



# 2020 Big Brothers Big Sisters of America Annual Impact Report

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Big Brothers Big Sisters of America  
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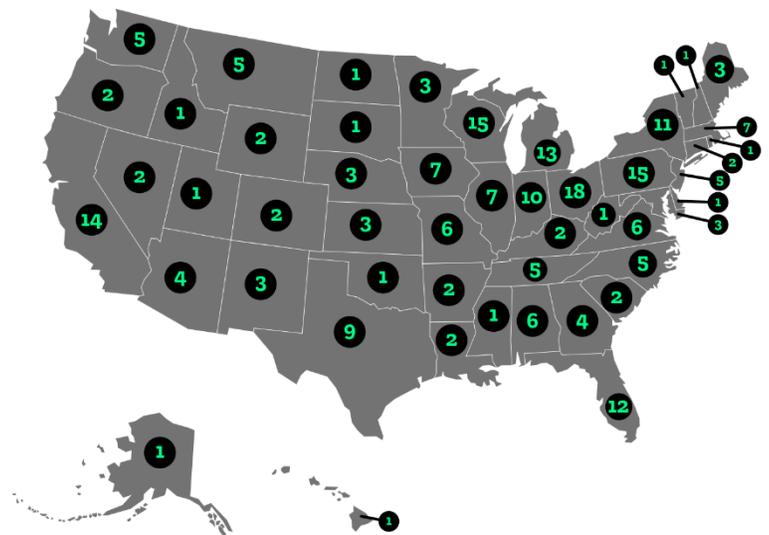
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) was born as an innovative alternative to the juvenile justice system to reach youth who need us most. We are the preeminent leader of 1-to-1 mentoring, providing youth and families safe, proven, accessible and free programs that work. We ignite and inspire **Matches (mentoring relationships)** between **Bigs (mentors)** and **Littles (young persons)**. Matches are typically classified as belonging to one of two categories: **Community-Based** matches that take place in the general community, or **Site-Based** matches that take place in a school, workplace, or similar setting.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- **109,254 Total Children Served**<sup>1</sup> by the Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) network in 2020.
- Typical Community-Based matches are lasting over two and a half years – **44% longer** than the average match length 10 years ago.
- Typical Site-Based matches are lasting nearly one and a half years – **34% longer** than the average match length 10 years ago.
- Littles surveyed in 2020 made **significant improvements from baseline to follow-up in eight outcome areas**: Social Competence, Academic Performance/School Grades, Educational Expectations, Emotion Regulation, School Connectedness, Depressive Symptoms, Risky Behaviors – School Discipline, and Risky Behaviors – Bullying.
- After at least one year of mentoring, **90%** of Littles surveyed report **they feel their Big is a special adult** in their life.

## OUR REACH

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America is the preeminent youth empowerment organization in the United States. **More than 230 agencies in over 5,000 communities in all 50 states** inspire and engage youth from age five through young adulthood. Established in 1904 as an alternative to the juvenile justice system to reach the most marginalized youth, more than 400,000 Littles, their families, and Bigs are part of the evidence-based program each year. **In the past decade we have reached nearly 2-million youth.**



## OUR MODEL

The core BBBS program is Community-Based mentoring, which allows Bigs and Littles in matches to spend one-on-one time together doing free or low-cost activities of their choosing in the community. The Community-Based mentoring program began over a century ago as an alternative to the juvenile justice system. BBBS agencies specialize in creating and supporting relationships that help Littles facing adversity develop the characteristics needed for academic, social, and economic success. As an evidence-based mentoring organization, BBBS prides itself on building and supporting impactful relationships. In 2020, 74.5% of Community-Based matches lasted at least 12 months (the minimum match length goal); on average, these matches last over two and half years.

<sup>1</sup> Total Children Served represents a unique count of **matches** made in calendar year 2020. This is distinct from the unique count of Littles.

All agencies operate under the BBBS Standards of Practice. BBBSA also provides and regularly updates the Service Delivery Model (SDM) for agency use. The SDM provides a standardized guide, based on research and empirical evidence, for how agencies should engage Bigs, Littles, and parents or guardians to achieve safe, long, and strong matches with the best possible outcomes for Littles, from the point of inquiry to match closure. BBBS is intentional about the populations of Littles served and the Bigs engaged in order to meet communities' most critical needs. Therefore, while the SDM provides consistency in service delivery across the Network, it also provides space for innovation, so agencies can effectively offer specific, targeted services in their locations. For example, the SDM is carried out in different settings, which include: 1) Community-Based, where matches meet in the community; 2) Site-Based, where matches meet at a designated site such as a school or workplace; 3) Site-Based Facilitated, where matches meet at a designated site and a staff member is present at all sessions, and 4) Site-Based Plus, a hybrid that may combine elements of both Community-Based and Site-Based settings.

To meet the needs of their communities, many agencies have expanded services and program enhancements. For example, some agencies have programs serving post high school youth with an emphasis on college and career readiness; some offer wraparound services for Littles and their families; many offer technology-enhanced mentoring (TEM) that connects youth and mentors through virtual platforms. In a network-wide survey answered by 163 agencies, collected shortly before pandemic-related lockdowns began, approximately 25% of agencies with college and career readiness programs were already offering technology-enhanced mentoring options to program participants. From the same survey, 80 agencies specified regularly offering referrals to wraparound services in areas such as rental/utilities assistance, school supplies, and food/grocery assistance; 68 agencies specified directly providing wraparound services to families. These survey responses show that leading up to the pandemic, the BBBS network was uniquely prepared to successfully pivot and provide crucial community supports in a time of crisis.

### ***The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic***

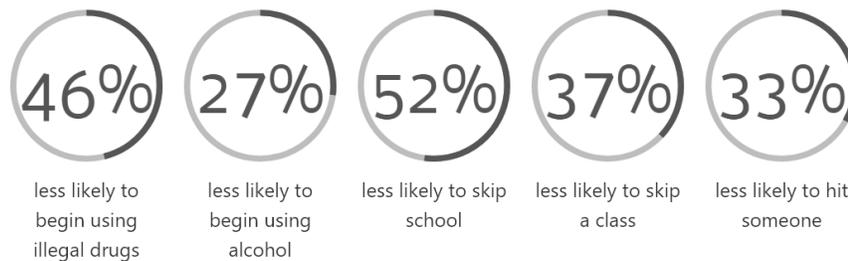
In March 2020, COVID-19 changed the way that the National Office and our agencies functioned. The BBBS network needed to quickly embrace new strategies for their matches after decades of primarily in-person operations. As schools and workplaces across the nation closed down and stay-at-home orders were issued, many families were cut off from access to basic needs. With crucial support from donors and funders, BBBSA and the network quickly transitioned to virtual programming, partnered with community organizations to provide wraparound services, and delivered essential necessities (including care packages and educational resources) to families. Additional efforts were made to keep matches connected through a variety of enrichment activities. This resulted in a rapid growth and expansion of innovations as agency staff leveraged technology to facilitate match and family communications, while maintaining physical distancing.

