

BIG SISTERS OF BC LOWER
MAINLAND ANNUAL REPORT

2005



**Big Sisters
of BC Lower Mainland**



THE STARFISH

One day a woman was walking along the beach when she noticed a figure in the distance. As she got closer, she realized the figure was that of a young girl picking something up and gently throwing it into the ocean. Approaching the girl, she asked, "What are you doing?"

The youth replied, "Throwing starfish in the ocean. The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they will die."

"Girlfriend," the woman said, "Don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can't possibly make a difference!"

After listening politely, the girl bent down, picked up another starfish and threw it into the surf. Then smiling at the woman, she said, "I MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR THAT ONE!"

- adapted from The Star Thrower by Loren Eiseley

A Message from the President

The incredible momentum behind us at Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland just continues to keep us moving forward! We've come off another fabulous year at Big Sisters from both a program and strategic perspective.

In 2005, the board embarked on the process of developing a strategic plan to guide this organization through the next five years and to ensure that we provide more girls in our community with the experience of having a Big Sister. Our strategic plan, while unique to meeting the needs of our organization and our community, ties in to the strategic plan of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada whose vision is that every child who needs a mentor, has a mentor. By 2013, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada is hoping to serve 100,000 children & youth nationwide.

Over the past year, we have looked at the infrastructure of the organization and put committees in place that directly support the priorities we have set out for ourselves. We've established a Board Governance committee, which builds upon our governance model; a Fund Development Committee to develop strategies to increase our donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations; and a Big Sisters Development Committee to assist Big Sister volunteers in the support and maintenance of their matches.

Big Sisters' Annual General Meeting in April 2006 was my last official duty as board president. It has been an honour to have had your trust for the past three years. I look forward to continuing to serve on the board as Past President, with the dynamic new executive team.

I am inspired daily by each one of you who goes out of your way to help make the journey through childhood and adolescence easier for the Little Sisters in our community. Thanks to you, there are over 300 Little Sisters for whom a difference was made last year. Thank you for doing your part!

Sincerely,
Leah Zille
 2005 Board President

A Note from the Executive Director

Welcome to the new Big Sisters Annual Report. It is my pleasure to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support in 2005, share some of our successes with you, and let you know about the difference your support has made in the lives of our Little Sisters.

2005 was a year of strategic planning at Big Sisters, where we set ambitious goals to serve more deserving girls in our community in the years ahead. We have undergone some changes at the program level to ensure that our programs are operating as efficiently and effectively as possible, and that we are serving our Little Sisters' needs in a timely manner. I am pleased to report that Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland served over 330 Little Sisters in 2005 and made 110 new Big and Little Sister matches. In addition, 78 Big and Little Sisters celebrated match anniversaries of 5 years together or more in 2005.

The Big Sisters program continues to offer significant benefits to our Little Sister participants including reducing their risk of drug and alcohol abuse, reducing violent behaviour, improving school attendance and academic success, improving relationships with parents, and improving their overall sense of self esteem and competence. We are encouraged by our successes this past year, and will be working hard to welcome more Big and Little Sisters into our programs in the year ahead.

I join our staff and Board in thanking you all for the contribution you have made to our organization over the past year. We are blessed with such strong support from volunteers and donors, and appreciate all that you do to allow us to offer quality mentoring programs to young girls in our community. We look forward to working with you all in the year ahead!

Sincerely,
Shannon Newman-Bennett



"We are blessed with such strong support from volunteers and donors, and appreciate all that you do to allow us to offer quality mentoring programs to young girls in our community."

- Shannon Newman-Bennett

OUR MISSION

Big Sisters is committed to enhancing the confidence, self-esteem and well-being of girls through supportive friendships with caring women.

Big & Little Sister Program

The traditional Big & Little Sister mentoring program matches Lower Mainland girls , ages 7 to 17, with volunteer women in one-to-one mentoring relationships. For at least one year, each Big & Little Sister match spends 3 to 5 hours a week together doing fun activities they both enjoy, talking, and simply just spending time with each other.

