



# BBG News December 2008



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Centre County

## BBBS ACTIVITIES FOR DECEMBER

PLEASE CALL 237-5731 TO SIGN UP!

### Holiday Party

Thursday, December 11th

State College Borough Building  
(Allen St.), Room 201

5:00 - 7:00 pm

Come play Christmas games,  
decorate cookies, drink hot  
cocoa and have fun!

\*Space is limited\*



### The Village at Penn State

Thursday, December 18th

4:00 - 5:00 pm

Come and play games  
with residents at  
The Village

\*A snack will be provided\*

#### BBBS STAFF DIRECTORY

JODI MORELLI, JMORELLI@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 111
MEGAN EVANS, MEVANS@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 114
DALLAS LUKE, DLUKE@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 113
VERNEL SMITH, VSMITH@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 116
STEPHANIE WHITESELL, SWHITESSELL@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 112
LAUREN FYE, LFYE@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 107
BEN WEIDLER, BWEIDLER@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 106
TRACY ROTH, TROTH@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 122
RANDI LIBBY, RLIBBY@CCYSB.COM	814-237-2224, EXT. 129

## BBBS AMBASSADOR FOR DECEMBER IS MICAEL MCGOVERN!

Big: Micael McGovern  
Little: Stephanie

1) How long have you been matched with your little? Did you get off to an easy start?

*I have been with my little since Valentine's Day 2007. We met at her house and it was like meeting an old friend. We had tons to talk about and we found out that we had lots in common.*

2) What are some of the qualities that you admire most in your little?

*My little has many qualities that I admire. She always speaks her mind, she is confident, she is willing to try new things, and she is extremely artistic.*

3) Have there been any rocky moments? If so, how did you handle them?

*Our rocky moments are usually concerning time management. My little is the typical teenager, and sometimes she forgets when she*

*schedules things. To solve the problem, we sat down and discussed the importance of respecting each other's schedules. We try to this day to find a time that will not "force" us to meet, but will allow us to spend time together at a relaxing pace.*

4) What is a typical activity like with your little? What do you do together? Any favorites?

*The great thing about my little is that she is willing to try anything at least once. We love to try new cuisines (she LOVES Japanese food now). We enjoy grabbing a cup of hot chocolate and just talking. My little is extremely creative and artistic, so we are always doing craft projects. Once we made our own French Photo Boards and filled the boards with pictures that described each other with positive adjectives. This project was fun and it made us think outside the box when we wanted to describe the other person.*

5) Why would you recommend BBBS to a friend?

*I am humbled when my little comes to me for advice, and even though I know that I cannot solve her every problem, I can definitely offer her a shoulder to lean on and an honest opinion. I truly enjoy spending time with my little. She has become a good friend and a great listener. I would recommend being a big to anyone who wants a fun, new friend and a positive experience that they will never forget.*



*BBBS thanks Micael and her BIG contributions to the program. Congratulations on being named December's BBBS Ambassador!*

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### MORE DECEMBER ACTIVITY IDEAS...

-View the **Schlow Library** calendar for free events, including the Polar Express on Dec. 6, 7, 13 and 14; Winter Children's Performance by the Penn State Thespians on Dec. 4 and 6, and a public reading of "A Christmas Carol" on Dec. 18. See <http://www.schlowlibrary.org/calendar> for more information. To reserve a space on

the Polar Express, call Schlow Library in advance at (814) 235-7817.

**-Bellefonte Victorian Christmas events** - beginning December 12. For more information, go to <http://bellefonte.com/ourtown/vicxmas08.html>

**-Campus events** - December

events include an open house by the Penn State Model Railroad club on December 6 and 7 (see <http://www.clubs.psu.edu/upmrrc/psmrrcannouncements.htm>).

For other campus events, go to <http://events.psu.edu/> - click on the Student Activity and Club Calendar.

## THE BEST GIFT YOU CAN GIVE BY JODI MORELLI

When the hustle and bustle of this holiday finally winds down, hopefully we all will get a chance to sit back and feel the warmth and the spirit of the season. There is something about this time of year that makes us truly appreciate the value of families and children.

