

girls out loud
creating shining stars

THE BIG SISTER OPPORTUNITY

Raising the aspirations of teenage girls





Who are we?

Girls Out Loud is a multi-award-winning social enterprise, established in 2010 by entrepreneur and female champion Jane Kenyon, on a mission to raise the aspirations of teenage girls in the UK and beyond.

Since our launch in 2010 we have worked with over 80 schools, (including schools across Dubai) and **changed the lives of over 30,000 girls** and we have only just started! Our core philosophy is to harness the power of real, successful and sassy female role models, who not only help girls see what is possible, they change mindsets to empower them to believe they can make it happen.

Our flagship programme is a 12 month, structured and supported mentoring programme for teen girls called BIG SISTER.

We believe mentoring is a fundamental skill and a core component of the gender agenda and we know from our experience in this space that our programme delivers a host of benefits not just for the teen girls but for the female role models stepping up to be mentors too.

Find out more at girlsoutloud.org.uk

Motivating the middle

We are passionate about motivating the vulnerable, middle girls. The girls who are in danger of becoming invisible as they simply cruise through school trying to find their place. These are the girls who are neither seriously disruptive, nor academically gifted so they tend to get lost in the noise and either hide in the corner or look for validation in all the wrong places. The one thing they all share is a propensity to seriously under perform. We understand these girls and after 12 years of working with them, know for sure they have the potential to be shining stars. In fact, we believe they are our future leaders, managers and entrepreneurs and with some investment and a positive role model who believes in them they will learn to be bold, brave and believe in themselves and then the magic really happens!

Benefits to mentors

However, the girls are not alone on their journey of self-discovery. Women who embrace the Big Sister mentoring role also report major shifts in their mind-set and a whole host of benefits. This is more than just the feel-good factor of giving back. Mentoring a 12 to 14 year-old girl and helping her find her voice, her gumption and her resilience; Encouraging her to ask more, be more visible and put her hand up; And effecting changes to her confidence, self-belief, self-reliance and overall performance and aspirations, clearly has a knock on effect on the mentors. It is a parallel process.

The impact on personal effectiveness is clear. Big Sisters note improvements in...

- Rapport and relationship building
- Creative thinking and problem solving
- Emotional intelligence and adaptability
- Managing change and thinking on your feet
- Communications, especially active listening
- Taking responsibility for own development and asking more
- Visibility and personal brand



*Could this be you
or a member of
your team?*

It is almost impossible to inspire and help a young girl find her voice and become more visible without first embracing this personally.



The ideal candidate for the Big Sister programme

The programme is best suited to middle/senior female managers who have the potential to progress higher, but just like the middle girls, may be lacking in confidence or not get the need for visibility, personal accountability and resilience.

The commitment

The programme is 12 months. We match 20 Little Sisters with 20 Big Sisters and they work together as a supportive unit with our guidance and leadership for a year. Mentors attend a 1-hour mentoring session with their Little Sister once a month, on school premises, in school term time. This works out at 10 sessions over the year.

On top of this we host up to 3, 2-hour workshops, a launch event and a graduation event. We ask Big Sisters to attend them all with their Little Sister. As well as a learning opportunity, these workshops are a great networking window as the programme attracts amazing women across all sectors.

Generally, most Big Sisters commit to 40 hours volunteering a year.

In addition to the hands-on mentoring time, we also train our mentors upfront over 2 full days, on a weekday on separate weeks. Combined this is 16 hours training time.

And finally, to support our mentors we host compulsory 2-hour peer mentoring sessions, at month 3, 6 and 9 where we check in on their journey, upskill where necessary and create a supportive coaching circle to share good practice and challenges. These sessions are powerful and allow Big Sisters to self-monitor their experience.



The investment

To nominate one of your female managers to participate in the programme is a financial commitment of £1,500k (£1,250k for public sector nominees who work in NHS, Fire Service and Police only). This investment contributes to their training, peer mentoring, workshops, coach supervision, resources and overall project management.