## OUR IMPACT

Big Brothers Big Sisters inspires youth equity and empowerment. As a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) organization, this lens is threaded throughout everything we do. We invite in and engage intentionally with families and mentors through our holistic approach. At the heart of BBBS is a commitment to continuous learning, improvement, and research.

The Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) study, conducted in 1995, is widely considered to be foundational to the mentoring field and to the BBBS Community-Based program model in particular. According to this study, our one-to-one model truly makes an impact in children's lives. Approximately 1,000 youth from eight BBBS agencies across the country who were looking for mentors participated in this study. Approximately half of the children were randomly chosen to be matched with a Big, while the others were assigned to a waiting list. Matched children met with their Big about three times a month for an average of one year. Researchers surveyed both the matched and unmatched children, and their parents, on two occasions: when they first applied for a Big and again 18 months later.

Researchers found that after 18 months of spending time with their Bigs, the Littles, compared to those children not in our program, were:



They also found that the Littles were more confident of their performance in schoolwork and getting along better with their families.

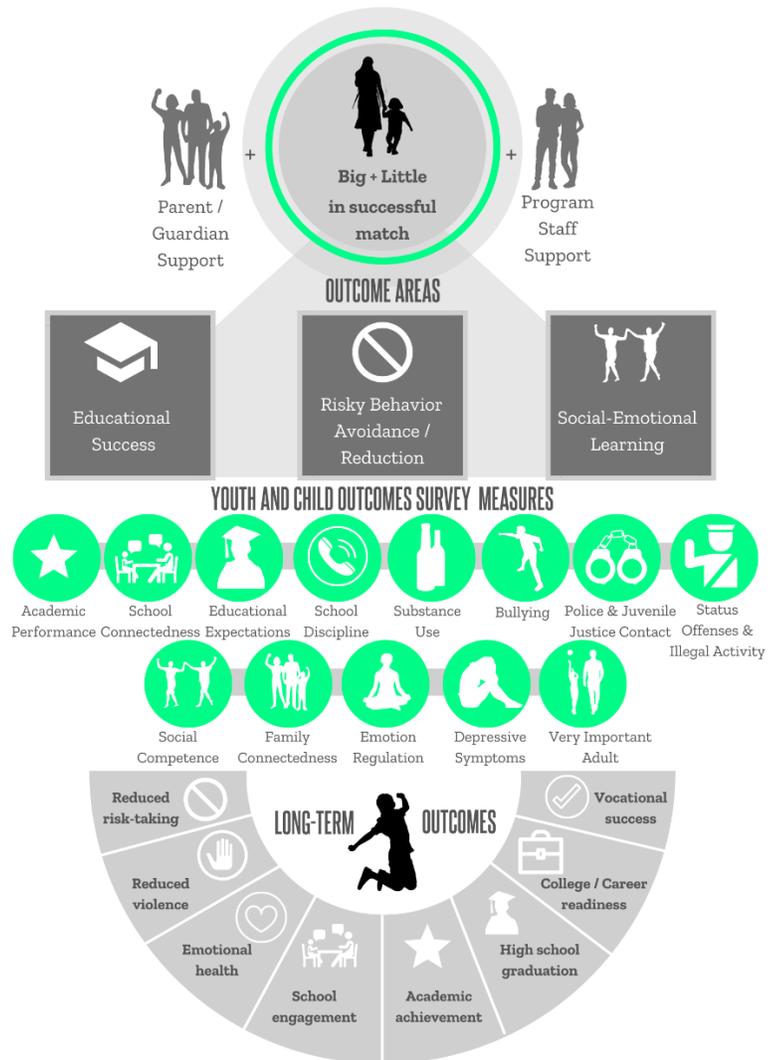
This study is widely considered to be foundational to the mentoring field in general and specifically to the BBBS Community-Based Mentoring Program by elevating it to model status (Blueprints for Healthy Littles Development; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Model Programs Guide). BBBSA strives to maintain this level of effectiveness and has embarked on a new long-term study of our Community-Based Mentoring Program to validate our continued positive impact on the Littles we serve. Study enrollment and data collection for the new study began February 2018 and continued through 2019. By the end of the year, over 1,300 youth were enrolled in the study. In 2020, study enrollment ended and 18-month follow-ups for study participants continued. Findings from this report are anticipated to become available in late 2024.

## OUR MEASUREMENT

BBBS strives to ensure that all Littles and Bigs served in our programs experience quality mentoring relationships that uphold our Standards of Practice. Agencies track outcomes that are proven predictors of long-term success, such as school attendance and engagement, throughout the match for ongoing program evaluation. BBBS defines success by measuring positive youth outcomes, the number of Littles effectively served by the program, and the lifelong success and community benefits that follow. See figure to the right for an overview of how these outcomes relate to long-term success.

We measure the quality of our programs and the strength of the mentoring relationships we create using two tools: the Youth Outcomes Survey (YOS), which includes a version called the Child Outcomes Survey (COS) administered to youth ages 10 and younger, and the Strength of Relationships (SOR) survey.

- 1) **YOS/COS:** Using a pre- and post-test methodology, the YOS and COS are designed to track outcomes in the following areas: educational success, risk behavior avoidance/reduction, and socio-emotional competency. BBBS staff administer the baseline YOS or COS before the match begins. At the match anniversary milestone, annually for Community-Based Mentoring Programs and at the end of the academic school year for Site-Based Mentoring Programs, BBBS staff administer a YOS or COS follow-up survey.
- 2) **SOR:** The SOR measures the level of emotional attachment, satisfaction, and connection between the mentor and the child. This tool helps BBBS create even more positive outcomes for children. Research clearly shows that the stronger the mentoring relationship, the better children fare. The SOR measure is a powerful instrument that allows the agency to achieve higher quality program impact. Specifically, the SOR can be used to track match progress and increase the probability that the match will continue and that the Littles will achieve positive outcomes. Additionally, higher survey compliance rates ensure the most accurate picture of the match relationship development.



BBBS staff collect, manage, and report survey and interview data through our shared data management system, Matchforce, to ensure compliance with the BBBS Standards of Practice and to achieve, track, and report outcomes for Littles served. This data management system also allows BBBS to track and report key indicators such as demographics of program participants, number of active matches, total children served, number of mentors, match length, and 12-month retention rates.

### **New in 2020**

An updated version of our YOS was released in February 2019 alongside a new complementary Child Outcomes Survey (COS). The COS is administered to children ages 10 years or younger,<sup>a</sup> while the YOS is administered to children ages 11 years or older. These surveys were further revised and released again in August 2020. There are now a total of 13 required measures across the surveys:

- Academic Performance (only on the YOS),*
- Educational Expectations (only on the YOS),*
- School Connectedness,*
- Emotion Regulation,*
- Social Competence (only on the YOS),*
- Family Connectedness (only on the YOS),*
- Risky Behaviors – Bullying,*
- Risky Behaviors – School Discipline,*
- Risky Behaviors – Substance Use (only on the YOS),*
- Risky Behaviors – Status Offenses and Illegal Activity (only on the YOS),*
- Police and Juvenile Justice Contact (only on the YOS),*
- Depressive Symptoms, and*
- Very Important Adult.*

Each of these measures ties directly to one of the following major outcome areas: **educational success, risk behavior avoidance/reduction, and socio-emotional competency**. Over the course of 2020 the National Office worked diligently with internal and external research and information technology experts to ensure that the outcomes reporting tool used to aggregate and analyze data was also updated to accurately reflect the newly released surveys and account for historic data.

