as judgmental or offensive to your youth or his/her parent/guardian.
- 8 Make sure that your page settings are set to private, so that only people you approve can view your online content. Ensure that Big Brothers Big Sisters and the parent/guardian

- are approved if you plan to post content related to your match.
- 9 Honor confidentiality guidelines within your match; be cautious when posting detailed information about conversations with your youth, their parent/guardian or with Big Brothers Big Sisters staff. Posting generalized information or status updates is typically appropriate, but lengthier postings or blogs containing in-depth information should be approved by the parent/guardian and by Big Brothers Big Sisters prior to posting.
  - 10 Be aware of other postings on your page that are not Big Brothers Big Sisters related or are inappropriate for minors. Know that as a Big Brothers Big Sisters volunteer you are a role model at all times. Please ensure that all content is appropriate and kid-friendly, in case your youth or his/her family were to read your social networking page. If the social networking site allows, create a separate group for your youth, his/her parent/guardian and Big Brothers Big Sisters staff that limits your youth's access to your general or universal postings.
  - 11 When in doubt about whether or not something is appropriate to post, consult with your Match Support Specialist prior to posting.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the termination of your match.**