Enterprise share their Big Sister story

"At Enterprise Mobility, we reinforce our Founding Values with partnerships like Girls Out Loud every day. The Big Sister program, which I have had the privilege to be involved in for over 10 years, truly 'strengthens our communities – one neighbourhood at a time'. We have invested in over 30 employees who have taken part in this remarkable program, and we have seen them personally flourish as a result.

Not only has their confidence grown, but their ability to build relationships, mentor effectively, and navigate difficult conversations has significantly improved. This experience has also aided them in progressing within Enterprise Mobility. We are now at a point where our female leaders are eager to take part.

Feedback from our employees on the program is overwhelmingly positive. They love giving back to their Little Sisters at such a crucial time in their lives, providing the support and mentorship that helps them develop the skills needed to stand out in the future.

The Big Sister program not only benefits the Little Sisters but also brings substantial growth and development to our mentors. The skills they acquire and the personal growth they experience enable them to return to Enterprise Mobility with a clear focus and ambition to drive change and support their own teams. This creates a ripple effect, fostering a culture of support and empowerment throughout our organization.

We are incredibly proud to be part of Girls Out Loud and deeply value the positive impact it has on our employees and the broader community. Our commitment to this partnership is a testament to our dedication to nurturing talent and fostering leadership within our company. I highly recommend getting involved in this life-changing program to all our female employees."

Chris Buckley
Group HR Manager at Enterprise Mobility



Seddon share their Big Sister story

"If your business values align with empowering individuals and fostering personal development, then look no further. Supporting the Big Sister program offers a unique opportunity for you to engage in meaningful mentorship leading to significant shifts in mindset and personal growth."

Mentoring these middle and often unheard girls not only benefits them, but also enhances the mentors' skills in rapport building, creative problem-solving, emotional intelligence, adaptability, and much, much more. Do not under-estimate the power of 'giving something back'. This programme is a parallel process of empowerment, where both the girls and your female employees are transformed, creating a ripple effect of positive change, which contributes to shaping future leaders, managers, and entrepreneurs."

What's not to love about such a worthwhile programme..?"

**Nicola Hodkinson, Director
Seddon Construction**

"Being a big Sister was one of the most incredible experiences I've had. I wanted to do it, initially, to help me prepare for my own daughter's teenage years, but also because Jane so eloquently portrayed the challenges of being a young girl in today's world and I wanted to help. However, what I didn't expect, was how much of an impact it would have on me too. Not least in revisiting my own experiences growing up, but also by challenging my amazing little sister to push herself, it also made me realise how much I needed to push myself out of my comfort zone too. Even though the last half of our sessions were so severely impacted by Covid, just speaking to Antonia on the phone meant I still felt I could support her, and our graduation was so emotional. It was fun and challenging in equal measures and I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone!"

**Katy Harris, Pre-construction Director
Seddon Construction**



Seddon

What our Big Sisters say

Beyond Trust believe that investing in their employees, allowing them to give back to their community and learn some new skills makes sound business sense, improves retention and in this instance helps create equity and attraction within the digital sector.

I know from personal experience the programme leaves a lasting impression. Little Sisters have a much-needed supporter at a pivotal time in their life, someone who is committed to being there, to listening, guiding and encouraging them to go after their dreams and believe in themselves. Big Sisters learn about themselves, how to navigate challenging conversations, how to mentor, how to reflect and reassess what is important, and live in the moment. I have personally found it such a rewarding programme I am now on my second cohort (I didn't want it to end!).

Emma Gallagher, Senior Talent Acquisition Manager at BeyondTrust

The Big Sister programme is such an amazing initiative, one that I would definitely have benefitted from as a young girl. Direct Line Group is a huge fan and recognises that sponsoring female employees to be Big Sisters not only supports the aspirations and confidence of girls, it empowers our women to step up and out of their comfort zone and be heard and seen too.