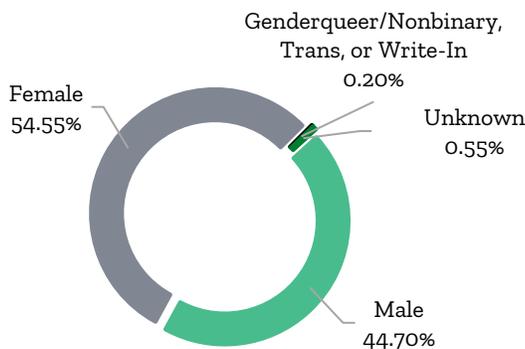
## OUR LITTLES

In 2020, BBBS agencies collectively served 105,671 Littles<sup>2</sup>.

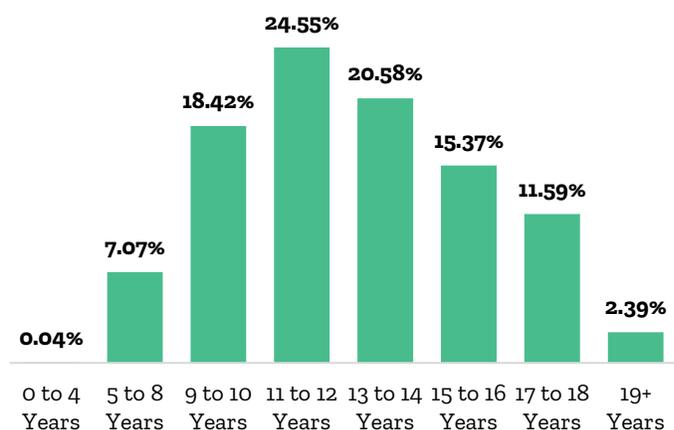
### Data Highlights<sup>3</sup>:

- 66% of Littles were Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).
- Gender identity remained unchanged from last year, with 55% of Littles identifying as female and 45% identifying as male. While still representing less than 1% of the population, the number of Littles identifying as trans, genderqueer, nonbinary, or other genders increased from 2019 to 2020.
- Average age of Littles in 2020 was 13 years. Similar to prior years, the largest age group served were 11 – 12 year olds.
- 98% of Littles were within the typical age window of five to 18 years of age.
- Some agencies enroll Littles outside of the typical age window. In 2020, less than 1% of Littles were under the age of five and 2% of Littles were aged 19 or older.
- 55% of Littles lived in single-parent households; 1% lived in foster care, group homes, or an institutional setting.
- 15% of Littles served had a parent who was incarcerated.
- 74% of Littles received free or reduced lunch from school and 22% of families received some type of income assistance – proxy measures of poverty.

### Littles: Gender Identity



### Littles: Age Groups

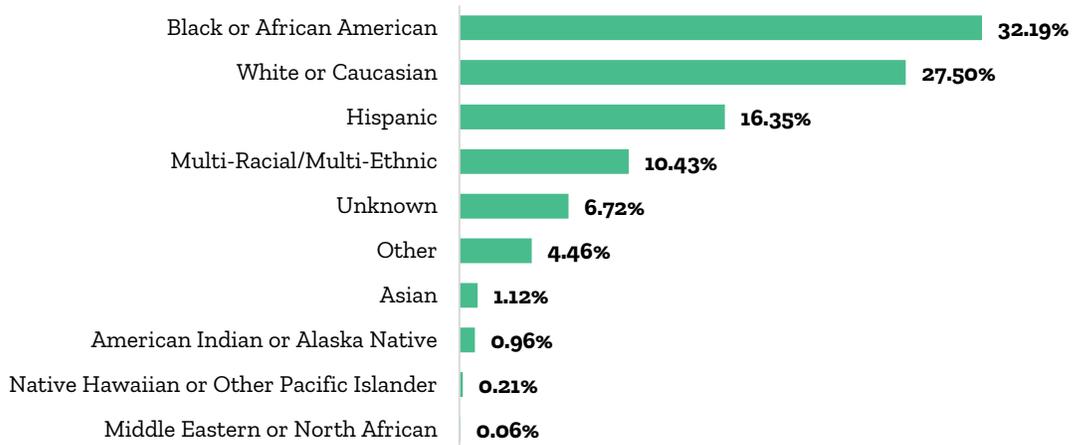


<sup>2</sup> This number represents the unique count of all Littles served in calendar year 2020. This may differ from the number of matches as a Little can be in a match that closes and be rematched with a new Big in the same calendar year.

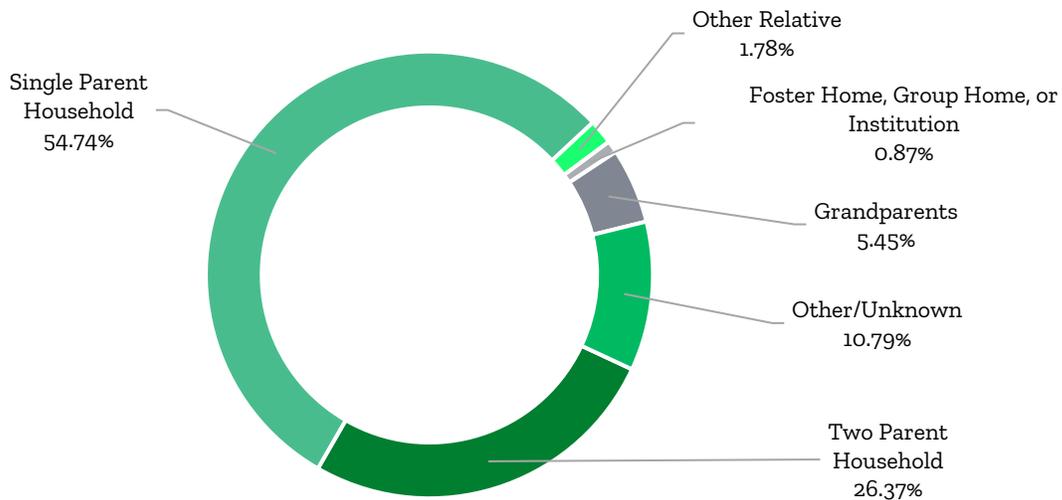
<sup>3</sup> Not all agencies were active in our shared match management system during this time period or may have since disaffiliated. Therefore, data for Littles and Bigs are from 107,273 matches within the system.



