



February 7, 2023

Paul,

The YIP Grant benefits the Little Brother/Little Sister Program by making it possible to connect kids with “Big Brother/Sister” mentors, thus providing a needed friend and support system in the lives of children identified as “at-risk”. The children in the LBLS Program are living with single parents, grandparents or guardians and the stresses of life within these homes can often be very great. Providing a “Big Brother/Sister” mentor for these children means there is someone there to support them through a listening ear, in making right choices, and guidance in life issues that steer these youth towards the right path and onto becoming the next generation of people wanting to help others and give back. YIP grant funding provides opportunities for the mentors to connect with their youth at unique events. These events also provide a special place for kids to connect with others in the program, providing them the opportunity to experience what they otherwise would not have been able to. The benefits to funding is a long list of positives, but thinking of each child’s face in the program and knowing the private, personal details of the sad issues they face, in their lives and homes, makes me so thankful that it is because of the YIP Grant funding that I get the privilege of coordinating this program so that these children have someone to turn to, someone to be a “watchdog” for them and by seeing these friendships grow year after year, I get to see first hand a positive change and transformation in the lives of our youth, our future!

**Overall Benefits from the YIP Grant:**

- Impacts the future generation
- Hope to youth feeling hopeless
- Keeping kids on track with life choices
- Developing life skills

**Statements from Mentors on how they have impacted their "Little(s)" in their school attendance or performance.**

- “I check in with my little daily at school. Attendance is an issue for her, however I have seen this improve since I have started to do a daily check in with her. We have talked about the importance of school attendance, as well as getting enough sleep, trying your best, and how to ask for help if you don't understand something.”
- “I have encouraged them to be prepared with homework and having clothes ready to put on the night before school, and that being on time is very important as well. I've told them that it is important to go to school. The girls trust me enough to call for a ride to school after missing the bus multiple times. (They could just choose to stay home and not say anything and I could choose not to pick them up) and they call when they need help with their homework (again they could choose to not do their homework and I could choose not to try help) and they invite me to their school programs which warms my heart. We all are making good choices and trying. I am trying to set a good example for the girls and in turn they are teaching me. Children learn from example. I Love these girls!”

**Statements from Mentors on how they have impacted their "Little(s)" in their attitude or behavior.**

- “My little struggles with self esteem. This has lead to difficulties with making friends and also making good choices. We have worked on finding her strengths and helping her to see her wonderful qualities, as well as some social skills for friendship building and choosing not to follow peer pressure to do things she knows are not good choices. I feel that these skills have helped to improve her attitude and lower problem behaviors, especially at school.”
- “I believe our relationship makes a positive difference in conversations skills, as they will correct themselves when using slang swear words, they comment on wanting to be mentors to younger kids when they are adults. They enjoy planning activities.”

Sincerely, Madeline Waage

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