The mentoring relationship is a parallel journey with both Big and Little Sisters challenging and holding each other to account. There is nowhere to hide when mentoring a 13 year old, you really have to be a role model, authentic, real and ready to inspire. It is a liberating and life changing journey for both mentor and mentee.

Marie Campbell, Customer Experience Manager at Direct Line Group





Teen girls in the UK

THE STATE OF THE NATION...

77% of girls aged 13-16 in the UK encounter harmful digital experiences. The frequency of this means many parents have come to normalise or trivialise this.

Barnardo's 2024

52% of child sexual abuse offences are now children (age 10-17) offending against other children. 14 being the most common age

BBC News 2024

Almost 1 in 10 girls have taken diet pills and weight loss aids they can buy over the counter in the past year.

Telegraph 2024

Knife crime against women and girls has doubled in the UK.

Independent 2024

The number of women and girls aged 10-24 recorded as having taken their own lives has increased by 94% since 2012.

ONS Sept 2020

1 in 4 girls will self-harm before they leave secondary school, rates have doubled in the past 6 years. In fact, we have seen a 68% rise in hospital admissions for self-harm for girls under 17 in past decade.

NHS | 2020

44% of girls think being good looking is the most important attribute.

Children's Society | Sept 2020

Smartphone use is fuelling a record demand for sleeping pills for under 16's. In the past 4 years prescriptions have increased by 43% with children as young as 10 being the main users.

NHS Business Services Authority | Nov 2020

24% of girls reported depressive symptoms by age 14.

NHS UK | 2019

Reports of rape, sexual assault and grooming against children are up nearly 75% in 2019/20 compared to 2014/15

Childline | 2020



This is what we are doing: **Little Sister Impact**

83%

of girls who complete the Big Sister programme are now confident speaking up in class

100%

of girls completing the Big Sister programme report an increase in confidence across a range of issues including body acceptance, identity, self-belief, relationships, aspirations and speaking up in class.

90%

of all girls who complete the Big Sister programme love it and would recommend it to a friend.

Little Sister Graduates...

"My attitude in school has got better and my progress log has improved. I get involved in less drama at home and I see my Mum as more of a friend now. I have grown up."

"I have now found the confidence to admit I am an introvert, and I am OK with this. You don't have to be loud to be confident. I can just be me."

"I have more self-belief now. I am no longer confused to label myself and my Big Sister was the first person I came out to. She was awesome."

Stanmore share their Big Sister story

The View From the Top

"As a small business owner, it can be difficult to decide which volunteer positions are right for your team. We believe the Big Sister programme is perfect for us". MD at Stanmore Insurance, Jackie Hyde (pictured right) continues "Having sponsored several team members through the programme I am pleased that both the business and individuals have benefitted, as well as the girls we are on board to empower."



Benefits to the Team

Before meeting their little sisters, big sisters attend training. These sessions develop the skills needed to engage with teenagers, such as active listening, rapport building and identifying needs. Skills that are also essential in any workplace.

"During the training, we explored the world our teenage girls are growing up in and why they need our help, we worked on becoming better communicators and ultimately better colleagues." said Melanie Smith, one of the Stanmore big sisters.



Julie Moore, Claims Manager
Mel Smith, Marketing Manager

Each big sister is responsible for building a relationship with their little sister. *"This part was quite daunting."* Stanmore big sister Julie Moore said. *"It's just like doing something new at work, you get a bit nervous, but it's all worth it in the end."*



Benefits to the Business

Along with the thorough training, there is also a shift in the mind-set of the Big Sisters. *"You can't help a teenage girl to be her authentic self, unless you are following the same path. You've got to walk-the-walk."* added Stanmore big sister Sharon Gallimore.

Big sisters often get teased out of their comfort zone and learn to traverse difficult conversations. *"One minute you're happily crafting, the next you're discussing revenge porn, nothing fazes me now."* concluded Melanie.

Become a Big Sister today. Apply on our website [**girlsoutloud.org.uk**](https://girlsoutloud.org.uk)

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Find out more at **girlsoutloud.org.uk**