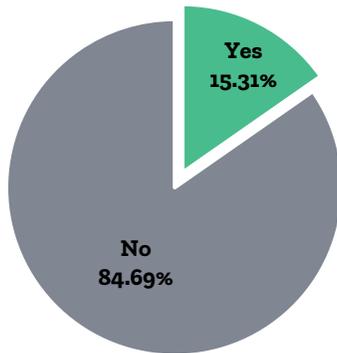
**Littles: Race/Ethnicity**



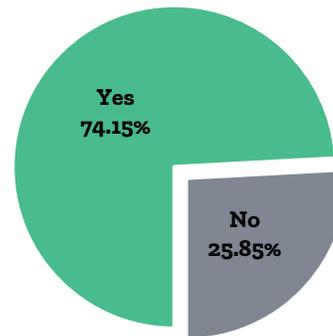
**Littles: Living Situation**



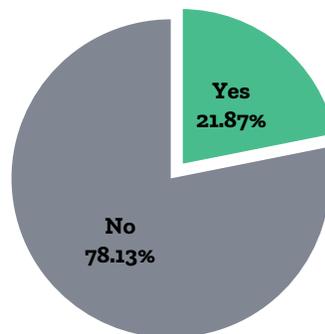
**Littles:** Incarcerated Parent



**Littles:** Subsidized Lunch Recipient



**Littles:** Family Receives Income Assistance



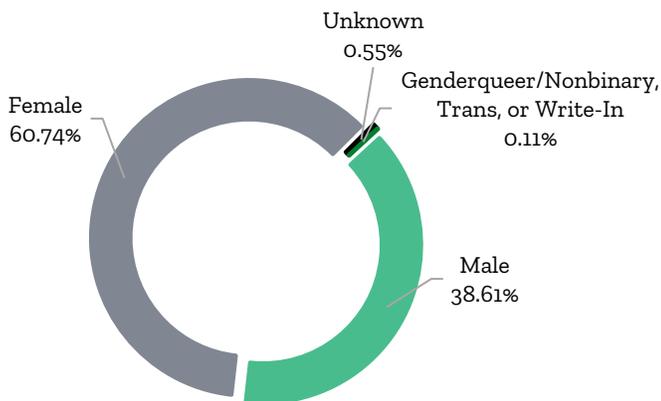
## OUR BIGS

In 2020, approximately 106,448<sup>4</sup> Bigs participated in matches.

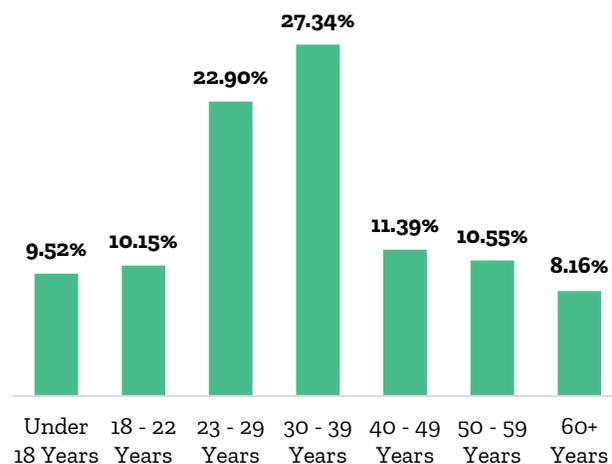
### Data Highlights<sup>5</sup>:

- A majority of Bigs, 61%, in 2020 were women. Less than 1% of Bigs self-identified as genderqueer, nonbinary, trans, or a different gender identity.
- BIPOC Bigs represented 28% of Bigs matched in 2020. Race/Ethnicity was unknown, meaning undisclosed, for 6% of Bigs and the remaining 66% were White.
- Average age for Bigs in 2020 was 35 years old.
- Nearly 70% of Bigs are under the age of 40. Some agencies have high school Bigs, accounting for the 10% of Bigs under the age of 18.
- 41% of Bigs did not disclose, or were not asked about, their level of education. We are investigating possible causes for this high percentage of unknown values and exploring how to better collect data.

### Bigs: Gender Identity



### Bigs: Age Groups

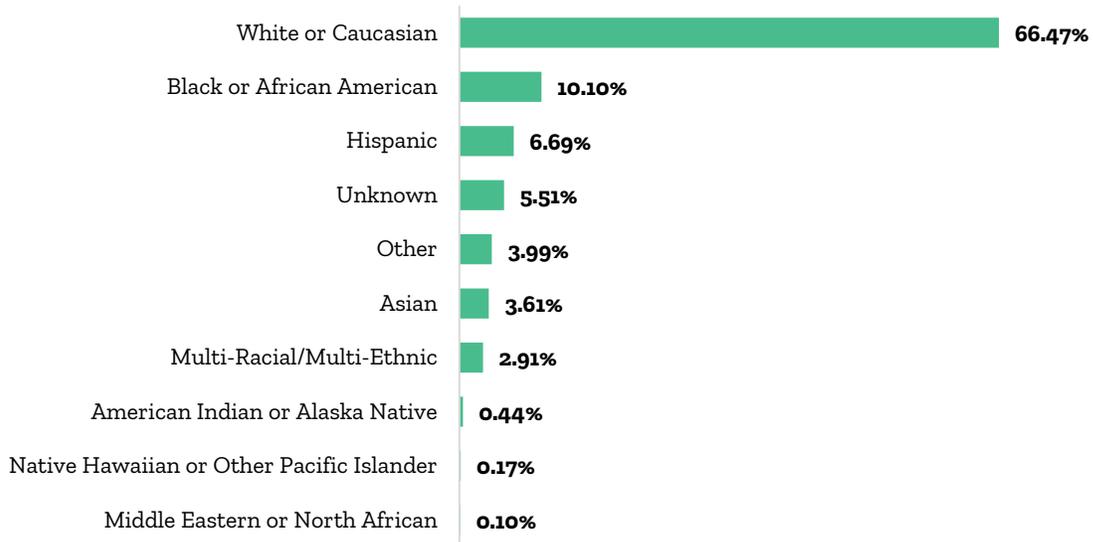


<sup>4</sup> The number of Bigs during the year may differ from TCS and number of Littles. This is because the same Big may have a match that closes and be re-matched within a calendar year and because this count does not include totals from agencies not using our shared match management system.

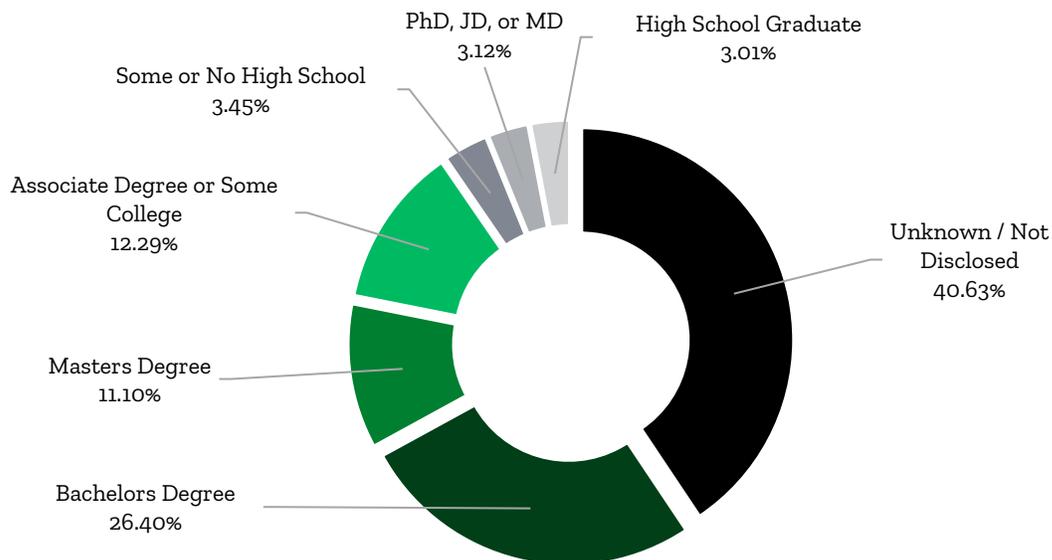
<sup>5</sup> Not all agencies were active in our shared match management system during this time period or may have since disaffiliated. Therefore, data for Littles and Bigs are from 107,273 matches within the system.



