

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF THE LOWCOUNTRY: MATCH SUCCESS STORY



Christina & Alyssa

When Shawvetta applied to Big Brothers Big Sisters, she was hoping her daughter Alyssa would be matched with a Big Sister who could help her open up, build confidence, and support her through challenges like social anxiety. Describing Alyssa as shy, upbeat, positive, and incredibly kind, Shawvetta says she's already seen some positive changes in her daughter since being matched with her Big, Christina, nearly ten months ago. "I've noticed that Alyssa has come out of her shell a little bit and is sharing more with me and with her Big Sister as well," she shared. "She's also been more into her hobbies—she's coloring, drawing, and painting more." Alyssa lights up with excitement whenever she has an outing with Christina, and the pair meaningful activities together like visiting the library, painting, and even walking around the mall to unwind and connect. One of their current creative projects is working on a dress that Alyssa wants to make. "She wants to go to college now—which is amazing and something she wasn't talking about before. She wants to study art," Shawvetta said proudly. She also added, "I think BBBS did a great job matching the two of them together!"

Although Alyssa doesn't quite remember why she initially wanted a Big, it's clear that her match with Christina has become something very special. She loves having someone else to talk to and spend time with regularly. Passionate about art, Alyssa enjoys drawing and painting imaginative creatures, and has recently begun learning how to sew. "BS has been helping me, and we're looking at some classes," she shared. "I want to learn how to make a dress and a skirt!" Alyssa feels supported and encouraged by Christina, and says their time together has helped her feel more confident socially: "She's helped me be more comfortable talking to more people." Looking ahead, Alyssa is excited about her future and dreams

of either going to college or starting her own fashion-related business—with Christina continuing to support her along the way. When asked about her favorite memory with her Big Sister, Alyissa smiled and said, “All of our outings have been fun!”

Christina decided to become a Big Sister after mentoring a young person at her job and realizing she was ready to make a deeper impact through volunteering. Since being matched with Alyissa, she’s noticed tremendous growth. “When we first met, Alyissa hardly talked—she was a little closed off. Now she talks with me openly, we have full-on conversations, and she seems more confident and comfortable,” Christina shared. She believes her role has been to offer patience and a safe space. “Alyissa knows she can be herself, vent about things, and that I’m here to listen without judgment.” Christina admires Alyissa’s courage to try new things, including on their outings. One of her favorite memories was a visit to the bookstore: “We were looking at the manga section, and instead of us standing there quietly, Alyissa started talking about different types of manga and anime. It was amazing to have that open conversation and learn more about her.” Reflecting on her experience, Christina said,

“Even though sometimes it’s hard—like you feel like you’re not helping or doing enough—it might be small, but it makes a difference.”