2005 STATISTICS:

- **110** new traditional Big & Little Sister matches were made in 2005.
- **332** Little Sisters were served by our programs.
- **2.79** years was the average length of match (required commitment is 1 year).
- **123** new Little Sisters were referred to the program - an **18% increase** from 2004.
- **514** women attended an Information Session - a **33% increase** from 2004.
- **26** Information Sessions were held throughout the Lower Mainland.
- **162** Big Sister applications were received - a **36% increase** from 2004.

LITTLE SISTER PROFILE:

- 66% of Little Sisters are from female-headed single-parent families, and 12% are from male-headed single-parent families.
- 58% of Little Sisters are referred by their families. Other important referral sources include the Ministry for Children and Families (17%), schools (12%), and mental health agencies (3%).
- Common reasons for a Little Sister to be referred to the Big Sisters program include: single parent family, divorce, abandonment, neglect, family conflict, abuse, illness or disability, low self-esteem, lack of peer friendships, behaviour challenges, death in the family, depression, and lack of social interaction.
- 44% of the girls referred to Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland are from Vancouver, 11% are from Surrey/Delta, 11% are from Burnaby, 10% are from the North Shore, 9% are from the Tri-Cities, 4% are from New Westminster, 3% are from Richmond, and 8% are from other Lower Mainland areas.



A Personal Perspective...

Big Sisters is an organization that has had a powerful impact on me; changing my life more than anyone could ever imagine. I became involved with Big Sisters at a very young age, after the separation of my parents. For the first ten years of my life, I had experienced a dysfunctional household that resulted in verbal and physical abuse of one parent by the other. At the age of 10 I was recommended to Big Sisters through a social worker in Ontario.



Keesha (centre) with her former Big Sister Trisha and her current Little Sister Teana

At this time, my mother was working more than one job and struggling to meet the needs of her children and maintain a respectable lifestyle on her single parent income. My mother continued to work hard and support my younger brother and I in every way she could. It was at that time that my Big Sister Trisha Barbato walked into my life. Trisha was the person who helped me build my self confidence and self-esteem by guiding and supporting me. Trisha was my non-judgmental friend and confidante; a trusting listener and motivator. With her help and friendship, I made positive life choices such as staying in school, breaking away from negative friendships, avoiding drugs and alcohol and furthering my education. She helped me realize that I could make my own choices and take responsibility for my own actions and that I did not necessarily have to fall into the lifestyle that I had witnessed during my upbringing. After our many years together, I feel that I can conquer anything because of Trisha's optimism and assurance. I thank her for encouraging me to apply to University despite my many financial and personal obstacles.

Today, as a 29 year old young woman, there is not one day that passes where I do not think of my Big Sister Trisha. Trisha and I remain in contact and she is still a significant part of my life. I have accomplished a significant amount in my life all while experiencing the roller coaster of life's challenges. Although we now live across Canada from one another, Trisha continues to be my amazing Big Sister and one of my best friends.

In 2002, I attended an Information Session to become a Big Sister volunteer with Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland, and soon after, I met my Little Sister Teana for the first time. I was looking forward to the day that I could reach out and make a difference in a young girl's life, like my Big Sister Trisha had done in mine.

My Little Sister had been on the waiting list for more than one year and I am overwhelmed at times that I have walked into her life and she into mine. Teana is a brilliant girl who is trying to discover her true self. It is a tough age sometimes—I remember being there myself not so long ago.

The most important aspect of our friendship is trust and it continues to build. We have become quite close in the past four years. We have laughed, engaged in many discussions, and gone to many events put on by Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland. Maybe one day my Little Sister will reflect on her life and choices and be content in knowing that she had the great support and friendship of a Big Sister, just like I did.

- Written by Keesha, a current Big Sister & former Little Sister

Big Sisters Study Buddy Program

The Big Sisters Study Buddy Program matches Little Sisters with volunteer tutors who offer them educational guidance and support. Study Buddies meet together for one hour a week for a minimum of three months. With the support of a Study Buddy, Little Sisters are encouraged and equipped to improve their educational performance and meet their academic goals.