**Bigs: Race/Ethnicity**



**Bigs: Level of Education**

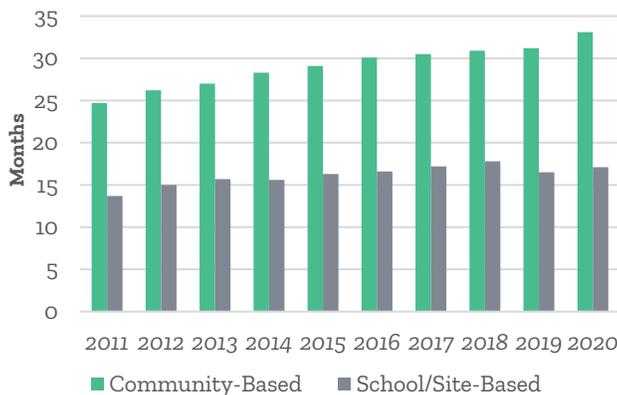


## 2020 Outcomes

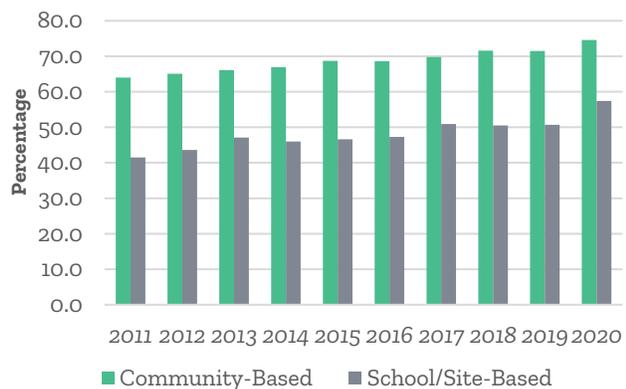
### Average Match Length and 12 Month Retention Rates

We gauge the quality of BBBS matches by measuring match length, 12-month match retention rate (the percent of matches lasting for at least 12 months, minimum match length goal), and youth outcomes. Research on BBBS shows that the longer the match, the stronger the relationship will be, resulting in more positive youth outcomes. Specifically, matches that last at least 12 months have been shown to produce significantly better outcomes than matches that end earlier.<sup>6</sup> For more than a decade, average match length in both our Community-Based Mentoring Programs and Site-Based Mentoring Programs has steadily increased. In 2020, Community-Based matches lasted 33 months, just over two and a half years; 44% longer than the average match length 10 years ago. Site-Based matches lasted 17.1 months, almost a year and a half; 34% longer than the average match length 10 years ago.

**10-Year Snapshot of Average Match Length (Months) by Program Type**



**10-Year Snapshot of 12 Month Retention Rate (%) by Program**



Likewise, the number of matches meeting the minimum match length (referred to as the 12-month retention rate) in both Community-Based Mentoring and Site-Based programs has also been trending upward for more than a decade. Community-Based retention rates increased from 64.0% in 2011 to 74.5% in 2020; Site-Based retention rates increased from 41.5% in 2011 to 57.4% in 2020.

These decade-long trends of increasing retention and length in matches poised the BBBS Network to persist and even thrive during the pandemic. Despite a decrease over past years in total number of children served, the quality of matches remained strong and arguably increased. When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, agencies were able to keep youth and their families connected to mentors and to services, leveraging a variety of virtual technologies and providing wraparound services. This is reflected especially in the marked increase in 12-month retention rate seen in Site-Based programs this year. Qualitative information from the BBBS Network suggests that agencies put extra emphasis on keeping Site-Based matches open and connected to a caring mentor, especially during the pandemic.

<sup>6</sup> Grossman, J. & Rhodes, J. (2002). The Test of Time: Predictors and Effects of Duration in Littles Mentoring Relationships. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 30(2), 199-219.

## Youth and Child Outcomes Surveys

2020 marks the first year of data available from the revised and expanded Youth and Child Outcomes Surveys. Disruptions to collection of survey data were anticipated as an effect of COVID-19, including a potential decrease in number of surveys able to be analyzed. For Community-Based matches, this was not the case. Not unexpectedly, Site-Based matches experienced slightly more disruption; almost 4,000 fewer surveys were available to analyze this year compared to 2019 Overall, the disruption to survey data collection was minimal, speaking to the dedication and resilience of our agencies. Improvement in collection of complete survey data remains a priority for the future.

Littles showed tremendous progress this year, making significant improvements from baseline to follow-up in all outcome areas: educational success, risk behavior avoidance/reduction, and socio-emotional competency. Increases in social competence were exceptional this year, with a large effect size suggesting real and impactful improvement. It is also important to acknowledge that family connectedness showed a statistically significant decrease, of medium impact. This could be due solely to age and typical development; it is not unusual for youth to experience decreased family connectedness as they move through adolescence. At the same time, this could serve as a call to bolster family engagement work across the BBBS Network.

Descriptions of each YOS/COS measure, alongside a comparison between Community-Based and Site-Based averages, are provided on the following pages.<sup>7</sup>

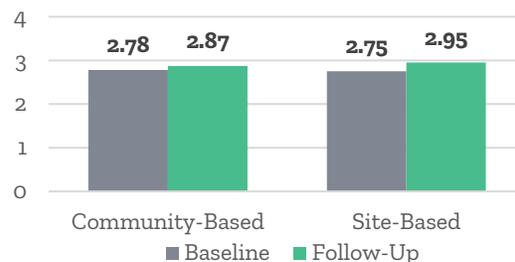
## Academic Performance

This measure uses children's self-reported grades. Self-reported grades are associated with actual grades which are linked to externalizing behaviors (i.e., aggression), internalizing behaviors (i.e., social withdrawal), and high school graduation rates<sup>8,9,10</sup>. The information from these questions provides an overall picture of academic performance. This measure is only on the YOS.

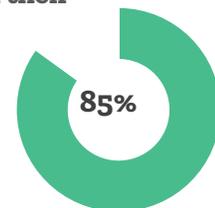
Scores for Academic Performance range from 0, indicating poor performance, to 4, indicating excellent performance.

Overall, Littles in both Community-Based and Site-Based matches significantly improved from baseline to follow-up. Regardless of match type, 85% of Littles stayed on track with or improved their grades.

