



Big Brother Big Sisters of the Bay Area

“When my son was 11 I didn’t want him hanging out on the street corner and joining gangs. I wanted something better.” - Little Ricky’s Mom

Santa Clara County match stories

Dream big, little brother



The first day Big Brother Tom met Little Brother Mike, they talked about school.

“I’ve got seven more years of school left,” said Mike, age 10. “Then I never want to think about it again.”

Tom asked “What about college?”

“College?” said Mike. “College isn’t for people like me.”

Tom was shocked, but didn’t try to talk him out of that.

Instead, he became Mike’s friend - his older brother - the kind you can talk about anything with. While they were visiting arcades, movies, restaurants, they would talk about Mike’s life, and Tom would be sure to mention his respect for his Little Brother’s mind.

When Mike’s grades improved, Tom was sure to compliment him on it.

And when they “just happened” to go to events on college campuses, Tom made sure Mike saw first hand just how much fun college life could be.

Two years later, while talking about a business trip he’d just taken, Tom’s Little Brother asked “Do you think I could work with you when I finish college?”

Tom’s heart stopped beating. “Are you going to college?” he asked.

Mike looked at his Big Brother incredulously, “Of course!” he replied.

Now three years into the relationship, Tom has seen Mike’s confidence grow too, along with his social skills. Much as they enjoy spending time together, the most exciting thing for Tom is to wonder:

What will his Little Brother Mike be like in five years?

It gets better every year

Over the last 8 years, Big Brother Geoff saw his Little Brother turn into a young man.

“He was extremely shy when he was 10,” said Geoff, laughing. “Not anymore. He liked the backstreet boys when he was 10, now he likes Mudvein.

He wasn’t into sports when he was 10, last year he even went out and played for the football team. He’s outgoing and the leader of his group of friends.”

Little Brother Zack turned 18 last week, which formally ends their relationship - 8 years of support, kindness, and lots of fun. Geoff showed Zack where he works, at Microsoft. They went to Space Camp together

The one thing they didn’t see eye to eye on, Geoff said, was school. Zack didn’t care about it, and Geoff realized that his Little Brother needed an adult in his life who did.

“Nobody in his family has graduated from college - in my family it was never an option: You were just going to college,” Geoff said. “I’ve taken that same tack with him, and I’ve probably had an impact there.”

He tutored Zack his freshman year, bribed him for good grades his sophomore year, and now - his senior year - Zack’s been accepted in to college, and will be in the school band.

“Meeting the time commitment was never a big deal, especially when it’s so much fun,” Geoff said. “I really appreciate the support Big Brothers Big Sisters has given.”