2005 STATISTICS:

- **36** new Study Buddy matches were made in 2005.
- **59** Study Buddy matches have been made since the launch of the program in 2002.
- **9.7** months was the average length of a Study Buddy match (required commitment is 3 months)
- **49** Study Buddy volunteer applications were received.
- **58%** of Little Sisters referred to the Big Sisters program requested a Study Buddy tutor.

"A Study Buddy is like one of your best friends plus she helps you learn and prepare for things."

- Little Sister
Study Buddy
Cheyene

First Nations Big Sisters Mentoring Program

The First Nations Big Sisters Mentoring Program aims to enrich the lives of First Nations girls through one-to-one friendships that offer them support, guidance, and exposure to positive life choices and role models within their own culture.

2005 STATISTICS:

- **34%** of the Little Sisters who report their ancestry to our organization are of First Nations heritage.
- **50%** of the Aboriginal youth we serve have involvement with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and have been identified as vulnerable youth.
- **16** referrals were received for First Nations Little Sisters.
- **4** First Nations cultural activities were held in 2005 for all of our Big & Little Sister matches to attend including a mini button blanket workshop, cedar rope workshop, First Nations Women Role Model Panel, and First Nations drama workshop.



Big & Little Sister Activities

A wide variety of activities and workshops continued to be offered to our Big & Little Sister matches in 2005. Many were offered as a part of our Healthy Living Initiative which promotes self-esteem by educating and empowering girls to make healthy lifestyle choices. Activities and workshops in 2005 included:

- Big Sisters Summer Camp
- Snowshoeing & Snowtubing at Mount Seymour
- Necklace-Making Workshop
- Spring Tea
- Journaling Workshop
- Golf lesson at Musqueam Golf Club
- Summer BBQ
- Sailing Day
- Halloween Party
- Ice Skating
- Winterfest Party



What our Big & Little Sisters are saying...

"It's really hard for me to express which times with Krista have meant the most to me, because even just being able to talk to her on the phone means the world to me. Everything about Krista is just amazing and I feel so blessed to have to her in my life!"

- Little Sister Ashley

"Michaela has come a long way from the shy, cautious, nine year old girl that I first met in November 2003. In our two years together, she has opened up to me and demonstrated her fairly confident, stubborn, energetic, thoughtful and curious personality. It has been a pleasure and delight to get to know her, spend time with her and become a friend that she can open up to about being a kid and things going on in her life."

- Big Sister Lisa

"Without my Big Sister, I think I would probably be less knowledgeable about certain things and I'd probably make a lot of bad decisions."

- Little Sister Maryam

"Being a Big Sister has changed my life and I know it will change yours. It is one of the most rewarding and fulfilling things I have ever done and the only thing I regret about it is not doing it sooner. This is one of the things that you should do, not only for yourself, but you never know what little girl is out there just waiting to have someone like you in her life."