### Academic Performance baseline and follow-up average scores.



### Percent of Littles who stayed on track with or improved their grades.



<sup>7</sup> All results represent network-wide data, available from 10,962 youth in Community-Based programs and 8,339 youth in Site-Based programs.

<sup>8</sup> Shippee, N. D., & Owens, T. J. (2011). GPA, depression, and drinking: A longitudinal comparison of high school boys and girls. *Sociological Perspectives*, 54(3), 351-376. <https://doi.org/10.1525/sop.2011.54.3.351>

<sup>9</sup> Balfanz, R., Herzog, L., & MacIver, D. J. (2007). Preventing Student Disengagement and Keeping Students on the Graduation Path in Urban Middle-Grades Schools: Early Identification and Effective Interventions. *Educational Psychologist*, 42(4), 223-235. doi:10.1080/00461520701621079

<sup>10</sup> Cassady, J. C. (2001). The stability of undergraduate students' cognitive test anxiety levels. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 7(20).

## Depressive Symptoms

This measure assesses children’s self-reported mood and feelings. It is important to recognize this measure examines indications of depressive symptoms and is not intended for clinical diagnosis. This measure is on both the COS and YOS.

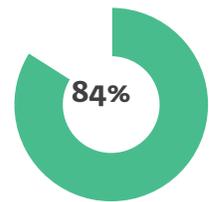
Scores for Depressive Symptoms range from a minimum of 0, indicating never experienced, to 4, indicating always experienced.

Overall, Littles in both Community-Based and Site-Based matches significantly improved from baseline to follow-up. Regardless of match type, 84% of Littles remained stable at a low occurrence of depressive symptoms or reported fewer symptoms at follow-up.

**Depressive Symptoms baseline and follow-up average scores.**



**Percent of Littles who remained stable or improved with depressive symptoms.**



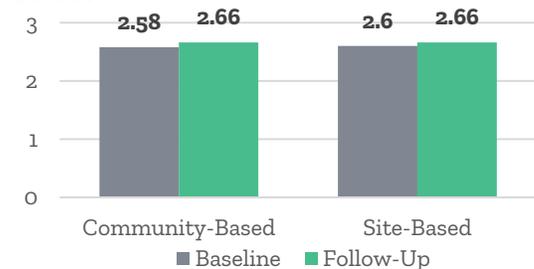
## Educational Expectations

These items measure how sure children are that they will finish high school and attend college. Mentoring has been linked to higher educational and vocational aspirations.<sup>11,12</sup> Children’s and adolescents’ academic expectations and plans, in turn, have shown associations with long-term school performance and standardized test scores<sup>13,14,15</sup>. This measure is only on the YOS.

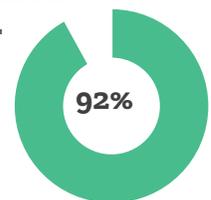
Scores for Educational Expectations range from a minimum of 0, indicating no plans, to 3, indicating plans for graduation and college or vocational training.

Overall, Littles in both Community- Based and Site-Based matches significantly improved from baseline to follow-up. Regardless of match type, 92% of Littles kept or created plans for graduating collect and / or attending college or trade schools.

**Educational Expectations baseline and follow-up average scores.**



**Percent of Littles who kept or created plans for high school graduation and beyond.**



<sup>11</sup> Hellenga, K., Aber, M.S., & Rhodes, J. E. (2002). African American Adolescent Mothers’ Vocational Aspiration-Expectation Gap: Individual, Social, and Environmental Influence. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 26, 200-212.

<sup>12</sup> Karcher, (2005). The Effects of School-Based Developmental Mentoring and Mentor’s Attendance on Mentees’ Self-Esteem, Behavior, and Connectedness. *Psychology in the Schools*, 42, 65-77.

<sup>13</sup> Eamon, M.K. & Altshuler, S.J. (2004). Can We Predict Disruptive School Behavior? *Children & Schools*, 26(1), 23-37.

<sup>14</sup> Khattab, N. (2005). The Effects of High School Context and Interpersonal Factors on Students’ Educational Expectations: A Multi-Level Model. *Social Psychology of Education*, 8, 19-40.

<sup>15</sup> Sirin, S.R. & Rogers-Sirin, L.R. (2004). Exploring School Engagement of Middle-Class African American Adolescents. *Littles and Society*, 35(3), 323-340.

## Emotion Regulation

This measure assesses children’s emotion regulation capabilities. Emotion regulation is an important skill for social interaction that is connected to various youth outcomes, including higher academic achievement and sociability. This measure is on both the COS and the YOS.

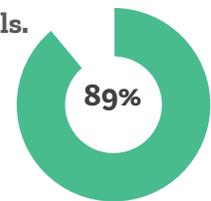
Scores for Educational Expectations range from a minimum of 0, indicating absence of capability, to 3, indicating complete capability.

Overall, Littles in both Community- Based and Site-Based matches significantly improved from baseline to follow-up. Regardless of match type, 89% of Littles kept on track with or improved their emotion regulation skills.

### Emotion Regulation baseline and follow-up average scores.



### Percent of Littles who stayed on track with or improved their emotion regulation skills.



## Family Connectedness

These items measure children’s relationships with their parents. Positive family dynamics are associated with decreases in substance use, sexual activity, and other risky behaviors<sup>16,17</sup>. It is important to recognize that family relationships often shift during adolescence as children seek a sense of independence and individual identity. This measure is only on the YOS.

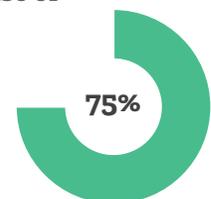
Scores for Family Connectedness range from a minimum of 0, indicating no connectedness, to 3, indicating total connectedness.

Overall, Littles in Community-Based matches significantly decreased from baseline to follow-up, while Littles in Site-Based matches saw no significant change. Importantly, and regardless of match type, 75% of Littles kept a strong or increased sense of family connectedness.

### Family Connectedness baseline and follow-up average scores.



### Percent of Littles who kept a strong or increased sense of family connectedness.



<sup>16</sup> Campo, A. T., & Rohner, R. P. (1992). Relationships between perceived parental acceptance-rejection, psychological adjustment, and substance abuse among young adults. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 16(3), 429–440. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0145-2134\(92\)90052-S](https://doi.org/10.1016/0145-2134(92)90052-S)

<sup>17</sup> Tharp, A. T., & Noonan, R. K. (2012). Associations Between Three Characteristics of Parent–Youth Relationships, Youth Substance Use, and Dating Attitudes. *Health Promotion Practice*, 13(4), 515–523. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839910386220>

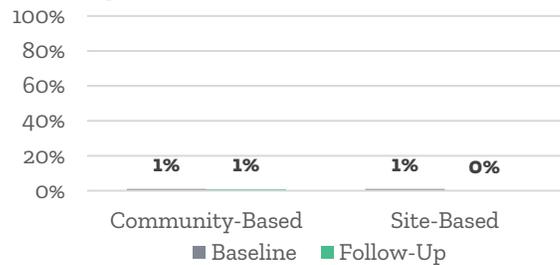
## Police and Juvenile Justice Contact

This item asks children if they have recently experienced being arrested. This question only appears on the YOS.

