

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF THE LOWCOUNTRY SUCCESS STORY



“Curtis and Antonio”

Little Brother Antonio’s mother enrolled him in Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Lowcountry when he was 11-years-old to gain an additional positive male influence in his life and a mentor that was dedicated and supportive. Antonio hoped that he would be matched with a fun and helpful Big Brother who could help him in math and play sports with him. Antonio found exactly what he was hoping for when he was matched with his Big Brother Curtis.



Curtis became a mentor because he wanted to give back to the community and have an opportunity to uplift the youth of today so that they can be better prepared for the future.

“We all come from different walks of life and we all have different life experiences. As a mentor, you can share those different experiences and you can show other young black men that you have different options in life, whether that is going to school, joining the military, or pursuing a professional career. Being a mentor gives you the opportunity to open those doors of possibility to those young black men,” said Curtis.

When Curtis first met Antonio, he was “young and very shy. But I saw a lot of potential in him,” says Curtis. Antonio and Curtis quickly bonded while shopping, playing basketball, and having long talks over lunch. To this day, Curtis shared that his favorite memories with Antonio are the times when they have played basketball in front his house, just laughing and having fun.

This match has also developed a healthy football rivalry between Antonio’s team, the San Francisco 49ers, and Curtis’ beloved Dallas Cowboys. Curtis tries to convert Antonio to a Cowboys fan but Antonio remains loyal to his team. Antonio may have even thrown a bit of shade at Curtis after the 49ers beat the Cowboys this season. “When we played them, we dusted them,” said Antonio. “I sent Curtis a text message after the game that just said ‘How ‘bout THEM ‘Boys?’”

Curtis and Antonio have the most fun together when they are just hanging out, having long conversations. “We sit around and talk about school and life and different ways that Antonio wants to better himself,” said Curtis. Antonio shared that his relationship with Curtis is different from other relationships in his life because of how freely he can communicate with him. “With other people, I don’t really express myself but with Curtis I can express myself,” said Antonio.

Since being matched, Curtis has seen a lot of positive growth in Antonio. “When we first met, Antonio had trouble focusing on his schoolwork. In the years since, I have seen a great change in

his grades," said Curtis. Curtis shared that Antonio has become more responsible, detail-oriented, and mature. He has also seen him become a more responsible big brother to his little sister at home.

Since being matched with his Big Brother, Antonio says that he has, "gotten older, taller, more mature, and more responsible with things I do. I learned how to be a successful kid!"

"Curtis is fun and takes care of me when I am with him," says Antonio. "He gives me things and does things for me. One day I will give back."

Curtis enjoys every moment that he spends with Antonio. "Antonio is a great kid and I look forward to great things for him in the future."