- Big Sister Ashlee

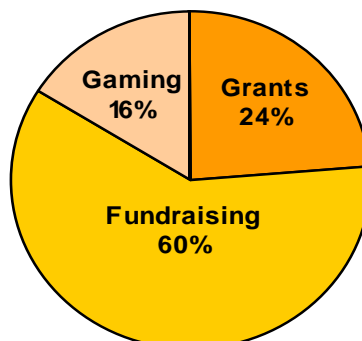
Fundraising

2005 EVENTS & NEWS:

- **The 9th Annual Big Sisters Spring Lunch** was held on May 11th, 2005 at the Sutton Place Hotel. Judy Rogers, City Manager for the City of Vancouver was the keynote speaker. Close to \$27,000 was raised at this event.
- **The 9th Annual Golf for Big Sisters** charity tournament was held on June 27th, 2005 at Beach Grove Golf Club. Chaired by Honourary Board Member Renate M. Mueller since its inception in 1997, this sold-out tournament raised a record \$51,500.
- **Big Sisters' 15th Annual Auction & Dinner** was held at the Pan Pacific Hotel on October 27th, 2005 with a "Divas Las Vegas" theme. Chaired by Barbara Hislop, this sold-out event raised a record of almost \$94,000.
- The Peter & Joanne Brown Foundation committed to donating a total of \$100,000 over the next four years to the newly-established **Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland Endowment Fund, Founded by Peter & Joanne Brown**. This is Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland's first endowment fund.
- **TELUS** committed to an annual donation of \$50,000 to Big Sisters for five years, for a total donation of \$250,000 - the largest donation ever received by our organization. With this donation, TELUS also became the founding member of the "Platinum Level" of the Big Sisters Patrons' Circle.
- Big Sisters launched a new fundraising initiative called the **Friends of Big Sisters** events. These events involve a supporter of Big Sisters hosting a get together with their acquaintances in their home so they can learn more about our organization and consider becoming involved as a supporter themselves.

REVENUE SOURCES:

Over the past 10 years, Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland has become increasingly self-sufficient with 60% of our annual revenue now provided by our own fundraising efforts compared to just 33% in 1996.



Robert T. Herd, C.A.*
*Personal Corporation

HERD & CO.
Chartered Accountants

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AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of the Big Sisters of B.C. Lower Mainland

We have audited the statement of financial position of the Big Sisters of B.C. Lower Mainland as at December 31, 2005 and the statements of changes in net assets, operations, and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Society's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at December 31, 2005 and the results of its operations and the changes in its financial position for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. As required by the Societies Act of British Columbia, we report that, in our opinion, these principles have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Chartered Accountants

Vancouver, B.C.
May 1, 2006

BIG SISTERS OF B.C. LOWER MAINLAND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2005

	2005	2004
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$ 258,593	\$ 205,959
Endowment Fund	26,710	25,000
Accounts receivable	21,085	16,555
Prepaid expenses	9,150	7,166
G.S.T. receivable	7,217	5,190
Payroll advances	-	625
	322,755	260,495
Capital Assets (Notes 2 & 3)	209,727	175,043
	\$ 532,482	\$ 435,538

BIG SISTERS OF B.C. LOWER MAINLAND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2005

	2005	2004
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 14,412	\$ 8,540
Wages payable	33,577	20,646
Accrued holiday pay	19,506	16,856
Unearned revenue (Note 5)	51,321	32,112
	118,816	78,154
NET ASSETS		
Peter & Joanne Brown Endowment Fund (Note 8 and Schedule 2)	26,710	25,000
Invested in Capital Assets	209,728	175,043
Internally restricted assets (Note 7 and Schedule 1)	20,402	18,972
Unrestricted Net Assets	156,826	138,369
	413,666	357,384
	\$ 532,482	\$ 435,538

BIG SISTERS OF B.C. LOWER MAINLAND

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005

	2005	2004
Receipts		
Grants	\$ 181,270	\$ 174,838
Gaming	120,189	120,343
Donations	250,355	167,271
Endowment	634	-
Fundraising (Note 6)	166,630	138,328
	719,078	600,780
Expenditures		
Activity hotline	571	571
Amortization	10,066	6,606
Big Brothers Big Sisters organization	17,985	10,747
Christmas party / winterfest	939	753
Contract fees	24,585	19,952
First Nations Program	16,990	25,703
Insurance	6,457	6,327
Little Sisters activities	4,854	5,570
Membership education	2,436	1,255
Newsletter	9,081	7,910
Office (Schedule 3)	52,852	44,263
Public relations	6,418	8,155
Professional development	1,043	595
Study Buddy program	33,423	6,529
Salaries	455,875	389,156
Spring camp	12,807	8,976
Special program support	6,924	4,440
Volunteer recognition	4,918	20
	668,224	547,528
Excess of Receipts over Expenditures before Other Items	50,854	53,252
Other Items		
Interest income	4,688	2,255
Excess of Receipts over Expenditures	\$ 55,542	\$ 55,507

2005 Big Sisters Patrons' Circle

The Big Sisters Patrons' Circle was founded to honour those who make significant contributions to Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland. Membership is based on minimum annual contributions of \$1,000 cash (\$2,000 in-kind) by individuals or \$2,000 cash or in-kind by companies, foundations, and government.