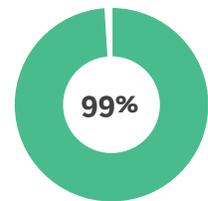
Consisting of one question, the percentage value represents, on average, what percentage of Littles answered “yes” to experiencing an arrest within the past 3 months.

Overall, Littles in Community-Based matches and Site-Based matches saw no significant change from baseline to follow-up. This is encouraging given the near-zero rate of occurrence at baseline. Regardless of program, 99% of Littles had little to no police and juvenile justice contact.

### Police and Juvenile Justice Contact baseline and follow-up average occurrence.



### Percent of Littles who had little to no police and juvenile justice contact.



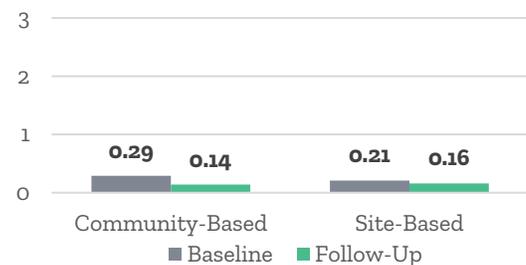
## Risky Behaviors - Bullying

This measure asks children about their engagement in physical, verbal, and social forms of bullying. This is important to measure because bullying behavior is linked to a variety of later negative health effects<sup>18</sup>. This measure is on both the YOS and COS.

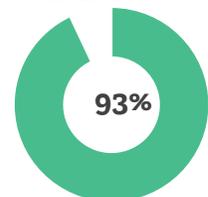
Scores for Bullying range from a minimum of 0, indicating no bullying, to 3, indicating frequent bullying.

Overall, Littles in Community-Based and Site-Based matches significantly decreased in bullying behaviors. Regardless of match type, 93% of Littles bullied infrequently or decreased their bullying behaviors.

### Bullying baseline and follow-up average scores.



### Percent of Littles who bullied infrequently or decreased their bullying behaviors.



<sup>18</sup> Simms, L., Bushman, S., & Pedersen, S. (2016). Bullying: How to prevent it and help children who are victims. National Center for Health Research.

## Risky Behaviors – School Discipline

This measure asks children about detentions, suspensions, and other disciplinary actions experienced at school. This is important to measure as research suggests students who are suspended are much more likely to not finish high school compared to those who have never been suspended<sup>19</sup>. This measure is on both the YOS and COS.

Scores for School Discipline range from a minimum of 0, indicating no types of disciplinary actions experienced, to 4, indicating the Little has experienced all of the following types of disciplinary actions: phone call, office visit, detention(s), and suspension(s).

Overall, Littles in Community-Based and Site-Based matches significantly amount of disciplinary actions received. Regardless of match type, 95% of Littles stayed on track with or improved behavior in school.

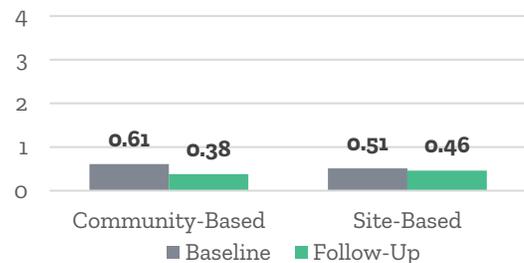
## Risky Behaviors – Status Offenses and Illegal Activity

These items ask children about engagement in a variety of risk behaviors, including: skipping school, running away from home, and participating in a gang. This measure is only on the YOS.

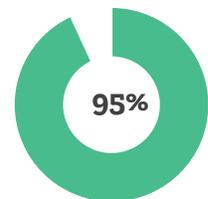
Scores for this measure range from a minimum of 0, indicating no engagement in activities, to 4, indicating the Little has engaged in all the following activities: skipping school, running away from home, participating in a gang, or doing something that could be against the law.

Overall, Littles in Community-Based matches and Site-Based matches saw no significant change from baseline to follow-up. This is encouraging given the near-zero rate of occurrence at baseline. Regardless of program, 93% of Littles are saying no to violence, skipping school, and breaking the law; they are avoiding or ceasing these activities.

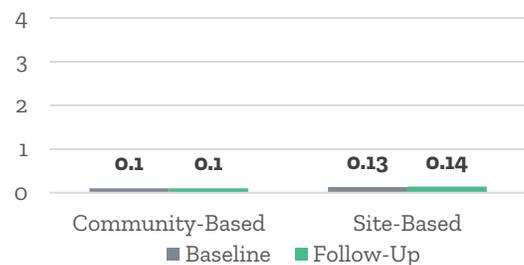
### School Discipline baseline and follow-up average scores.



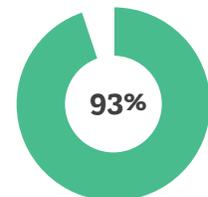
### Percent of Littles who stayed on track with or improved behavior in school.



### Status Offenses and Illegal Activity baseline and follow-up average scores.



### Percent of Littles who avoided or ceased status offenses and illegal activities.



<http://center4research.org/violence-risky-behavior/z-other-violence/bullying-and-violence/>

<sup>19</sup> Christle, C. A., Jolivet, K., & Nelson, C. M. (2007). School characteristics related to high school dropout rates. *Remedial and Special education, 28*(6), 325-339.

## Risky Behaviors – Substance Use

This measure asks children about their engagement with substance-related risk behaviors, including alcohol. These risk behaviors are linked to a variety of later negative health effects<sup>20</sup>. This measure is only on the YOS.

Scores for Substance Use range from a minimum of 0, indicating no substance use, to 4, indicating the Little has used each of the following substances in the past 3 months: opioids, tobacco / vaping products, alcohol, any other drugs or substances used to get high.

Overall, Littles in Community-Based matches and Site-Based matches saw no significant change from baseline to follow-up. This is encouraging given the near-zero rate of occurrence at baseline. Regardless of program, 96% of Littles avoided or ceased substance use.

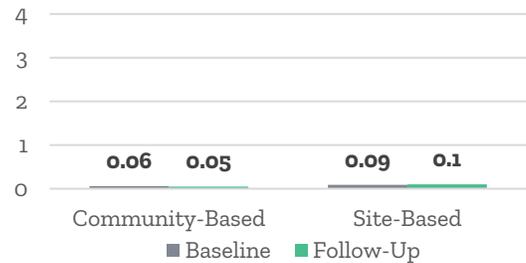
## School Connectedness

This measure assesses children’s level of engagement with and connection to school. School connectedness is linked to achievement in school and may serve as a protective factor against engagement in risky behavior. This measure is on both the YOS and the COS.

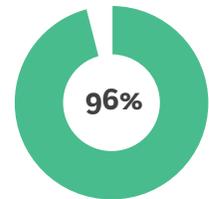
Scores for School Connectedness range from a minimum of 0, indicating no connection, to 3, indicating strong connection.

