

# PRESS RELEASE

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Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

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## **START SOMETHING “BIG” IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

Celebrate National Mentoring Month with Big Brothers Big Sisters!

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

JACKSON (January 15, 2014) – January is National Mentoring Month, and local organizations including Big Brothers Big Sisters of Jackson County (BBBSJC) and the Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (JCSAPC) are celebrating the successes of mentoring relationships and the future matches that will be made in 2014 in Jackson County! Mentoring is the easiest way to make an impact on a young person, preparing them for success and supporting them in reaching their full potential.

On Saturday, January 25, 2013, we will be celebrating the many mentors and community partners who have generously given their time and their energy to work with special children between the ages of 5 and 18 at our annual Mentor Appreciation Breakfast in honor of National Mentoring Month. We are looking forward to honoring our selfless volunteers who can be found throughout Jackson County genuinely caring for young people and the potential they have to do great things for society. In addition to celebrating our mentors and mentees, we are participating in the Martin Luther King Breakfast on January 17<sup>th</sup> and a Roller Skating outing sponsored by the Jackson Breakfast Rotary on February 4<sup>th</sup>.

We are excited to announce that BBBSJC served over 220 youth in mentoring relationships in 2013! But nearly 100 children are on the waiting list so if you can consider volunteering yourself; they are patiently waiting for their awesome Big to come into their life! The Big Brothers Big Sisters Youth Outcomes Summary shows that mentoring programs have positive academic, socio-emotional and behavioral outcomes for youth. High school graduation rates, avoidance of juvenile delinquency and drug use and college or job readiness can be improved with established long-term one-on-one mentoring relationships with a caring adult. Young people that are matched, professionally supported and remain in these mentoring relationships with Big Brothers Big Sisters “Bigs” are 46% less likely to use drugs, 52% more likely to regularly attend school, and 33% less likely to be violent or involved in criminal behaviors (Big Brothers Big Sisters, 2013).

Partnerships with the Substance Abuse Coalition, Energizing Education, Most Teens Don't, Jackson County Intermediate Schools, Jackson County Interfaith Shelter, YMCA Storer Camp, Youth Haven Camp and Tim Horton Camps have provided opportunities for Bigs and Littles to increase the quality of their mentoring relationships. These and other community partnerships are supporting youth in being drug free, academically successful, mindful of their personal power, and looking forward to the future! If you are looking for a way to get involved in the Jackson community and have a passion for the future of our area, contact Big Brothers Big Sisters and Start Something today!

More information about:

- Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition and its activities, please contact Kelsey Haynes at (517) 796-5133 or via email at [khaynes@uwjackson.org](mailto:khaynes@uwjackson.org)
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Jackson County, please contact Melissa Laird, Community Based Match Specialist, at (517) 784-7181 or visit our website at [www.bbbsjackson.org](http://www.bbbsjackson.org).

*Our efforts are funded through Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Michigan Department of Community Health.*