Platinum Level

Telus (*Founding Member of the Platinum Level*) * The Peter & Joanne Brown Foundation

Individuals

Ivan Antoniw * Janet Austin & Ashley Chester * Shannon Belkin * Jack & Shirley Cunningham * Lisa Ethans & Lyle Leo * Marguerite Ford * Rusty & Lindy Goepel * Kay Gray * Bob and Judy Hager & Family * Gabryel Harrison * Barbara Hislop * Rina Honderich * Margaret Livingstone & Tony Watts * Linda Martin * Nancy & Greg McKinstry * Gail McLeod * Susan Mendelson & Jack Lutsky * David & Darrell Mindell * Ric & Donna Moore * Linda Parsons * The Honourable Patricia Proudfoot * Grace Sadowski * Patricia & Ken Shields

Companies

BCBusiness magazine * BC Hydro Power Smart * The Beat 94.5 FM * Best Buy Canada Ltd. * Birks * Brinkhaus Jewellers * Bull, Housser & Tupper * Business in Vancouver * Canadian Northern Shield Insurance * Carats.com * Club Intrawest * Citytv * CTV * Davis & Company LLP * Deloitte & Touche LLP * Global Television * Harmony Airways * HSBC Bank Canada Broker Services * HSBC Investments (Canada) Ltd. * KVOS TV * The Lazy Gourmet * McNeill Nakamoto Recruitment Group * Microsoft Canada * Navigo Consulting & Coaching Inc. * Omega Frontline Apparel Ltd. * Orca Bay Sports & Entertainment * Pan Pacific Vancouver * Plum * PricewaterhouseCoopers * Raymond James Ltd. * Rocky Mountaineer Vacations * Safeway City Square * Sears Surrey Outlet Store * Superior Imaging Solutions * The Sutton Place Hotel * TitanStar Capital Corp. * TV Week Magazine * UBC Museum of Anthropology * Unforgettable 600 AM * The Vancouver Courier * WestJet

Foundations/ Funders

The 1988 Foundation * Canadian Progress Club Greater Vancouver * Community Gaming Management Association * Face the World Foundation * F.K. Morrow Foundation * Hamber Foundation * Harold E. Ballard Foundation * Keg Spirit Foundation * Morris & Helen Belkin Foundation * North Shore Community Foundation * RBC Foundation * Surrey Foundation * United Way of the Lower Mainland * The Vancouver Sun Raise-a-Reader Campaign * Victoria Foundation – Fraser Region Aboriginal Strategic Trust Fund

Government

City of Burnaby * City of North Vancouver * City of Richmond * City of Vancouver * District of North Vancouver * Province of British Columbia

Patrons Circle members as of December 2005.

2005 Board of Directors

Leah Gray, President
Deborah Nicols, Vice President
Heather Conradi, Treasurer
Deborah Kerr, Secretary
Ronda Fullerton, Director
Kay Gray, Director
Julie Isaac, Director
Heather Lehmann, Director
Linda Low, Director
Linda Martin, Director
Vickie McDonnell, Director
Tracey Mills, Director
Michele Reid, Director



Honourary Advisory Board

Janet Austin
Joanne Brown
Barbara Constantine
Charmaine Crooks
Ed Des Roches
Lisa Ethans
Marguerite Ford
Rina Honderich
Gail Hulnick
Margaret J. Livingstone
Darlene Marzari
Susan Mendelson
Anne Mortifee
Renate M. Mueller
Beverly Nann
Katie O'Brien
Linda Parsons
Marina Pratchett
The Honourable Patricia Proudfoot
Patricia Shields
Suki Takagi
Anna Terrana
Denise Turner



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of BC Lower Mainland**

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Programming supported by:



CITY OF VANCOUVER