Overall, Littles in Community-Based matches decreased in school connectedness, while Littles in Site-Based matches saw connection to school increase. Regardless of program, 86% of Littles reported a strong level of engagement with school, with relatively high baseline scores that stayed high or increased.

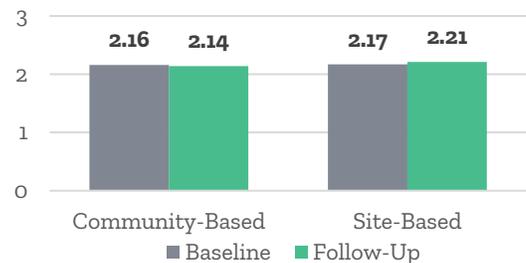
**Substance Use baseline and follow-up average scores.**



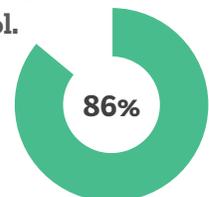
**Percent of Littles who avoided or ceased substance use.**



**School Connectedness baseline and follow-up average scores.**



**Percent of Littles who reported a strong or increasing level of engagement with school.**



<sup>20</sup> U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services. (2014). The TEDS Report: Age of Substance Use Initiation among Treatment Admissions Aged 18 to 30.

## Social Competence

This measure assesses children’s perceived capability for peer relationships and assertiveness, and can indicate a sense of belonging among peers. This measure is tied to social-emotional learning. This measure is only on the YOS.

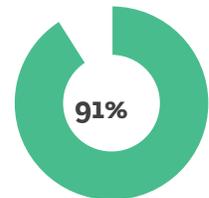
Scores for Social Competence range from a minimum of 0, indicating no capability, to 3, indicating strong capability.

Overall, Littles in Community-Based and Site-Based matches significantly increased in social competence. Regardless of match type, 91% of Littles reported a strong sense of belonging, with relatively high capability at baseline that remained strong or increased.

**Social Competence baseline and follow-up average scores.**



**Percent of Littles who reported a strong or increasing level of social competence.**



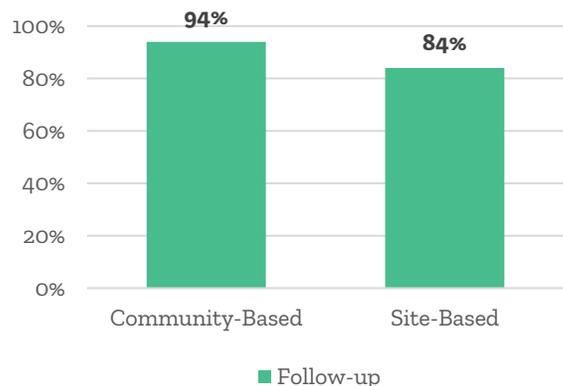
## Very Important Adult

Having a special adult in a child’s life who is not a parent is associated with a wide range of social-emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes in young people. This question is on the YOS and COS.

Consisting of one question, the percentage value represents, on average, what percentage of Littles answered “yes” to seeing their Big as a special adult.

Because this question specifically addresses the child’s perception of their mentor, answers are only assessed at follow-up.

**Very Important Adult average occurrence of reporting “yes” at follow-up.**



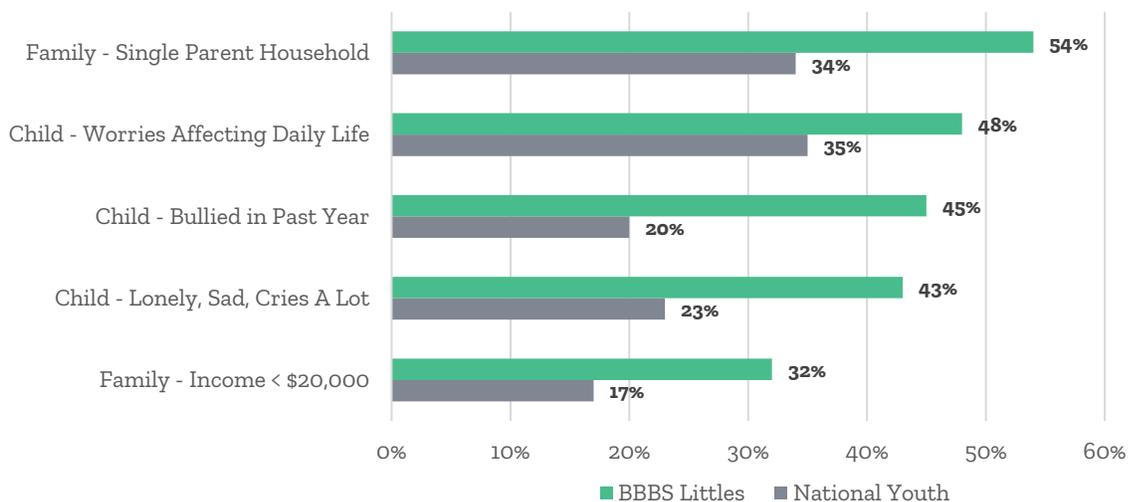
## OUR FUTURE

The release of the fully revised YOS and COS alongside an updated and improved outcomes reporting tool has allowed us to assess a greater breadth and depth of outcomes. Results in 2020 affirmed the impact of our work to keep youth connected, with increased average match lengths and 12-month retention rates. Significant improvements across many YOS and COS outcomes measures reflected positively upon the work of BBBS agencies to empower and inspire youth. Our holistic approach to mentoring will benefit from continuing to intentionally and genuinely engage with families and from bolstering the support systems that surround each individual child.

One of the tools we use to support the whole child is the Risk and Protective Inventory (RPI). The RPI is administered to parents or guardians and identifies the strengths and needs of a child and their family. Data are used to better understand the needs our families have and inform what partnerships we need to make in our agencies' communities. Piloted by BBBSA and made available to the entire Network in 2019, use of the RPI continues to rise among BBBS agencies. Last year, 90 agencies used the RPI and surveyed 11,244 families. This year over 200 agencies administered surveys to 20,486 families. The survey can be administered multiple times to help agencies understand the evolving strengths and needs of families; for this analysis we pulled the earliest administered surveys to obtain a picture of families when they first engaged with BBBS. We found that **the top 21 items endorsed by parents or guardians were all strengths, illustrating the ability our families already have to support their children.** The top five risks or needs identified by parents or guardians were: single-parent household (54%), child having difficulty controlling feelings/emotion regulation (53%), child having worries that affect their daily life (48%), difficulty paying bills in past year (47%), and child being bullied in the past year (45%). **Of particular interest is that 20% of Littles had lost contact with an important adult role model in the last 12 months – demonstrating the critical role of BBBS mentoring.**

Data from the RPI also allow us to draw comparisons between the youth we engage and national averages. In comparison to national averages, our Littles generally face challenges at higher rates compared to the average youth in the U.S., as seen in the chart below.

**Risk and Protective Inventory: BBBS Littles vs. National Data**



This information highlights where our Littles and their families need us most. We look forward to expanding use of the RPI network-wide and better leveraging how we use this information to improve our collaboration with families.