



Strikes, Spares and Mentors!

People in communities across Canada are going bowling to fund mentoring for kids in need of a Big Brother or a Big Sister

From mid-February through April, people from all walks of life in Canadian towns and cities are teaming up with Big Brothers Big Sisters to go bowling to help thousands of children get the support they need.

Called *Bowl For Kids Sake* (BFKS), the massive campaign is now underway, and Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada (BBBSC) has selected Kevin, a 13-year-old from Tillsonburg, Ontario, to speak for all the kids currently waiting for a mentor.

After Kevin lost his Dad in 1999, his Mom signed him up to receive mentoring from a Big Brother. Kevin credits that experience with making him a better, stronger person and has proven it by becoming the top *Bowl For Kids Sake* youth fundraiser five-years-in-a-row for Ingersoll, Tillsonburg and area.

“I learned from Michael, my Big Brother, that I wasn’t alone and that people care,” said Kevin. “My Big Brother really helped me and now it’s my turn to give back and help other kids.”

Across Canada, demand for children and youth mentoring far exceeds the number of available Big Brothers and Big Sisters. BBBSC provides mentoring services to 26,300 children nationally, but more than 10,000 children and youth remain on waiting lists for a mentor.

“Our national target for this year’s *Bowl For Kids Sake* campaign is to raise \$7 million,” said Lee Overton, Director, Bowl For Kids Sake. “The funds raised are absolutely critical to connecting children and youth in need with mentors that will help them learn, grow and succeed. Every child in Canada who needs a Big Brother or Big Sister should have one, and that is our goal.”

Each dollar from the BFKS fundraising campaign is used exclusively in the community in which it is raised. The funds help local BBBSC agencies provide children and youth mentoring programs, match “Bigs” with “Littles”, maintain existing relationships, recruit new “Bigs” and form new matches.

“Getting involved is easy,” said Kevin. “People wanting to form a team and gather pledges or donate just need to call their local BBBS agency or visit bowlforkidsake.ca. It’s really fun.”

Forming a BFKS team is a four-step process. Contact your local BBBS agency; put together a team of four to six people; raise funds on-line or by using a pledge form; then come out to the BFKS event and have a great time bowling.

During a recent television interview, Kevin was asked what he wanted to do when he grew up. Kevin’s response was heartfelt and immediate: “I want to be a big brother!”

Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada is the nation's largest youth mentoring organization, providing quality mentoring services for over 26,300 children, with a goal of serving 100,000. Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada currently has 140 agencies serving 1,000 communities. To find out more or donate on-line visit **bowforkidsake.ca**.