As we take time to reflect on the meaning of the holiday and look forward to the coming year, it is my holidays wish that adults everywhere will make children their No. 1 priority for 2009. After all, there are certain gifts we should be giving the children in our lives all year long—things that don't cost a cent, but mean the most – the gifts of respect, nurturance, values and our time.

In the spirit of giving, the Search Institute, the national, non-profit research center that designed the 40 Assets approach to development, has come up with quite an extensive list of gifts that we can give the children in our lives throughout the year.

Although the list actually includes about 150 little things we can do for children, in the interest of space, here are a few very important ones: notice and acknowledge children; seek children out; remember their special days; ask them about themselves; look in their eyes when you talk to them; listen to them; forget your worries sometimes and concentrate only on them; notice when they're acting differently; keep the promises you make; catch them doing something right; ask for their opinion; praise more and criticize less; applaud their successes; encourage them to think big; expect their best, but don't expect perfection; empower them to help and be themselves; accept them unconditionally.

Remember that as a volunteer, you can build assets in your Little all the time in all aspects of their lives. You can do this by giving them appropriate boundaries, structure and stability; providing them with healthy and constructive activities; encouraging their commitment to education and learning; modeling positive, caring values; and helping them build positive views of themselves and positive views of their futures. These are pretty simple gifts that keep on giving all year long.

THANK YOU for giving children the most valuable gift of all this holiday season and the whole year through – the gift of your friendship. Have a blessed holiday season, and resolve to make your relationship with your Little the best it can be in 2009!

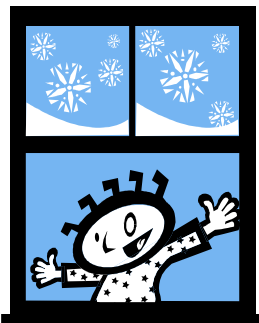
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### SAFETY FIRST!

*CHILDREN HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE AT ALL TIMES. THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN IN OUR PROGRAM IS OUR NUMBER 1 PRIORITY. WE EXPECT EVERYONE ASSOCIATED WITH BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF CENTRE COUNTY TO SUPPORT THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN.*

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## KEEPING KIDS SAFE DURING THE HOLIDAYS - BY TRACY ROTH



Following are some reminders to help stay safe during the holidays:

**Outdoor safety** – Wear hats, gloves, and appropriate footwear. Be an example - if your Little is wearing a hat, so should you!

**Baking** – Check ingredients of cookies and other holiday treats for any food allergies that a child may have (peanuts, tree nuts, dairy, etc.)

**Toys** – If using or purchasing a new toy, read directions and safety precautions carefully. Be aware of age guidelines for toys; consider not only the child you are with but any siblings who may also use the toys.

**Trees** – If you are setting up an artificial tree indoors, look for ones that are Fire Resistant. Do not use electric lights on metallic trees,

as this may cause an electric shock. Always check string lights for exposed wire, cracked bulbs and other hazards before using.

Lastly, make sure you are supervising your Little. The Holiday season brings hustle, bustle and crowds! Keep an eye on your little and make sure he or she is safe.



## Acknowledgements

**Happy Birthday to:** Lauren Mrsa, Mike McGreevy

**Congratulations to the following Match Anniversaries:** Matt Owens and Zachary (1 year), Zach Noel and Vincent (1 year), Trinh DeSa and Austyn (1 year), Matt Smith and Christian (1 year), Nate Dincher and Cameron (1 year), Mischa Moschera and Rachel (1 year), Terry Dickson and Jessica (3 years), Steven Conaway and John Paul (1 year), Kevin Dincher and Lee (1 year), Derek Winterburn and Kolachi (1 year)

**Welcome to our New Bigs:** Elaina Sabatine, Abby Brier, Russ Ferguson, Jackie McCawley, Valarie Troya, Shane Doud, Enrique Perez, Kiley Packer, Mary Gidaro, Katie Blume, Andrew Smith

**Thank yous:** Joel Diamond/Penn State Athletics, Laura Sullivan/Center for the Performing Arts, The Village at Penn State, State College Area YMCA

